

# **MATS PROGRAM MANUAL**

**BIBLE AND THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT  
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
April 2013**

## Table of Contents

<b>Program Description .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Degree Components and Requirements.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>M.A.T.S. Advanced Standing .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Suggested Sequencing of Courses for the MATS Degree.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MATS Goals and Assessment of Student Learning.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>MATS Portfolio Assessment Rubric .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>MATS Grading Rubric: Theological Studies Seminar Paper .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Permission to Use Student Work.....</b>	<b>14</b>

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# Master of Arts in Theological Studies

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.) program is designed to serve as an intermediate degree for further graduate programs in biblical and theological studies. It is also designed to provide advanced biblical and theological training for ministers who want to enhance their ministry in specialized areas such as teaching and church related writing.

## Degree Components and Requirements

The M.A.T.S. is a two-year program of study requiring 48 credits. However, applicants with a strong undergraduate program in religion may petition for Advanced Standing in the program, which could allow them to complete the program with 39 credits or approximately three semesters of study. *See M.A.T.S. Advanced Standing.*

**For courses successfully completed as an undergraduate, a student may substitute an advanced course.** *See the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree for examples.*

Students may choose from six concentrations: Biblical and Theological Studies, Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Biblical Languages, Intercultural Theology and Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies. (The Intercultural Theology concentration is designed to provide advanced biblical and theological training for missionaries and ministers who want to enhance their ministry in an intercultural context in specialized areas such as leadership formation, theological education and church related writing. This concentration is designed to serve as an intermediate degree for further graduate programs in biblical, theological and missiological studies.)

In addition to the general requirements for graduation, graduation requirements for the M.A.T.S. program also include a supervised seminar-quality research paper (in BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS 646) and the submission of a portfolio containing copies of the student's work demonstrating attainment of the learning outcomes in the program. (*See the M.A.T.S. Program Manual.*) A limited number of courses may be taken through directed research or distance learning.

## **MISSION OF GOD AND WORLD CHRISTIANITY (9 CREDITS)<sup>1</sup>**

BTH/MHT 501 Mission of God in Biblical and Contemporary Contexts	3
HIS/MHT 556 World Christianity I	3
HIS/MHT 557 World Christianity II	3

## **BIBLE AND THEOLOGY (15 CREDITS)<sup>1</sup>**

BIB 532 Hermeneutics	3
BNT 530 New Testament Introduction	3
BOT 530 Old Testament Introduction	3
THE 531 Systematic Theology I	3
THE 532 Systematic Theology II	3

## **THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH (6 CREDITS)**

RES 531 Theological Research and Writing	3
BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar	3

## **CONCENTRATIONS (15-18 CREDITS)**

*Select one:*

### **Biblical and Theological Studies**

BAR, BGR, BHE, BIB, BNT, BOT, BTH, HIS\*, PCS\* or THE courses 15

### **Old Testament Studies**

Choose **two courses** in **Biblical Hebrew** 6

*Choose three from the following:*

BAR, BIB\*, BHE, BOT or BTH\* courses 9

### **New Testament Studies**

Choose **two courses** in **Biblical Greek** 6

*Choose three from the following:*

BIB\*, BGR, BNT or BTH\* courses 9

### **Biblical Languages**

BAR, BGR or BHE courses 18

*(Requires at least 2 courses in Biblical Hebrew & 2 courses in Biblical Greek)*

### **Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies**

PCS, HIS\*, BTH\* or THE\* 15

### **Intercultural Theology**

MHT 544 Spiritual Formation of the Leader 3

MHT 635 Pentecostal Theology of Leadership Development 3

MHT 642 Contextualized Theology 3

MHT 643 Anthropology and Communication Theological Perspective	3
MHT Elective	3

## **GENERAL ELECTIVE (3 CREDITS)**

Elective	3
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\* *Specific courses in this category must be approved by the student's faculty adviser.*

1 See *M.A.T.S. Advanced Standing guidelines.*

## **M.A.T.S. Advanced Standing**

Students who have earned a significant number of credits in religious studies from approved colleges and universities may request exemption from certain required courses in the M.A.T.S. degree program, thus granting them Advanced Standing. Life experience does not qualify for advanced standing. *(See registrar for further details.)*

The following rules apply to M.A.T.S. Advanced Standing:

1. Advanced Standing cannot exceed nine credits.
2. Advanced Standing is considered for undergraduate courses with satisfactory parallel content, provided the equivalent collegiate courses are double the credit value of the seminary's courses. A minimum grade of B is required and the student must be able to demonstrate competency in subject matter by presentation of an Advanced Standing Portfolio for each course for which advanced standing is desired. A fee of \$50 per course will be charged for each portfolio that is evaluated, regardless of whether or not the advanced standing is granted.
3. Advanced Standing must be requested prior to enrollment but no later than the end of the student's first semester of study at AGTS. Requests should be submitted to the Registrar's Office.
4. Partial course advanced standing will not be granted.
5. If the student later takes a course where advanced standing has been granted, the advanced standing would be nullified.
6. Advanced Standing may be granted for courses listed in the categories "Mission of God and World Christianity" and "Bible and Theology."
7. In an area where a student demonstrates competency but the criteria preclude Advanced Standing, a substitute course may be allowed if approved by the faculty adviser and the Academic Dean.

## **Suggested Sequencing of Courses for the MATS Degree**

- This sequencing is for those who enter the program without advanced standing.
- For those who receive advanced standing, the suggested sequence would be altered in consultation with the faculty advisor.
- BOT/BNT/MHT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar is reserved for the last semester of a student's program and is offered in the spring semester.
- A summer session is included to demonstrate that the student can accumulate course credits during this time. If courses are not taken in the Summer Session the course load in each of the terms in the Second Year would increase to twelve credits to complete the program in two years.

### **First Year**

#### **Fall Semester**

BIB 532 Hermeneutics  
BOT 530 Old Testament Introduction  
HIS/MHT 556 World Christianity I  
RES 531 Theological Research & Writing

**Total 12 credits**

#### **Spring Semester**

BNT 530 New Testament Introduction  
HIS/MHT 557 World Christianity II  
BTH/MHT 501 Mission of God in Biblical and Contemporary Contexts  
General or Concentration Elective Course

**Total 12 credits**

#### **Summer Session**

General or Concentration Elective Course  
General or Concentration Elective Course

**Total 6 credits**

### **Second Year**

#### **Fall Semester**

THE 531 Systematic Theology I  
General or Concentration Elective Course  
General or Concentration Elective Course

**Total 9 credits**

#### **Spring Semester**

BOT/BNT/MHT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar  
THE 532 Systematic Theology II  
General or Concentration Elective Course

**Total 9 credits**

**Total for the program 48 credits**

## MATS Goals and Assessment of Student Learning

### **Learning Outcomes:**

After completing the MATS program the student will be able to:

- 1. Assess the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testaments, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world.**
  - a. Construct a brief historical framework of the Ancient Near East including succession of empires in relation to the Old Testament.
  - b. Define the cultural background concepts and practices that are significant for understanding major Old Testament teachings.
  - c. Explain the major historical, critical, and interpretative issues involved with the books of the Old Testament.
  - d. Outline and describe key events in the political history of Judaism in the Hellenistic Period.
  - e. Describe and discuss the basic social structures that permeated the world of the New Testament.
  - f. List and discuss the major interpretive and introductory issues pertaining to the major portions of the New Testament.
  - g. Articulate God's plan for the universe from a biblical perspective.
  - h. Recognize the vital link between the kingdom of God, the church, and missions as expressed in both the Old and New Testaments.
  - i. Analyze the Christological paradigm for missions.
- 2. Formulate a paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.**
  - a. Discuss an understanding of the nature and work of hermeneutics as it relates to the task of exegesis and expository preaching.
  - b. List and define the principles that are appropriate for interpreting biblical texts in general and specific literary genres used in the Bible.
  - c. Apply the principles of interpretation to the exegesis of a biblical text.
  - d. Critique and evaluate the various methods of New Testament interpretation, assessing both their positive contributions and limitations for New Testament exegesis.
  - e. Summarize the message of each book of the Old Testament in relation to Israel's context.
  - f. Understand the need for doing theology in light of the unreached people groups in specific contexts.
  - g. Apply biblical understandings and missiology to the contemporary world context.

**3. Evaluate the major issues and key figures in church history and biblical and systematic theology in light of the mission of God.**

- a. Discuss the history of Christianity in its diverse cultural settings to the present.
- b. Analyze the contributions of key personalities and movements to the development of Christianity.
- c. Explain how diverse cultural contexts both enriched and challenged the witness of the faith.
- d. Analyze new understandings of the mission of the Church that arose and the patterns of evangelism that were subsequently adopted.
- e. Discuss the important theological issues that contributed to the further articulation of Christian doctrine.
- f. Explain and reflect on the major doctrinal areas of the Christian faith.
- g. Compare the evangelical formulations of theological topics with the contemporary theological discussion and development.
- h. Assess the unique contributions and challenges of the Pentecostal tradition to the formulation of theological topics.
- i. Defend the biblical foundations for the expression of theological topics.

**Assessments:**

- Direct assessment
  - Seminar-quality Research Paper produced in the course, Theological Studies Seminar
    - Department rubric for grading (see below)
  - Portfolio
    - Submission of the MATS Assessment Portfolio (pages 8-10 of this Manual)
    - Selected graded papers, tests, etc., from the student's coursework, including the "seminar quality research paper"
      - Students select work for inclusion and identify which specific criteria that illustrates their attainment of the specific learning objectives
      - Students include a narrative (10 pages in length) in which they report their assessment of their attainment of the specific learning outcomes
    - The portfolio is to be submitted along with the Seminar-quality Research Paper in the course, Theological Studies Seminar
    - The student will submit with the portfolio the "Permission to Use Student Work" form (attached to this Manual) that will permit the usage of the contents of the portfolio for assessment and accreditation purposes only.
  - Open-dialogue sessions
- Indirect assessment

- Course evaluations
- The MATS program survey
- ATS entering and graduating student surveys
- Open-dialogue session

**Timelines and person responsible:**

1. Professor of the Theological Studies Seminar
2. Department professors will evaluate portfolios to ascertain the extent to which learning outcomes are being attained
3. The meetings of the Department in each Fall term will be devoted to assessing student learning in light of the information gleaned from the various assessment instruments and methods
  1. Seminar-quality Research paper
  2. Portfolio
  3. Survey instruments

**Results:** The Department will be asking as it reviews the assessment data:

- What evidence does the data give in assessing your program?
- After reviewing the data what are the implications for the program?

**Action Plan:** As a result of the data analysis the Department will determine:

- What are the strengths of the program?
- What are the weaknesses of the program?
- What is the plan for quality improvement?
- What are the priorities?

**Closing the loop:** The Department will move to:

- Revise goals and/or activities
- Plan for quality improvement

## *MATS Program Assessment Portfolio*

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your assessment of the degree to which the MATS program provided for you the attainment of the goals of the program by:

1. selecting the number (from 1-5) corresponding to the rating you believe most appropriately reflects the degree to which the program goals were accomplished;
2. adding a brief comment, whenever possible (at least one per section), to clarify your rating and to provide further detail about your observation;
3. adding a few selected papers, graded exams, etc., from your courses that illustrate the evaluation(s) you are providing;
4. attaching a ten-page narrative explaining your evaluation of the degree to which the MATS program achieved the goals of the program;
5. attaching the signed "Permission to Use Student Work" form; and,
6. having your entire portfolio converted to a PDF format for submission..

### **Scale:**

#### **5 – Excellent (Superior quality)**

The program provided for the complete and detailed attainment of the learning outcome.

#### **4 – Very Good (Above average quality)**

The program provided for the attainment of the learning outcomes but not in as great detail as a score of 5.

#### **3 – Good (Average quality)**

The program provided for attainment of the learning outcome adequate for the student's general preparation.

#### **2 – Limited (Below average quality)**

The program provided limited attainment of the learning outcome.

#### **1 – Poor (Inadequate, unacceptable)**

The program failed to provide for the attainment of the learning outcome.

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1. The MATS program has prepared the student to assess the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testaments, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world by preparing the student to:</b>					
a. Construct a brief historical framework of the Ancient Near East including succession of empires in relation to the Old Testament.					
b. Define the cultural background concepts and practices that are significant for understanding major Old Testament teachings.					
c. Explain the major historical, critical, and interpretative issues involved with the books of the Old Testament.					
d. Outline and describe key events in the political history of Judaism in the Hellenistic Period.					
e. Describe and discuss the basic social structures that permeated the world of the New Testament.					
f. List and discuss the major interpretive and introductory issues pertaining to the major portions of the New Testament.					
g. Articulate God's plan for the universe from a biblical perspective.					
h. Recognize the vital link between the kingdom of God, the church, and missions as expressed in both the Old and New Testaments.					
<i>Comments:</i>					
<b>2. The MATS program has prepared the student to be able to formulate a paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world by enabling the student to:</b>					
a. Discuss an understanding of the nature and work of hermeneutics as it relates to the task of exegesis and expository preaching.					
b. List and define the principles that are appropriate for interpreting biblical texts in general and specific literary genres used in the Bible.					
c. Apply the principles of interpretation to the exegesis of a biblical text.					
d. Critique and evaluate the various methods of New Testament interpretation, assessing both their positive contributions and limitations for New Testament exegesis.					
e. Summarize the message of each book of the Old Testament in relation to Israel's context.					
f. Understand the need for doing theology in light of the unreached people groups in specific contexts.					
g. Apply biblical understandings and missiology to the contemporary world context.					
<i>Comments:</i>					

<b>3. The MATS program has prepared the student to be able to evaluate the major issues and key figures in Church history and biblical and systematic theology in light of the mission of God by giving the student the preparation to:</b>					
a.	Discuss the history of Christianity in its diverse cultural settings to the present.				
b.	Analyze the contributions of key personalities and movements to the development of Christianity.				
c.	Explain how diverse cultural contexts both enriched and challenged the witness of the faith.				
d.	Analyze new understandings of the mission of the Church that arose and the patterns of evangelism that were subsequently adopted.				
e.	Discuss the important theological issues that contributed to the further articulation of Christian doctrine.				
f.	Explain and reflect on the major doctrinal areas of the Christian faith.				
g.	Compare the evangelical formulations of theological topics with the contemporary theological discussion and development.				
h.	Assess the unique contributions and challenges of the Pentecostal tradition to the formulation of theological topics.				
i.	Defend the biblical foundations for the expression of theological topics.				
<i>Comments:</i>					
<b>4. The MATS program has prepared the student to be able to demonstrate an overall clear attainment of the MATS learning outcomes.</b>					
<i>Comments:</i>					

**MATS Theological Studies Seminar Paper**  
**FINAL DRAFT - GRADING RUBRIC**

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_/100  
Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_%

Please indicate the assessment of the student's demonstration of skills and qualities in each area by:

7. selecting the number (from 0-4) corresponding to the rating you believe most appropriately reflects his or her performance;
8. adding a brief comment, whenever possible (and at least one per section: A, B, C, etc.), to clarify your rating and to provide further detail about your observation; and
9. adding the scores for each section and calculating a percentage score.

**Scale:**

- 4 = Excellent = superior qualities  
 3 = Very good = above average qualities  
 2 = Good = average qualities  
 1 = Limited = below average, inconsistent quality  
 0 = Poor = inadequate, unacceptable

	0	1	2	3	4
<b>A. TOPIC SELECTION &amp; RATIONALE (see INTRODUCTION)</b>					
1. The chosen topic is <b>worthy of study</b> , having both <b>academic</b> value (serving to contribute to a larger field of study) and <b>practical</b> value (in the service of humanity, the work of the local church, or the kingdom of God).					
2. The student has given the topic an <b>interesting and understandable title</b> , and has offered a <b>clear and cogent rationale</b> for its selection.					
3. The student has stated the <b>research goal</b> (question, hypothesis, issue or argument) with a burden of proof, i.e., in a way that its outcome is objectively measurable.					
4. The student has clearly described the <b>scope and limits</b> of the study, clarified any necessary <b>terms, issues, or assumptions</b> and explained his/her <b>approach and methodology</b> .					
<i>Comments:</i>					

	0	1	2	3	4
<b>B. RESEARCH &amp; ORGANIZATION (including LITERATURE REVIEW)</b>					
6. The student has chosen and demonstrated a <b>research method</b> that is <b>adequate</b> to access the data and to accomplish the stated goals.					
7. The outline and organization of the paper reveals a <b>scope</b> of investigation that is <b>comprehensive</b> of the chosen topic.					
8. The student demonstrates that he or she knows how to gather <b>appropriate</b> resources, sift through the material, and glean helpful information <b>relevant</b> to his or her topic.					
9. The student has demonstrated an <b>awareness of the contemporary literature</b> related to the topic and has <b>summarized it accurately</b> , noting nuances.					
10. The <b>outline</b> is <b>coherent</b> (showing accurate subordination and parallelism of its various levels); and the flow of <b>logic and argument</b> development is <b>easy to follow</b> .					
<i>Comments:</i>					

	0	1	2	3	4
<b>C. CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS (including HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION)</b>					
11. The student understands the <b>history of interpretation</b> related to the topic and has <b>summarized accurately</b> the various views through time.					
12. Drawing from the past and present, the student begins his/her argument by laying a foundation of the current <b>state of the research</b> on the topic.					
13. The student has shown evidence of <b>critical assessment</b> , which evaluates the <b>merits and deficiencies</b> of opposing viewpoints.					
14. The student employs <b>higher levels of thinking</b> (cf. Bloom's Taxonomy: e.g., application > analysis > synthesis > evaluation) and the <b>Canons of Criticism</b> (completeness, relevance, accuracy, consistency, and method [logic]).					
15. The student has demonstrated <b>critical thinking skills</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing a <b>legitimate thesis</b> and arriving at a convince <b>conclusion</b>, by</li> <li>• presenting its <b>evidence</b> in a compelling manner, and</li> <li>• <b>defending</b> it against all attacks.</li> </ul>					
<i>Comments:</i>					

	0	1	2	3	4
<b>D. WRITING, VERBAL EXPRESSION, ACADEMIC FORM (OVERALL)</b>					
16. The writing of the paper is mechanically sound with regard to <b>word use and selection, gender-inclusive language, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and syntax.</b>					
17. The student writes in a clear <b>straightforward style</b> and syntax so that meaning is <b>easily understood</b> and <b>antecedents</b> are clearly identified.					
18. There is <b>coherence and logical</b> development of <b>thought</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• well-constructed paragraphs <b>clearly announce subjects</b>; and</li> <li>• <b>transitional sentences</b> at the end of paragraphs and between sections or chapters facilitate flow of thought.</li> </ul>					
19. The student has constructed all the requisite <b>parts</b> of a paper in a manner that conform to <b>Turabian</b> academic style.					
20. The student has cited research sources (both in the <b>footnotes and bibliography</b> ) in a manner that conforms to <b>Turabian</b> academic style.					
<i>Comments:</i>					

	0	1	2	3	4
<b>E. BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE &amp; INTERPRETATIVE SKILLS (OVERALL)</b>					
21. The student has conducted his/her investigation so as to provide interaction with <b>relevant biblical material</b> , which supports, guides, and corroborates his/her conclusion.					
22. The student has interpreted biblical material in a responsible way, using <b>sound hermeneutics</b> .					
23. The student's interpretation has drawn from a <b>breadth and depth</b> of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>primary sources</b> (including Scripture____<sup>1</sup>, ancient ____, historical ____, and contemporary __ sources), and</li> <li>• <b>secondary sources</b> (Journals ____ and Commentaries ____).</li> </ul>					
24. The student's interpretation has drawn from the <b>best of relevant</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>reference works</b> (including those on the original languages____, dictionaries/encyclopedia/atlas ____ , history, archeology, etc. ____), and</li> <li>• <b>specialized studies</b> (theologies, introductions ____ and monographs ____).</li> </ul>					
25. The student has made an <b>application</b> of the conclusion of the study (in the service of humanity, the work of the local church, or Christ's kingdom).					
<i>Comments:</i>					

<sup>1</sup> These blanks are for the reviewer's convenience in tallying the number of sources in the Bibliography of each genre.

## Permission to Use Student Work

### MATS Program

I give my permission for my portfolio to be used in the assessment process of the MATS Program by the Bible and Theology Department of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary. I give my permission for my work to be presented as an example of the required portfolio for accreditation purposes only at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary. This does not give permission for my work to be included in any published journal, book, web page, or other document meant for general and/or academic dissemination.

(Name, printed) \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_