

CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND MINISTRY, M.A.

NOTE: This program is not admitting students at this time.

The Master's program in Christian Formation and Ministry prepares students to foster the development, growth, nurture, and wholeness of Christians in a wide array of ministry settings. Our department is convinced that the individual well prepared for ministry will possess a strong liberal arts foundation in ministry-relevant disciplines, a growing capacity to effectively link theory and practice in concrete ministry settings, and a purposeful participation in an ongoing process of personal spiritual formation. Through these various avenues, students work to develop an integrated philosophy of formation and ministry that is biblically and theologically grounded, academically informed, and relevant to the needs of a changing world.

The program is designed for the "reflective practitioner" because it promotes a continual dialogue between foundational principles and pressing ministry concerns. As such, it is useful for anyone interested in facilitating spiritual formation in others, particularly those working in church and parachurch contexts, student development settings, schools, camps, and the mission field. Because of the value placed upon collaboration and the richness and diversity of faculty and students, there is a significant emphasis on the development of a vibrant learning community. In addition, students participate in spiritual formation courses that facilitate personal and corporate spiritual and character development and the discernment of ministry calling in the context of this community.

While all of the courses are designed to reflect broad ministry concerns, students are encouraged to pursue their particular ministry interests throughout the program. Beyond the core requirements, students are required to select an area of ministry concentration. Students may choose a ministry concentration in:

- Church and Parachurch Ministry
- Bible, Theology, and Ministry

Regardless of the chosen focus area, students will benefit from the combination of core ministry themes and more specialized courses in areas of personal interest.

Admissions

NOTE: This program is not admitting students at this time.

Admission to the Christian Formation and Ministry graduate program is open both to those who are currently involved in ministry and to those who are preparing for future ministry. Admission does not require a specific undergraduate major or a prescribed set of courses, but students are expected to possess a basic knowledge of the Bible and proficiency in written and spoken English. Since this program is aimed at preparing students for Christian ministry, continued enrollment in the degree program requires successful candidacy approval, which occurs after admission and before 12 hours of coursework have been completed. During the candidacy approval process, CFM professors will evaluate the presence of essential ministry skills and dispositions, as well as the student's demonstration of a commitment to growth in Christian virtues. At the time of acceptance into the program, the department will notify the student if there are course deficiencies which need to be met.

Requirements

Requirements for the Christian Formation and Ministry program leading to a Master of Arts degree consist of the successful completion of 42 semester hours. Students are required to complete 24 hours of core courses plus an additional 18 hours in a specified area of concentration.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses		
CFM 512	Bible in Ministry (course no longer offered)	2
CFM 513	History and Philosophy of Ministry	4
CFM 514	Ministry in Culture (course no longer offered)	2
CFM 516	Teaching for Transformation	4
CFM 517	Developmental Theory and Spiritual Formation	2
CFM 518	Research Methods for Ministry	2
CFM 521	Personal Spiritual Formation	2
CFM 522	History and Traditions of Spiritual Formation	2
Category I Bible TSR requirement		4
CFM 683	Integrative Seminar	0
CFM 691	Concentration Mentoring Group (registered each semester)	0
CFM 693	Ministry Practicum	0
CFM 692	Creative Project	2
or CFM 698	Applied Thesis/Thesis	
Theological Studies (TSR) ¹		
Concentration Area		
Select 18 credits in a specified area of concentration (see list) ²		18

¹ As part of this 42-credit program, all graduate students are required to complete a theological studies requirement of 6 semester hours. For CFM students, this consists of CFM 512 (no longer offered), plus a 4-hour course from the Category I (<https://catalog.wheaton.edu/graduate/academic-policies-information/academic-requirements/>) listing in the Graduate School section of this catalog. Students are also required to complete a zero-credit Integrative Seminar (CFM 683), a zero-credit Mentoring Group in their area of concentration registered each semester (CFM 691), a zero-credit Ministry Practicum (CFM 693) and a two-credit capstone research project (CFM 692 or CFM 698)

² Up to eight hours of electives within a concentration may be taken through independent study courses. With the exception of zero-credit offerings, courses taken on a pass/fail basis may not be applied to the degree requirements. For courses offered only on a pass/fail basis, two hours of pass/fail credit may be applied to the degree with approval of the department chair.

Ministry Concentrations

Bible, Theology, and Ministry Concentration

The Bible, Theology, and Ministry concentration is designed for those who desire a more advanced grounding in biblical and theological studies while also developing a strong ministry foundation. Students in this concentration will develop an integrated understanding of the biblical narrative, biblical interpretation, Christian theology, and church history while also developing a ministry philosophy, learning critical ministry skills, and deepening their engagement with personal spiritual formation.

Code	Title	Credits
Biblical Studies		
BITH 566	Foundations for Biblical Interpretation (counts as TSR requirement)	4
Theological Studies		
Select 4 credits of the following:		4
BITH 638	Old Testament Theology	
BITH 648	New Testament Theology	
BITH 565	Christian Theology	
BITH 567	Theology of the Church or BITH 382 Church	
BITH 561	Theological Anthropology	
BITH 558	Topics in Advanced Biblical and Theological Studies	
Christian History		
Select 4 credits of the following:		4
BITH 576	History of Christianity to 1900	
BITH 581	The Reformation	
BITH 687	Seminar in American Christianity and Historical Theology	
BITH 653	Historical Theology: Patristic	
BITH 654	Historical Theology: Medieval Christianity	
BITH 571	Introduction to the History of Christianity	
BITH Elective		
Select 4 credits		4
Open Elective		
Select 4 credits		4
Bible, Theology, and Ministry Final Project		
CFM 692	Creative Project	2
or CFM 698	Applied Thesis/Thesis	

Church and Parachurch Concentration

The Church and Parachurch concentration is designed for those who are involved or interested in church and parachurch ministries in any setting. The core courses of this program are relevant to all ministry contexts, providing a solid foundation in biblical and theological reflection, ministry philosophy, practical skills, and personal spiritual formation. Beyond the core courses, students can tailor much of the program to their unique needs and interests, selecting a combination of courses that will best equip them for fruitful ministry.

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
CFM 523	Ministry Leadership and Organization	4
Church and Parachurch Final Project		
OAL 534	Care and Counsel in Ministry	2
CFM 692	Creative Project	2
or CFM 698	Applied Thesis/Thesis	
Electives		
Select 10 credits in ministry-related courses (up to 8 credits can be taken from other graduate departments or other concentrations)		10
Total Credits		18