

Master of Arts in Theological Studies

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS) 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 MATS 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 *MATS Advanced Standing*.

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

Students in this program are not required to choose a concentration, except the one designated "Biblical and Theological Studies" which gives the widest range of course options (BAR, BGR, BHE, BIB, BNT, BOT, BTH, HIS, THE or MHT). Should a student wish, they may focus more narrowly by taking 15 hours in New Testament Studies, Old Testament Studies, Biblical Languages, Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, or Intercultural Theology.

In addition to the general requirements for graduation, graduation requirements for the

MATS program also include a supervised seminar-quality research paper (in BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS/THE 646). A limited number of courses may be taken through directed research or distance learning.

1. Mission of God and World Christianity* (9 Credits)

Courses	Credits
BTH/MHT 501	3
HIS/MHT 556	3
HIS/MHT 557	3

2. Bible and Theology* (15 Credits)

Courses	Credits
BIB 532	3
BNT 530	3
BOT 530	3
THE 531	3
THE 532	3

3. Theological Research (6 Credits)

Courses	Credits
RES 531	3
BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS/THE 646	3

4. General Elective

Elective Course (3 credits)

Optional Concentration or Area of Focus (15 credits): Student's choice of electives in BAR, BGR, BHE, BIB, BNT, BTH, HIS, MHT, PCS, PHI or THE.

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

MATS 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 MATS degree program, thus granting them Advanced Standing. Life experience does not qualify for Advanced Standing. (See Assistant Registrar, Seminary for other details.)

The following rules apply to MATS 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 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 is charged for each portfolio that is evaluated 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 Office of Seminary Registration.
4. Partial course Advanced Standing cannot 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 advisor and the Dean.
8. All AGTS master programs must be completed within a 10-year time limit, which includes any undergraduate courses used for Advanced Standing and any graduate courses transferred in from other schools. See the AGTS Office of Seminary Registration for more information.

MATS Assessment-Based Credit Equivalency.

For those who cannot fit within the 10-year window for Advanced Standing, there is the option for an Assessment-based Credit Equivalency.

AGTS permits up to 9 credits assessment-based credit equivalency in the MAIS, MATS and MLM programs (for students whose undergraduate credits were acquired more than 8 years prior to starting an AGTS degree) for three BTH core classes:

- BNT 530
- BOT 530
- THE elective / THE 531 or THE 532

To fulfill this, the student will take an exam in the topic with a written component and a short oral (via online) follow-up exam with a professor in the topical area, which is graded on a pass/fail scale. A fee of \$100 for each core class examination will be charged to the student's account, regardless of whether or not the Advanced Standing is granted. Contact the Office of Seminary Registration for more information.

Five-Year Theological Studies Program.

AGTS has an accelerated MATS program in conjunction with Evangel

University. Students earn a BA/BS at Evangel University in four years and finish the MATS degree in one more year (27 credits, 9 each fall, spring, and summer semesters). Students must enroll in one of the University's Department of Theology and Global Church Ministries programs, the Adult Studies Church Ministries program, or complete a Pre-seminary minor. In their undergraduate program, students complete 12 hours as follows:

Courses	Credits
THEO 560	3
THEO 554	3
Two of the following: CHMN 520; PHIL 575; HIST 528	6

These courses can be dual-counted toward the MATS with a minimum grade of B. (Note: Undergraduate dual-credit courses have graduate syllabi.)

They may also qualify for 9 credits of Advanced Standing by taking BIBL 296 Sophomore Seminar, BIBL 337 Hermeneutics, BIBL 116 New Testament Literature, BIBL 37n any New Testament book study, BIBL 115 Old Testament Literature, and BIBL 36n any Old Testament book study. A minimum grade of B is required for Advanced Standing courses.

For more information about this accelerated program, please contact the Associate Dean of AGTS or Dr. Mike Jaffe at (417) 268-1000.

Online MATS Program. The MATS is also offered as an online program. The online MATS is a 48-credit program, allowing for students with a strong

undergraduate program in religion to petition for Advanced Standing, which would reduce the program to 39 credits (See *MATS Advanced Standing* above.) The admission, contours and graduation expectations of the online MATS program are the same as that of the resident program—9 credits, Mission of God and World Christianity; 15 credits, Bible and Theology; 6 credits, Theological Research and Writing; 15 credits of courses with BAR, BGR, BHE, BIB, BNT, BOT, BTH, HIS, PCS, and THE prefixes; and 3 credits of General Electives.

Projected Tentative Online Course Schedule

Year 1	Fall	RES 531 HIS 528	3 3
	Spring	BIB 532 HIS 556	3 3
	Summer	THE 531 HIS 557	3 3
Year 2	Fall	BNT 530 BTH 532	3 3
	Spring	BOT 530 BTH 530	3 3
	Summer	THE 532 BTH 501	3 3
Year 3	Fall	BTH 533 HIS 532	3 3
	Spring	BTH 538 BNT/BOT/MHT/ PCS/THE 646	3 3

The student should consult the Course Schedule each term to learn what is offered in the program.

The syllabi for each online course, available during the registration periods, will specify the technical and other requirements for the course. Sustaining two courses each term—

fall, spring, and summer—will allow the student to complete the MATS program in approximately 3 years.