

# MASTER OF ARTS IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

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Studies for the MA in Pastoral Ministry prepare women and men to take part in the various ministerial activities of the Church, particularly at the level of the parish or diocese. Students can choose to pursue the MA in Pastoral Ministry with or without a concentration. Those who do not declare a concentration focus on developing a general understanding of the various arts of pastoral ministry. Those who declare a concentration choose one of the following:

- Church Management
- Health Care Ministry
- Hispanic Ministry
- Liturgy and Worship
- Pastoral Care
- Religious Education
- Spirituality and Justice
- Spiritual Formation
- Youth and Young Adult Faith

These guidelines are designed to deepen the quality of studies of Pastoral Ministry. They serve students by providing structure to the Masters of Arts program. Requirements are designed to ensure that students are familiar with the foundational methods, ideas and literature of the interdisciplinary studies that constitute the ideal formation of the pastoral minister.

Without prejudice to these guidelines, a student's program of studies is developed in consultation with an academic advisor with attention to the student's background and aspirations. The curriculum is composed of seven elements: courses in Theological and Scriptural Foundations, Pastoral Studies for Ministry, Religious Education, Electives, Holistic Formation, Contextual Education and Synthesis Project (comprehensives).

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The degree requires 35 hours for summer-only students and 44 hours for academic-year students. It may sometimes be necessary, however, to accumulate more than this number of credits to fulfill the degree requirements.

### 1. THEOLOGICAL AND SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS

Studies in theology and scripture cover foundational issues of theological and scriptural scholarship. While some concentrations have special theological and scriptural requirements, they usually include studies in Christology, ecclesiology, sacraments, ethics, Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and Christian Scriptures (New Testament). *In order to give students an understanding of the rich traditions that inform their studies, one theological foundations or pastoral studies course must be taught from a historical perspective.*

A student with no previous background in theology should take introductory courses. Students with backgrounds in theological studies may look for more advanced or specialized courses to fulfill requirements

in Theological and Scriptural Foundations.

TM 644 Theological Foundations in Practical Perspective introduces the student to the study of theology on a graduate level and in the U.S. context. This is required of all MA students, unless exempted from it explicitly by one's admission letter. Students exempt from this requirement take an elective in its place.

## **2. PASTORAL STUDIES FOR MINISTRY**

The MA degree prepares the student as a pastoral generalist. Students who do not declare a concentration take three pastoral electives of the student's choice. Students who declare a concentration take courses to provide pastoral preparation in the area of their special interest.

### *Church Management concentration*

(see worksheet for specific Theological Foundations requirements)

- Integrative Colloquium in Church Management
- Managing People and Organizations (CSOM)
- Accounting (CSOM)
- Financial Management (CSOM)
- Three courses covering three of the following six areas: Sacraments, Spirituality, Religious Education, Pastoral Care and Counseling, Hispanic Ministry, Canon Law

### *Health Care Ministry concentration*

(see worksheet for specific Theological Foundations requirements)

- One course in Pastoral Care and Counseling
- One course in Spirituality
- One course in Death and Dying
- One course in Psychology and Religion
- Two units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) (*replaces Contextual Education*)

### *Hispanic Ministry concentration*

(see worksheet for specific Theological Foundations requirements)

- Hispanic Ministry Seminar I—Theological Foundations
- Hispanic Ministry Seminar II—Pastoral Studies
- One course in Adult Faith Formation **or** Youth and Young Adult Faith

### *Liturgy and Worship concentration*

- One course in Sacramental Theology
- One course in Liturgical Theology/Practice
- One related course in Liturgy

### *Pastoral Care concentration*

- One course in Psychology and Religion
- One course on the Foundations of Pastoral Care and Counseling
- One course in Spirituality
- One course in Pastoral Care and Counseling

### *Religious Education concentration*

- Three courses drawn from core courses in this field, in consultation with one's academic advisor

*Spirituality and Justice concentration*

- Two courses in Social Ethics
- One Spirituality survey course
- One course in Spirituality Studies
- One course in one of the following areas: Pastoral Care and Counseling, Hispanic Ministry, or Youth and Young Adult Faith

*Spiritual Formation concentration*

- Two courses in Formative Resources for Contemporary Spirituality
- One course in Spiritual Direction with Practicum
- One course in Pastoral Counseling

*Youth & Young Adult Faith concentration*

- Six credits (two academic-year courses or three summer courses) in Youth and Young Adult Faith
- One course in Spirituality and Ministry

### **3. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

All students (except those in the Health Care Ministry and Church Management concentrations) are required to take one course in religious education. In fulfilling this requirement, students will develop a fuller understanding of the dynamics of education in Christian faith and a richer appreciation for the many ways ministry is likely to affect the ongoing religious and spiritual formation of persons and communities.

### **4. CONTEXTUAL EDUCATION (FIELD EDUCATION)**

Students in the MA program are required to enroll in TM 530, Contextual Education (field education). The purpose of Contextual Education is to enable students to explore the work of pastoral ministry and to develop the skills for theological reflection on that experience. All MA students are required to take Contextual Education, with the exception of the following: those concentrating in Health Care Ministry who are required to take Clinical Pastoral Education, and all dual degree students.

For *academic year* students, Contextual Education is a two-semester commitment of eight hours per week (total of 28 weeks), for which students earn four credits. Students engage in a supervised field experience, designed in consultation with the Faculty Director for Contextual Education in the IREPM Department. Students also participate in a practicum with others in the MA and MEd programs. The practicum meets 8 times each semester. Students register for Contextual Education in the fall and are billed for two credits in the fall and two credits in the spring.

*Summers-only* students fulfill their Contextual Education experience over two summers and the interim academic year, for which they earn two credits. They are required to do five hours per week of a supervised field experience during the academic year (total of 28 weeks) at a location convenient to their home. The field

experience is designed in consultation with the Faculty Director for Contextual Education. Students are also expected to participate in the Contextual Education practicum with other students, which take place during the summers before and after their field experience, as well as online during the academic year. Summers-only students register during the first summer and are billed for two credits at that time.

## **5. ELECTIVES**

Students may choose, in consultation with their advisors, courses in theology, scripture, education and/or ministry in order pursue particular interests or to round out their program of study.

## **6. HOLISTIC FORMATION**

MEd and MA students participate in the one-credit Holistic Formation program (TM 730). This program consists of two parts: a Holistic Formation group and a Spiritual Formation Plan.

During the first year or summer of studies, students participate in small groups facilitated by experienced facilitators, which allow them to integrate spiritual growth with their academic work in a supportive and prayerful atmosphere. During the academic year, the groups meet six times per semester; during the summer, groups meet once each week. At the end of the year or summer, students receive a J grade (course extension) until they have fulfilled the components of their Spiritual Formation Plan.

Students are required to create a personalized Spiritual Formation Plan (SFP) as a component of the Holistic Formation experience. A student creates a Spiritual Formation Plan in consultation with one's advisor and one's Holistic Formation facilitator. Students may fulfill the components of their SFP during the duration of degree program at STM. When a student has fulfilled the components of the plan, the student informs his or her academic advisor, who will then sign off on that portion of the student's degree worksheet/program of study. The student leaves a copy of the signed form in the Associate Director for Spiritual and Liturgical Formation's mailbox. Upon receipt of this form, the Associate Director will change the grade from a "J" to a "P" (Pass).

The purpose of the SFP is to establish a *habitus* of spiritual practice, one which is discerned and consciously chosen, one that corresponds with the uniqueness of persons and establishes a solid spiritual foundation for reflective ministry. Students choose and complete ONE OPTION from TWO of THREE AREAS during the course of their studies.

### *AREA I*

- Spiritual Direction (six month experience or more)\*

### *AREA II*

- Retreat experience (e.g., STM retreat, silent directed retreat, guided retreat, annotated Exercises of St. Ignatius)
- Immersion experience (STM or equivalent)
- Intentional Christian community experience

### *AREA III*

- Monthly volunteer experience with journal reflection (six month experience or more)

- Spirituality and the arts experience with journal reflection (six month experience or more)
- Liturgical Preaching and Presiding workshop (CE)\*\*
- Ways of Christian Prayer workshop (CE)
- Navigating Spiritual Paths for the Parish and Pastoral Minister workshop (CE)
- Participation in STM Faith and Justice Committee with journal reflection (one semester)
- Participation in the STM Liturgy Committee with journal reflection (one semester)
- Boston College Women's Resource Center Volunteer with journal reflection (six month experience or more)

## **7. SYNTHESIS PROJECTS**

Upon completion of course work, MA students write a synthesis project that provides them the opportunity to: 1) creatively synthesize their studies in theology, 2) address a question about their particular concentration in pastoral ministry and 3) outline a pastoral program appropriate to their own ministerial context. Students discuss their essays with two faculty members in a subsequent oral examination.

Preparatory seminars, topic brainstorming sessions, writer's labs and consultants are available to assist students with the research, writing and oral defense of synthesis projects. For additional details on guidelines and procedures, see the *Master's Synthesis Project Packet* available at the STM Service Center at 9 Lake Street and consult STM Academic Calendar for workshop dates.