MASTER OF ARTS

Purpose
The purpose of studying for the degree of Master of Arts (M.A.) is to acquire a general competence in biblical and doctrinal theology, including a major in one area of theology. A student who completes the M.A. program may apply for admission to the Ph.D. program.

The Master of Arts is designed for both clergy and laity. It is especially helpful for Christian men and women who seek to further their knowledge of theology, so that they may give appropriate leadership in their congregations and communities. M.A. students choose a major and minor from the following four options: exegetical theology, historical theology, practical theology, and systematic theology. The students also will have the opportunity to take additional courses outside of the major and minor areas. For guidance in these and other matters, students should consult the M.A. Course Selection Guide in the Graduate School section of the Seminary’s Portal site.

ADMISSION

Eligibility
For admission to the Master of Arts program, an applicant must hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited educational institution, with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale).

Application
Application forms may be obtained from the CSL website at www.csl.edu/apply. The application deadline is February 7. An application is not complete until it includes all of the following:

• Completed Application Form
• Application Fee of $50 (those who are applying both to the M.A. and to one of the Seminary’s ministerial formation programs pay this fee only with their first application)
• Official Report of GRE Scores (scores older than five years will not be accepted)
• Official Transcripts from each college or university and seminary previously attended
• International students also must submit an official report of TOEFL scores with a minimum score of 200 (CBT), 72-73 (IBT) or 533 (PBT) and a brief theological essay in English.
• All applicants failing to demonstrate a sufficient competency in English composition may be required to do entry-level work in this area.
• Alternate Route, M.A. in Deaconess Studies, and Center for Hispanic Studies students may consider applying after they have completed one half of the coursework for their programs.

Matriculation
Prior to matriculation, all M.A. students must demonstrate proficiency in basic Christian doctrine (as represented especially in Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms), Old Testament content, and New Testament content. Proficiency may be demonstrated by passing entrance exams or by passing applicable courses (credit not applicable to the M.A. degree) at Concordia Seminary. Applicants must take the exams by February 7. If an exam is not passed on the first attempt, the student may either attempt the exam a second and final time or attempt to successfully complete the associated pre-seminary course during the summer term preceding matriculation (but may not do both).

GENERAL ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS
M.A. students may take many of the same courses taken by the Master of Divinity (M.Div) students. It is therefore important to register at the correct time in order to ensure a place in desired courses. M.A. students may go to the Office of the Graduate School for advice on selecting appropriate courses.

1. Students must complete at least 60 quarter hours of credit with a cumulative curriculum grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Graduates of a theological seminary must complete at least 36 quarter hours of credit at Concordia Seminary with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. A student whose cumulative curriculum grade point average falls below a 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. The probationary status serves as a warning that the student is not making satisfactory progress and that, unless the quality of the work improves, will be subject to dismissal from the Graduate...
School. Ordinarily, a student whose cumulative grade point average remains below a 3.0 for two consecutive quarters will be dismissed.

II. Individual courses will satisfy the requirements of the graduate M.A. only when completed with a grade of “B-” or better.

Student Status
International students must maintain full-time status as a condition of their class F-1 visa. Students in the M.A. program (except Certificate program students, who also are enrolled in the M.A. program) maintain full-time status if they satisfy one of the following conditions:

- Are registered for at least eight credit hours per quarter (excluding summer); or
- Are registered for and engaged in full-time research and writing of the master’s thesis; or
- Are engaged in full-time preparation for master’s degree comprehensive exams.

CURRICULUM - GENERAL THEOLOGICAL STUDIES
Special Program Requirements - Major
A candidate for the M.A. (General Theological Studies) will choose a major and a minor in one of the following departments:

- Exegetical Theology
- Systematic Theology
- Historical Theology
- Practical Theology

The student may not fail more than two courses in either the major or the minor and still successfully complete the major or the minor.

Language Proficiency
There are no general requirements for foreign language proficiency for the M.A. However, ordinarily students whose major is exegetical theology will be required to demonstrate proficiency in Biblical Greek and may be required to demonstrate proficiency in Biblical Hebrew to complete courses conducted on the basis of the biblical languages.

Program Options
Subject to the approval of the department of the student’s major, the M.A. program is substantially a classroom program, concluding with one of two options:

Examination
I. If the student chooses the examination option, the test in the major area may be taken at any time but is normally best taken during the last quarter of the program.

II. The student must complete 24 hours of credit in a major, three of which may be earned by a research project (795), as well as completing 18 hours of credit in a minor. The student must complete an additional 18 hours of credit, at least nine of which are earned in a third area. Graduates of a theological seminary must complete 21 hours of credit in a major, nine hours of credit in a minor, and six additional hours of credit in eligible courses of their choice.

III. A total of six credits for acceptable graduate courses in religion or theology may be transferred from another accredited graduate school provided that prior approval of the courses is obtained from the director of the Graduate School. A total of 12 credit hours may be transferred from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

IV. Students must pass a written comprehensive examination that tests their general understanding of and their ability to interpret and relate theological information in their major area. (Students in practical theology will in part choose and be tested in one of the following subject areas: Pastoral Theology, Pastoral Care and Counseling, Christian Education, Preaching, Worship, and World Missions; for this reason, representative course work toward the major in the area of the student’s choosing always should be done in preparation for the exam.) A basic bibliography, specific statements of guidance, and sample questions designed to aid in preparing for the examinations are available from the Graduate School section of the Seminary’s Portal site. The examinations are administered under the guidance of the director of the Graduate School. No examination may be taken more than
twice. In order to participate in commencement, the examination must be taken and passed by March 15.

V. Courses taken for credit through Concordia Seminary's Center for Hispanic Studies may be applied to the graduate M.A. This option allows for the completion of the M.A. through courses taught entirely in Spanish.

Thesis
I. The student must complete 30 hours of credit in a major, six of which are earned by writing an acceptable thesis, 15 hours of credit in a minor, and 15 additional hours of credit in eligible courses of the student's choice, at least nine of which are earned in a third area. Graduates of a theological seminary must complete 24 hours of credit in a major, six of which are earned by writing an acceptable thesis, nine hours of credit in a minor, and three additional hours of credit in an eligible course of the student's choice.

II. No credits may be transferred from a program at another graduate school.

III. The thesis option involves the student in less course work but more writing. The student may register for the thesis at any time, but, after one year from the date of registration, an extension fee will be due if the thesis has not been completed. Accordingly, it is generally advisable to register for the thesis during or immediately after the quarter in which the last course work has been taken. If the thesis option is selected, the thesis may be submitted at any time, but it must be submitted on a specific schedule to ensure graduation and participation in commencement.

IV. The work of the thesis proceeds according to the guidelines specified in the M.A. Thesis Procedures document on the Graduate School's Portal site.

Time Limit and Reinstatement
The student must complete the M.A. program in five years. The files of students who are not able to complete the work in this time period will be retired. Students who fail to make academic progress for more than two years or fail to register for two successive quarters will be retired. Students who wish to be reinstated may request this of the Advanced Studies Committee. Reinstatement, if granted, is valid for two calendar years and may be made only once.