Standards of Accreditation

Theological schools accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools (the "Commission") are special-purpose institutions of postbaccalaureate, higher education. Prior to meeting the standards of accreditation, these schools must demonstrate that they are qualified for membership in the Commission by virtue of membership in The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (the "Association") and by virtue of offering graduate theological degrees, functioning within the Christian or Jewish faiths, and demonstrating that their graduates serve in positions of religious leadership. The purpose of the Association is the improvement of theological schools, which is implemented through accreditation by the Commission and by the programs and services the Association provides to member schools.

Since 1938, The Association of Theological Schools has maintained standards for the accreditation of member schools. The standards both define minimal requirements for accreditation and identify qualities associated with good institutional and educational practice; as such, they articulate the shared understandings and accrued wisdom of the theological school community regarding normative institutional performance. The standards have been periodically reviewed and revised since their inception; the present general institutional standards are the result of a comprehensive redevelopment process undertaken from 2008 through 2010.* The degree program standards will undergo redevelopment during the 2010–2012 biennium.

These standards are the basis by which schools are evaluated for accredited status with the Commission. More than previous editions of ATS standards, these standards seek to describe excellence in theological education in the context of the different purposes and constituencies of accredited schools. They provide the basis for ongoing institutional and educational improvement as well as descriptions of minimal expectations. The entire text comprises the accrediting standards. Within this text, the term "shall" is used to denote minimal expectations of accredited schools. Words such as "should" are used to identify characteristics of good practice and educational quality and to set forth expectations for improvement of theological education.

The language of these standards reflects the belief that the theological character of schools is central to their identity. An attempt has been made to write the standards in a language that is theologically inclusive of the Commission's member schools, but at various points in the standards, the language is more characteristic of some theological schools and their religious communities than of others. At these points of differences, translation into terms that reflect the school's theological character will be appropriate.

The standards are implemented according to the procedures and policies contained herein and are interpreted and administered by the Board of Commissioners (the "board").

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* Schools visited during the 2010–2011 academic year may elect to use the general institutional standards in effect prior to the June 2010 revision. Those unrevised standards are available on the Commission on Accrediting section of the ATS website. Beginning with the 2011–2012 academic year, the new general institutional standards will apply to all schools. See the plan of implementation under the section, "General Institutional Standards."

Guide to Standards Numbering

General Institutional Standards				
OLD			**NEW**	
1	Purpose, planning, and evaluation	1	Purpose, planning, and evaluation	
2	Institutional integrity	2	Institutional integrity	
3	Learning, teaching, and research: theological scholarship	3	Theological curriculum: Learning, teaching, and research	
4	Theological curriculum		*Standard 4, section 4.1 moved to Standard 3, section 3.1.* *Standard 4, sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 moved to the degree program standards (DS).*	
5	Library and information resources	5	Library and information resources	
6	Faculty	6	Faculty	
7	Student recruitment, admission, services, and placement	7	Student recruitment, admission, services, and placement	
8	Authority and governance	8	Authority and governance	
9	Institutional resources	9	Institutional resources	
10	Multiple locations and distance education	10	Multiple locations and distance education	

Degree Program Standards	
Degree programs *(formerly Standard 4, sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4)*	DS
Basic programs oriented toward ministerial leadership	A, B, C, D
Basic programs oriented toward general theological studies	E
Advanced programs oriented toward ministerial leadership	F, G, H, I, J
Advanced programs primarily oriented toward theological research and teaching	K, L
Criteria for admission, transfer of credits, shared credit in degree programs, and advance standing related to degree programs approved by the Board of Commissioners	M

Degree Program Standards

The Commission on Accrediting of ATS identifies its expectations and requirements for the degrees offered by member schools in the following degree program standards. These standards for degree programs are intended to ensure a common understanding of the kind and quantity of academic work involved in a degree program undertaken at member schools, and to provide common public meaning for a degree, regardless of the member school that grants it.

Degree program standards DS and M set forth expectations relevant to all degree programs, including issues of transparent communications of degree offerings, consistent degree nomenclature, general content, nondegree instructional programs, criteria for admission, transfer of credits or shared credits, and advanced standing.

The standards specific to each degree program have a common framework that includes sections on purpose; educational goals; program content, location, and duration; admissions criteria and distinctive resources needed to offer the degree; and educational evaluation. Accredited schools are required to offer degree programs that conform to these degree program standards and that are approved, on that basis, by the Board of Commissioners.

While the degree standards are intended to ensure a common, public meaning for degrees granted by theological schools that are accredited by the Board of Commissioners, a member institution should implement its degree programs in ways that meet the standards *and* reflect the school's values and purpose. Thus, while the standards require schools to offer programs that provide opportunities through which students may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness, each school must determine the kind of opportunities that are appropriate to its institutional and religious commitments, as well as the characteristics that are reasonable indicators of moral integrity or personal faith, in the context of the school's institutional and theological commitments. The standards require institutions to assess the degree to which the goals of a degree program have been achieved, but schools must identify the qualities by which the attainment of goals will be assessed.

Because accreditation is somewhat distinctive in North American higher education, applicants for admission who have completed their prerequisite educational work outside North America will typically not present degrees from "accredited" schools, and the patterns of their previous education may be different from familiar patterns of education in North America. Commission member institutions are responsible for determining, for all applicants, the level of work that has been completed and whether the work represents the educational equivalent of specified, prerequisite degrees.

When a school offers more than one degree program, it is important that each program be designed in a way that ensures its educational integrity. While some courses in a degree program may also be used to satisfy requirements for another degree, in most approved degree programs there will be some courses that are offered only for that program. In schools that offer both master's-level and doctoral programs, courses should be appropriate for each level and generally offered for students at only one level, with exceptions made only in clearly defined cases. Moreover, in each degree program a sufficient number of students should be enrolled to ensure an appropriate community of learners focused on the purpose and goals of that degree.

DS   Degree programs

DS.1   Introduction

Degree programs approved by the Board of Commissioners are postbaccalaureate and fall into several groups. It should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive and that there is some natural overlapping among them. Programs at the level of the first graduate theological degree are of two main kinds: (1) some are oriented primarily toward ministerial leadership and (2) some toward general theological studies. Programs at the advanced level, normally presupposing a first theological degree, are of two main kinds: (1) those that focus upon advanced ministerial leadership and (2) those directed primarily toward theological research and teaching.

DS.1.1   When Commission institutions offer more than one degree program, they shall articulate the distinctions among the degrees with regard to their educational and vocational intent. Institutions shall articulate the goals and objectives of each degree program they offer and assure that the design of its curriculum is in accordance with institutional purpose and the accreditation standards of the Commission.

DS.1.2   The number of students enrolled in any degree program shall be sufficient to provide a community of learning in that degree program.

DS.1.3   Schools shall follow the recommended nomenclature for all board-approved degree programs. In cases where governmental licensing, charter requirements, or institutional federation agreements preclude use of recommended nomenclature, the board will consider alternate degree nomenclature. In cases where the standards provide alternate nomenclature for the same kind of degree program (e.g., MRE or MA in Religious Education, ThM or STM, PhD or ThD), the nomenclature employed reflects the history or policies of the schools offering the degree programs.

DS.1.4   Degree programs shall be approved by the board according to the Commission's formally adopted procedures (cf. Commission procedures).

DS.2   Basic programs oriented toward ministerial leadership

DS.2.1   Curricula for programs oriented toward ministerial leadership have certain closely integrated, common features. First, they provide a structured opportunity to develop a thorough, discriminating understanding and personal appropriation of the heritage of the community of faith (e.g., its Scripture, tradition, doctrines, and practices) in its historical and contemporary expressions. Second, they assist students in understanding the cultural realities and social settings within which religious communities live and carry out their missions, as well as the institutional life of those communities themselves. The insights of cognate disciplines such as the social sciences, the natural sciences, philosophy, and the arts enable a knowledge and appreciation of the broader context of the religious tradition, including cross-cultural and global aspects. Third, they provide opportunities for formational experiences through which students may grow in those personal qualities essential for the practice of ministry, namely, emotional maturity, personal faith, moral integrity, and social concern. Fourth, they assist students to gain the capacities for entry into and growth in the practice of the particular form of ministry to which the program is oriented. Instruction in these various areas of theological study should be so conducted as to demonstrate their interdependence, their theological character, and their common orientation toward the goals of the degree program. The educational program in all its dimensions should be designed and carried out in such a way as to enable students to function constructively as ministerial leaders in the particular communities in which they intend to work and to foster an awareness of the need for continuing education.

DS.2.2   The following degree nomenclature is included among these kinds of curricular programs: Master of Divinity; Master of Arts in Religious Education/Master of

Religious Education; Master of Arts in _____ (e.g., Counseling); Master of Sacred Music/Master of Church Music.

DS.3   Basic programs oriented toward general theological studies

DS.3.1   First graduate theological degrees in basic programs oriented toward general theological studies have in common the purpose of providing understanding in theological disciplines. These programs may be designed for general knowledge of theology or for background in specific disciplines, or for interdisciplinary studies. They are intended as the basis for further graduate study or for other educational purposes. Nomenclature may differ according to the history of its use in the particular school. The curricula for these degrees should be developed in relation to the institution's distinctive goals for the programs. A scholarly investigation of Scripture, tradition, and theology is essential for all of the programs, while some may also emphasize research methods, teaching skills, or competence in specific theological disciplines. Depending on the intention of the degree, appropriate formational experiences are to be provided that will develop the qualities essential for the application of the degree. Adequate faculty and instructional resources must be available, with special attention given to particular areas of focus within the programs.

DS.3.2   Degrees of this kind are offered with the following nomenclature: Master of Arts, Master of Arts (Religion), Master of Theological Studies.

DS.4   Advanced programs oriented toward ministerial leadership

DS.4.1   Advanced programs in ministerial leadership presuppose a basic theological degree. All are designed to deepen the basic knowledge and skill in ministry so that students may engage in ministry with increasing professional, intellectual, and spiritual integrity. Emphasis is upon the practice of ministry informed by analytic and ministerial research skills. Certain curricular features are common to the advanced programs in this category. Each degree program emphasizes the mastery of advanced knowledge informing the understanding of the nature and purposes of ministry, the competencies gained through advanced study, and the integration of the many dimensions of ministry. Each degree program includes the completion of a final culminating written project/report or dissertation. Schools offering any of these advanced degrees are expected to make explicit the criteria by which the doctoral level of studies is identified, implemented, and assessed.

DS.4.2   Degrees offered in this broad category have the following nomenclature: Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Educational Ministry, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Missiology, Doctor of Musical Arts.

DS.5   Advanced programs primarily oriented toward theological research and teaching

DS.5.1   These programs oriented toward theological research and teaching presuppose a basic postbaccalaureate theological degree and permit students to concentrate in one or more of the theological disciplines. They equip students for teaching and research in theological schools, colleges, and universities, or for the scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice, or for other scholarly activities. They provide for both specialization and breadth in education and training; they provide instruction in research methods and procedures relevant to the area of specialization; and normally they provide training in teaching methods and skills, or in other scholarly tasks. Curricula for these programs provide, first of all, a structured opportunity to develop an advanced critical understanding and appreciation of a specific area of theological studies or in interdisciplinary relationships and cognate studies. Second, they assist students in understanding cultural realities and social settings within which religious communities and institutions of theological or religious education exist and carry out their missions, as well as the institutional life of these communities and institutions themselves. Third, they assist students to grow in those personal and spiritual qualities essential for the practice of scholarly ministry in theological environments. Fourth, they allow students to gain the capacities for teaching, writing, and conducting advanced research.

DS.5.2 The nomenclature for advanced master's degrees includes the Master of Theology and Master of Sacred Theology. The nomenclature for doctoral degrees oriented to research and teaching includes the Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Theology.

DS.6 Degree program standards

To provide for a common public recognition of theological degrees, to assure quality, and to enhance evaluative efforts, the Commission establishes standards for each degree program. Each degree program should reflect the characteristics of the theological curriculum (see 3.1–3.2). The degree standards articulate the following requirements: purpose of the degree; primary goals of the program; program content, location, and duration; admission and resource requirements; and educational evaluation. The degree programs offered by board-accredited institutions shall conform to these standards.

DS.7 Other instructional programs

In addition to their degree programs, theological schools contribute to their various publics through other programs of learning and teaching. Although these programs do not culminate in degrees, they should be compatible with the institution's primary purpose of graduate theological education.

DS.7.1 Characteristics

DS.7.1.1 Programs that do not lead to degrees should remain appropriate to institutional purpose and will differ according to their learning goals: for example, continuing education for religious leaders, programs for persons of color or linguistic minority groups, or programs for enrichment.

DS.7.1.2 Such programs should be conducted with the proper administrative and faculty oversight, including design, approval, staffing, financing, and evaluation.

DS.7.1.3 Faculty who teach in such programs should be appropriately qualified. Normally, qualification will be demonstrated by the possession of an appropriate graduate theological degree and by significant experience in the field in which one is teaching. Students in these programs should have appropriate access to the instructor and to learning resources commensurate with the level and purpose of the program.

DS.7.2 Types of programs

DS.7.2.1 Schools may offer programs of study consisting either of courses for which graduate academic credit is granted or educational events without such credit.

DS.7.2.2 Programs of study that grant graduate credit are appropriate for enrichment, personal growth, the development of lay leaders, or special, non-degree emphasis for vocational ministerial leaders. Such programs require students to have a baccalaureate degree, or its educational equivalent, for admission and to complete a program comprising courses appropriate for graduate credit. Completion of the program of study results in some formal recognition but not a degree. Credits earned toward these programs may subsequently be transferred into a graduate degree program.

DS.7.2.3 Programs of study that do not carry academic credit may include courses, workshops, lectures, and other types of educational experiences on topics related to the theological curriculum or to the mission and ministry of the church. These programs and events may be designed for continuing education of ministers, for basic theological education, for personal enrichment, or for other purposes consistent with the character of the school. Because no academic credit is offered, those enrolled need not hold the baccalaureate degree. Requirements for admission to particular programs or events are at the discretion of the institution.

Basic Programs Oriented Toward Ministerial Leadership

A   Master of Divinity (MDiv)

A.1   Purpose of the degree

A.1.0   The Master of Divinity degree is the normative degree to prepare persons for ordained ministry and for general pastoral and religious leadership responsibilities in congregations and other settings. It is the required degree for admission to the Doctor of Ministry degree program, and the recommended first theological degree for admission to advanced programs oriented to theological research and teaching.

A.2   Primary goals of the program

A.2.0   The goals an institution adopts for an MDiv degree should take into account knowledge of the religious heritage, understanding of the cultural context, growth in spiritual depth and moral integrity, and capacity for ministerial and public leadership.

A.3   Program content, location, and duration

A.3.1   Content

A.3.1.0   The MDiv program should provide a breadth of exposure to the theological disciplines as well as a depth of understanding within those disciplines. It should educate students for a comprehensive range of pastoral responsibilities and skills by providing opportunities for the appropriation of theological disciplines, for deepening understanding of the life of the church, for ongoing intellectual and ministerial formation, and for exercising the arts of ministry.

> A.3.1.1   *Religious heritage:* The program shall provide structured opportunity to develop a comprehensive and discriminating understanding of the religious heritage.
>
> > A.3.1.1.1   Instruction shall be provided in Scripture, in the historical development and contemporary articulation of the doctrinal and theological tradition of the community of faith, and in the social and institutional history of that community.
> >
> > A.3.1.1.2   Attention should be given both to the broader heritage of the Christian tradition as such and to the more specific character of particular Christian traditions and communities, to the ways the traditions transcend particular social and cultural settings, and to the ways they come to unique expression in them.
> >
> > A.3.1.1.3   Instruction in these areas shall be conducted so as to indicate their interdependence with each other and with other areas of the curriculum, as well as their significance for the exercise of pastoral leadership.
>
> A.3.1.2   *Cultural context:* The program shall provide opportunity to develop an understanding of the cultural realities and structures within which the church lives and carries out its mission.
>
> > A.3.1.2.1   The program shall provide for instruction in contemporary cultural and social issues and their significance for ministry. Such instruction should draw on the insights of the arts and humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.
> >
> > A.3.1.2.2   MDiv education shall address the global character of the church as well as the multicultural and cross-cultural nature of min-

istry in North American society and in other contemporary settings. Attention should also be given to the wide diversity of religious traditions present in the social context.

A.3.1.3 *Personal and spiritual formation:* The program shall provide opportunities through which the student may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness. Ministerial preparation includes concern with the development of capacities—intellectual and affective, individual and corporate, ecclesial and public—that are requisite to a life of pastoral leadership.

A.3.1.3.1 The program shall provide for spiritual, academic, and vocational counseling, and careful reflection on the role of the minister as leader, guide, and servant of the faith community.

A.3.1.3.2 The program shall provide opportunities to assist students in developing commitment to Christian faith and life (e.g., expressions of justice, leadership development, the devotional life, evangelistic witness) in ways consistent with the overall goal and purpose of the school's MDiv program.

A.3.1.4 *Capacity for ministerial and public leadership:* The program shall provide theological reflection on and education for the practice of ministry. These activities should cultivate the capacity for leadership in both ecclesial and public contexts.

A.3.1.4.1 The program shall provide for courses in the areas of ministry practice and for educational experiences within supervised ministry settings.

A.3.1.4.2 The program shall ensure a constructive relationship among courses dealing primarily with the practice of ministry and courses dealing primarily with other subjects.

A.3.1.4.3 The program shall provide opportunities for education through supervised experiences in ministry. These experiences should be of sufficient duration and intensity to provide opportunity to gain expertise in the tasks of ministerial leadership within both the congregation and the broader public context, and to reflect on interrelated theological, cultural, and experiential learning.

A.3.1.4.4 Qualified persons shall be selected as field supervisors and trained in supervisory methods and the educational expectations of the institution.

A.3.1.4.5 The institution shall have established procedures for selection, development, evaluation, and termination of supervised ministry settings.

A.3.2 Location

A.3.2.1 MDiv education has a complex goal: the personal, vocational, spiritual, and academic formation of the student. Because of the importance of a comprehensive community of learning, the MDiv cannot be viewed simply as an accumulation of courses or of individual independent work. In order to ensure an appropriate educational community, at least one year of full-time academic study or its equivalent shall be completed at the main campus of the school awarding the degree or at an extension site of the institution that has been approved for MDiv degree-granting status.

STANDARDS

A.3.2.2 If requirements can be completed in extension centers or by means of distance learning, the institution must be able to demonstrate how the community of learning, education for skills particular to this degree, and formational elements of the program are made available to students.

A.3.3 Duration

A.3.3.0 In order to fulfill the broad educational and formational goals of the MDiv, the program requires a minimum of three academic years of full-time work or its equivalent.

A.4 Admission and resource requirements

A.4.1 Admission

A.4.1.1 The MDiv is a postbaccalaureate degree. Admission requirements shall include (1) a baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or holding membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, or the educational equivalent; (2) evidence of the commitment and qualities desired for pastoral leadership; and (3) the academic ability to engage in graduate education.

A.4.1.2 As many as 10 percent of the students in the MDiv degree program may be admitted without possession of the baccalaureate degree or its educational equivalent, if the institution can demonstrate by some objective means that these persons possess the knowledge, academic skill, and ability generally associated with persons who hold the baccalaureate degree. Admission of such applicants should be restricted to persons with life experience that has prepared them for theological study at the graduate level.

A.4.2 Distinctive resources needed

A.4.2.1 The MDiv degree, as the basic degree offered by board-accredited institutions, requires the resources identified in general institutional standards 1–10. In addition, MDiv students shall have access to community life that provides informal educational experiences, a sustaining religious fellowship, and adequate opportunity for reflection upon the meaning of faith in its relation to education for ministry. MDiv education is enhanced by faculty and community resources that support the goals of general education for ministerial leadership.

A.4.2.2 Faculty

A.4.2.2.1 Faculty shall relate the insights of their disciplines to the practice of ministry and shall be attentive to students' spiritual development and professional growth.

A.4.2.2.2 Faculty resources should include some persons who are currently engaged in parish, congregational, or specialized ministerial leadership.

A.4.2.3 Community resources

A.4.2.3.1 The theological school shall maintain a vital relationship with the religious community or communities to which it is related and other support systems both to ensure that students have meaningful ministry contexts in which to work, and to facilitate the placement of graduates.

A.4.2.3.2   An open and mutually enhancing relationship with other theological schools, universities, professional schools, and social agencies should be maintained insofar as that relationship contributes to the accomplishment of the program's goals.

A.5   Educational evaluation

A.5.1   The institution offering the MDiv shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the various goals of the degree program.

A.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

B   **Master of Religious Education (MRE)**
          Master of Christian Education (MCE)
          Master of Arts in Religious Education (MA in Religious Education)
          Master of Arts in Christian Education (MA in Christian Education)

B.1   Purpose of the degree

B.1.0   The primary purpose of degrees with these various titles is to equip persons for competent leadership in various forms of educational ministry in congregations and other religious institutions.

B.2   Primary goals of the program

B.2.0   Primary goals for this kind of degree program include (1) the capacity for critical and constructive theological reflection regarding the content and processes of educational ministry; (2) understanding of the educational, social, and behavioral sciences that undergird educational practice, as well as the cultural contexts in which educational ministry occurs; (3) growth in personal and spiritual maturity; and (4) skill in teaching and in the design, administration, and assessment of educational programming.

B.3   Program content, location, and duration

B.3.1   Content

B.3.1.0 Degree programs oriented to leadership in educational ministry should provide instruction in the wide range of theological disciplines as well as other disciplines critical for educational practice, and they should include a variety of educational contexts and approaches. The program should facilitate interaction among the various areas of study and the practices of educational ministry.

> B.3.1.1 *Religious heritage:* The program shall provide basic instruction in the religious heritage, including Scripture, theology, history of the tradition, and other appropriate areas of study.

> B.3.1.2 *Cultural context:* The program shall provide instructional settings and opportunities for students to gain understanding of the context of teaching and learning in congregational life; to develop the capacity to design and maintain educational programming that is sensitive to developmental, family, and cultural influences on children, youth, and adults; and to develop skill in assessing and relating to the cultural contexts in which congregations serve.

> B.3.1.3 *Personal and spiritual formation:* The program shall provide opportunities through which the students may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness.

> B.3.1.4 *Educational practice:* The program shall provide structured opportunities for students to gain skill in understanding and practice of educational areas of study, including history and philosophy of education, teaching and learning, administration, and the behavioral and social sciences. The program shall also provide students with supervised experiences in educational ministry. These experiences should be of sufficient duration and intensity to provide opportunity to gain expertise in the tasks of ministerial leadership and to reflect on interrelated theological, cultural, and experiential learning. The theological school shall select qualified persons as field supervisors and train them in supervisory methods and the educational expectations of the institution. Schools shall also have a procedure for selection, development, evaluation, and termination of supervised ministry settings.

B.3.2 Location

B.3.2.1 As degree programs in which persons are educated for a form of ministerial leadership, these programs require a comprehensive community of teachers and peers who have opportunity for common experiences over time. To accomplish these goals, at least one year of full-time academic study or its equivalent must be earned on the campus of the institution granting the degree, or in an extension site of the institution that has been approved for degree-granting status.

B.3.2.2 If requirements can be completed in extension centers or by means of distance learning, the institution must be able to demonstrate how the community of learning, education for skills particular to this degree, and formational elements of the program are made available to students.

B.3.3 Duration

B.3.3.0 The program of study should be of sufficient duration to acquire the basic knowledge and skills for effective educational ministry practice. The broad educational and formational goals of the program require two years of full-time academic work, or its equivalent.

B.4 Admission and resource requirements

B.4.1 Admission

B.4.1.1 Persons seeking admission to this kind of degree program should possess a baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or holding membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, or the educational equivalent, and appropriate indicators of the intellectual, personal, vocational, and spiritual aptitude for leadership in educational ministry.

B.4.1.2 As many as 10 percent of the students in this degree program may be admitted without possession of the baccalaureate degree or its educational equivalent, if the institution can demonstrate by some objective means that these persons possess the knowledge, academic skill, and ability generally associated with persons who hold the baccalaureate degree. Such applicants should be restricted to persons with life experience that has prepared them for graduate theological education.

B.4.2 Distinctive resources needed

B.4.2.0 In addition to the resources identified in general institutional standards 1–10, schools shall have a variety of resources to support this kind of degree program.

B.4.2.1 The faculty shall include a sufficient number of full-time faculty with expertise in the various educational and ministry disciplines. In order to guarantee multiple perspectives and approaches, as well as sufficient attention to advising students and assisting in their vocational formation, the school shall provide the equivalent of more than one full-time faculty member in this area. A school can demonstrate the adequacy of faculty resources by two or more full-time faculty in the area, or one full-time faculty member and several qualified part-time faculty members, or comparable staffing patterns. Institutions may extend the adequacy of faculty resources through cooperative relationships with other theological schools or institutions with graduate departments of education.

B.4.2.2   The institution shall give appropriate attention to library collections and information resources necessary for study in education and cognate disciplines, such as educational databases and church education curriculum resources.

B.4.2.3   Schools shall demonstrate that students have sufficient opportunity to work with trained supervisors in meaningful ministry contexts, which requires appropriate relationships with local congregations and religious institutions.

B.5   Educational evaluation

B.5.1   The institution offering the MRE or comparable degree programs shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the various educational goals of the program.

B.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

C Master of Arts *in* [specialized ministry] (MA *in* _____)

C.1 Purpose of the degree

C.1.0 The primary purpose of degrees that the Commission designates as MA *in* (area of specialized ministry) is to equip persons for competent leadership in some form of specialized ministry in congregations and other settings. The degree program may focus, for example, on youth ministry, counseling, missions, or social ministries.

C.2 Primary goals of the program

C.2.1 Primary goals for this kind of degree program include (1) the capacity for critical and constructive theological reflection regarding the content and processes of the areas of specialized ministry; (2) skill in the design, implementation, and assessment of ministry in these specialized areas; (3) an understanding of the various disciplines that undergird the area of specialized ministry; and (4) growth in personal and spiritual maturity.

C.2.2 Because these programs may vary considerably with the size of the institution and the specialized ministry practices of the denominations or religious communities to which the theological school relates, each program shall clearly identify the ministerial roles that graduates of the degree might assume and shall articulate the particular educational goals of the degree program.

C.3 Program content, location, and duration

C.3.1 Content

C.3.1.1 Degree programs oriented to specialized ministerial leadership should provide instruction in the wide range of theological disciplines as well as those disciplines critical for the practice of the specialized ministry.

C.3.1.1.1 *Religious heritage:* The program shall provide instruction in the religious heritage, including Scripture, theology, and history of the tradition.

C.3.1.1.2 *Cultural context:* The program shall provide instructional settings and opportunities for students to gain understanding of the context of the specialization in the broader range of ministerial practice and the purposes of the church, and to develop appropriate understanding of the broader social context in which the specialized ministry is performed.

C.3.1.1.3 *Personal and spiritual formation:* The program shall provide opportunities through which students grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness.

C.3.1.1.4 *Specialization:* The program shall provide structured opportunities for students to gain understanding and skill in practice related to the areas of specialization, to acquire the capacity to design and maintain effective practices and programs in the areas of the specialty, and to develop skill in assessing the efforts and contributions of the specialized ministry.

C.3.1.1.4.1 The program shall provide students with supervised experiences in the area of the ministry specialization. These experiences should be of sufficient duration and intensity to provide opportunity to gain expertise in the tasks of ministerial leadership and to reflect on the interrelated theological, cultural, and experiential learning.

C.3.1.1.4.2   The theological school shall select qualified persons as field supervisors and train them in supervisory methods and the educational expectations of the institution.

C.3.1.1.4.3   In programs of study that might lead to licensure or certification by a professional or ecclesiastical authorizing authority, practica and other requirements should conform to generally accepted standards of the area of specialty.

C.3.2   Location

C.3.2.1   As degree programs educating persons for specialized ministerial leadership, these programs require a comprehensive community of teachers and peers who have opportunity for common experiences over time. The equivalent of at least one full-time academic year of work must be earned on the campus of the institution granting the degree or at an extension site of the institution that has been approved for degree-granting status.

C.3.2.2   If requirements can be completed in extension centers or by other means of distance learning, the institution must be able to demonstrate how the community of learning, education for specialized skills, and formational elements of the program are made available to students.

C.3.3   Duration

C.3.3.0   The program of study should be of sufficient duration to permit the student to acquire the basic knowledge and skills for thoughtful and effective practice in the area of the specialized ministry. The range of disciplines to be studied, appropriate contextual and supervised field education opportunities, and the formational goals of the program require the equivalent of two years of full-time academic work.

C.4   Admission and resource requirements

C.4.1   Admission

C.4.1.1   Persons seeking admission to this kind of degree program should possess a baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or holding membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, or the educational equivalent, and appropriate indicators of the intellectual, personal, and vocational aptitude for leadership in the specialized ministry.

C.4.1.2   As many as 10 percent of the students in these degree programs may be admitted without possession of the baccalaureate degree, or its educational equivalent, if the institution can demonstrate by some objective means that these persons possess the knowledge, academic skill, and ability generally associated with persons who hold the baccalaureate degree. Such applicants should be restricted to persons with life experience that has prepared them for graduate theological study.

C.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

C.4.2.0   Institutions should be able to demonstrate that they have a variety of resources to support programs educating people for specialized ministry indicated by the degree nomenclature.

C.4.2.1   A sufficient number of full-time faculty should have expertise in the various disciplines related to the specialized ministry area. The value of multiple perspectives and approaches, as well as adequate faculty for advisement and vocational formation, requires more than one full-time faculty member

functioning in the area of specialization identified in the degree's nomenclature. A school can demonstrate the adequacy of faculty resources by two or more full-time faculty in the area, or one full-time faculty member and several qualified part-time faculty members, or comparable staffing patterns. Institutions may extend the adequacy of faculty resources through cooperative relationships with other theological schools or institutions with appropriate graduate departments in the area of the specialty.

C.4.2.2   The institution shall give appropriate attention to library collections that provide learning resources for study in specialized areas as well as other appropriate information and media resources for graduate instruction in the area of specialization.

C.4.2.3   Programs shall provide students with sufficient opportunities to work with trained supervisors in contexts appropriate for the specialized ministry. The institution should maintain appropriate educational relationships with congregations, counseling centers, or community organizations; and should have procedures for the selection, evaluation, and termination of supervised ministry sites.

C.5   Educational evaluation

C.5.1   The institution offering the MA *in* [specialized ministry] shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the various goals of the degree program.

C.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

D   Master of Church Music (MCM)
Master of Sacred Music (MSM)
Master of Music in Church Music (MM in Church Music)
Master of Arts in Church Music (MA in Church Music)

D.1   Purpose of the degree

D.1.0   The purpose of these degrees is to equip persons for competent leadership in church or sacred music in congregations and other settings.

D.2   Primary goals of the program

D.2.0   Primary educational goals include (1) capacity for constructive theological reflection, (2) an understanding of music theory and history, (3) competence in an applied music performance area, (4) skill in conducting and leadership of musical ensembles, (5) knowledge of church music literature, (6) capacity to lead a comprehensive program of church music education, and (7) growth in personal and spiritual maturity.

D.3   Program content, location, and duration

D.3.1   Content

D.3.1.1 *Religious heritage:* The program shall provide basic instruction in Scripture, theology, and history of the tradition, including worship, liturgy, and hymnology.

D.3.1.2 *Musical arts:* The program shall provide graduate level instruction in the various musical arts and training in performance skill areas. The board recommends that the degree program follow the guidelines of the National Association of Schools of Music for the musical arts requirements in master's-level work.

D.3.1.3 *Personal and spiritual formation:* The program shall provide opportunities through which the student may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, and moral integrity.

D.3.1.4 *Music ministry leadership:* The program shall include opportunities for students to gain skill as conductors of musical ensembles and leaders of worship, preferably in supervised ministry contexts. These opportunities should reflect concern for the relationship of the churches' worship and ministry, and awareness of the multicultural and cross-cultural nature of ministry in North American society.

D.3.2   Location

D.3.2.0 As a degree preparing persons for ministerial leadership in church music, this degree requires a comprehensive community of teachers and peers who have opportunity for common experiences over time, as well as access to studio and ensemble resources and the range of courses in musical arts and theological studies. To accomplish these goals, the degree must be completed on the campus of the institution granting the degree or, if the degree is granted by affiliation with a school or department of music located in another institution, on the campuses of the two institutions.

D.3.3   Duration

D.3.3.0 This degree program requires the equivalent of two years of full-time academic study.

D.4   Admission and resource requirements

D.4.1   Admission

D.4.1.1   Persons seeking admission to this program should possess (a) a baccalaureate degree program approved by the National Association of Schools of Music, or (b) meet the standards of the bachelor of music degree as prescribed by NASM, or (c) take instruction (without graduate credit) until the competencies assumed by (a) or (b) are met.

D.4.1.2   Member institutions shall require qualifying and/or placement exams of all graduate applicants. If deficiencies are indicated, remedial work may be required without graduate credit.

D.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

D.4.2.1   In addition to the general theological school faculty resources, this program requires sufficient, qualified faculty who can provide instruction in the range of musical arts disciplines, performance areas, conducting, and ensemble leadership; and who can promote integration of music specialization within the broader context of ministry.

D.4.2.2   Schools offering this degree shall have adequate facilities for graduate instruction in the musical arts, such as appropriate studio and practice space.

D.4.2.3   These programs also require library collections including musical scores, recordings, books, periodicals, and other media that support graduate instruction and faculty research in the various disciplines related to the musical arts.

D.5   Educational evaluation

D.5.1   The institution offering master's degrees in church or sacred music shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the various goals of the degree program.

D.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

STANDARDS

Basic Programs Oriented Toward General Theological Studies

E **Master of Arts (MA)**
Master of Arts (Religion) (MAR)
Master of Arts (Theological Studies) (MA [Theological Studies])
Master of Theological Studies (MTS)

E.1 Purpose of the degree

E.1.0 The purpose of these degree programs is to provide a basic understanding of theological disciplines for further graduate study or for general educational purposes. The specific nomenclature for these degree programs, which are governed by the same standards, may be chosen according to an institution's specific purpose in offering the program or to reflect the needs and interests of the students enrolled.

E.2 Primary goals of the program

E.2.0 The goals an institution adopts for these degree programs should include the attainment of a survey knowledge of various theological disciplines, or focused knowledge in a specific discipline, or interdisciplinary knowledge.

E.3 Program content, duration, and location

E.3.1 Content

E.3.1.1 Depending on the goals of the specific degree, the program of study shall include exposure to the broad range of theological disciplines or to the focused study of a theological discipline in depth and in the context of the broader theological disciplines.

E.3.1.2 In addition to course work, these degrees should require a concluding exercise that allows for a summative evaluation; this exercise may be a thesis in the area of concentration, a comprehensive examination, or another summative process of evaluation.

E.3.1.3 The study of languages shall be required if a level of competence in a language is integral to the specific degree program.

E.3.2 Duration

E.3.2.0 Normally these degrees require two academic years of full-time study or the equivalent. In some cases, however, persons admitted with some advanced theological study or with prior extensive undergraduate studies in religion and/or other appropriate foundational areas may complete the program with one year of full-time course work, in addition to the thesis and/or comprehensive examination.

E.3.3 Location

E.3.3.1 Courses should be provided on the institution's main campus or in an approved branch or extension site that provides access to appropriate resources of faculty, library, and a community of peers pursuing similar programs of study. In order to ensure peer learning and teaching, at least one-half of the course work required shall be completed at the institution's main campus or at an extension site of the institution that has been approved for degree-granting status.

E.3.3.2 If requirements can be completed in extension centers or by means of distance learning, the institution must be able to demonstrate how the com-

munity of learning, education for skills particular to this degree, and formational elements of the program are made available to students.

E.4   Admission and resource requirements

E.4.1   Admission

E.4.1.1   Admission to any of these degree programs requires a baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or holding membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada, or the educational equivalent. Students should have the interests, aptitudes, and personal qualities necessary for the particular application of the degree they are seeking.

E.4.1.2   Admission to these degrees should be offered to students whose background and academic records indicate the ability to engage in graduate-level study for academic pursuits or personal development.

E.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

E.4.2.1   In general, adequate faculty, library resources, and support services shall be available to sustain students in these programs. Where concentrations are offered in specific disciplines, more than one faculty member shall teach in the discipline, and special attention must be given to the faculty and library resources in those areas.

E.4.2.2   Students should be provided with guidance and support for the particular vocational decisions related to the purposes of their programs.

E.5   Educational evaluation

E.5.1   The institution offering the degree shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the various goals of the degree program.

E.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

STANDARDS

Advanced Programs Oriented Toward Ministerial Leadership

F   Doctor of Ministry (DMin)

F.1   Purpose of the degree

F.1.0   The purpose of the Doctor of Ministry degree is to enhance the practice of ministry for persons who hold the MDiv degree and have engaged in ministerial leadership.

F.2   Primary goals of the program

F.2.1   The goals an institution adopts for the DMin should include an advanced understanding of the nature and purposes of ministry, enhanced competencies in pastoral analysis and ministerial skills, the integration of these dimensions into the theologically reflective practice of ministry, new knowledge about the practice of ministry, and continued growth in spiritual maturity.

F.2.2   Programs may be designed to advance the general practice of ministry in its many forms or to advance expertise in a specialized area of ministerial practice (e.g., pastoral care, preaching, missions).

F.3   Program content, location, and duration

F.3.1   Content

F.3.1.1   DMin programs shall provide advanced-level study of the comprehensive range of theological disciplines that provides for

F.3.1.1.1   an advanced understanding and integration of ministry in relation to the various theological disciplines;

F.3.1.1.2   the formulation of a comprehensive and critical understanding of ministry in which theory and practice interactively inform and enhance each other;

F.3.1.1.3   the development and acquisition of skills and competencies, including methods of pastoral research, that are required for pastoral leadership at its most mature and effective level; and

F.3.1.1.4   a contribution to the understanding and practice of ministry through the completion of a doctoral-level project/thesis.

F.3.1.2   The DMin program shall provide for varied kinds of learning, including

F.3.1.2.1   peer learning and evaluation as well as self-directed learning experiences;

F.3.1.2.2   significant integrative and interdisciplinary activities involving the various theological disciplines and careful use of the student's experience and ministerial context as a learning environment;

F.3.1.2.3   various opportunities for learning and using the disciplines and skills necessary for the DMin project including sustained opportunities for study and research on the campus of the institution offering the degree; and

F.3.1.2.4   opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.

F.3.1.3   The program shall include the design and completion of a written doctoral-level project that addresses both the nature and the practice of minis-

try. The project should be of sufficient quality that it contributes to the practice of ministry as judged by professional standards and has the potential for application in other contexts of ministry.

> F.3.1.3.1   The ministry project should demonstrate the candidate's ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, organize an effective research model, use appropriate resources, and evaluate the results, and should reflect the candidate's depth of theological insight in relation to ministry.

> F.3.1.3.2   Upon completion of the doctoral project, there shall be an oral presentation and evaluation. The completed written project, with any supplemental material, should be accessioned in the institution's library.

F.3.2   Location

F.3.2.1   The program shall provide for substantial periods of interaction on a campus of the member institution to ensure

> F.3.2.1.1   sufficient opportunity for disciplined reflection on one's experience and needs for educational growth;

> F.3.2.1.2   sustained involvement with regular full-time faculty and appropriate adjunct faculty;

> F.3.2.1.3   extended involvement in peer learning; and

> F.3.2.1.4   access to the resources of the institution, such as the library and academic and professional advising.

F.3.2.2   Some DMin course work may occur away from the main campus of the institution, and the program should make effective educational use of the candidate's ministerial context.

F.3.3   Duration

F.3.3.0   The DMin program shall require the equivalent of one full year of academic study and, in addition, the completion of the project. Normally, the degree shall require not less than three nor more than six years to complete, although the Commission on Accrediting may approve alternative degree designs.

F.4   Admission and resource requirements

F.4.1   Admission

F.4.1.1   Admission to the DMin program requires the possession of a board-approved MDiv degree or its educational equivalent. Ministerial experience is not considered the equivalent of or a substitute for the MDiv degree.

F.4.1.2   Because the achievement of a new level of competence in the practice of ministry is a program goal, requirements for admission also include at least three years of experience in ministry subsequent to the first graduate theological degree and evidence of capacity for an advanced level of competence and reflection. As many as 10 percent of the students in the DMin degree program may be admitted without the requisite three years of ministry experience provided that the institution has an objective means for determining that these persons have the capacity for the level of competence and reflection appropriate for advanced, professional ministerial studies. The admission of such

applicants should be restricted to persons with ministry experience that has prepared them for theological study at the advanced level.

F.4.1.3   If a school offers specialized DMin programs, it should set appropriate standards for admission to such programs.

F.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

F.4.2.0   In addition to a community of peer learners that is adequate both in number and quality for advanced study, the degree requires particular faculty, library, and academic support resources.

F.4.2.1   Schools shall have faculty and other instructional personnel in adequate numbers to staff the program and with the competencies required for the specific goals of the general or specialized programs.

F.4.2.1.1   Program administrative procedures should include faculty in determining the program goals, provide for the evaluation of all participating faculty, and make available opportunities for faculty development in relation to the DMin program.

F.4.2.1.2   Teaching responsibility in the DMin program for regular faculty should be assigned in a manner comparable to that for other degree programs in that institution.

F.4.2.1.3   When needed competencies are not available in the regular faculty, adjunct faculty shall be employed. Whenever adjunct faculty, qualified mentors, or other personnel are employed, they shall receive appropriate orientation to the purposes and expectations of the DMin program, and their roles shall be exercised in full collaboration with regular faculty.

F.4.2.1.4   It is expected that faculty in the DMin program shall be committed to structuring learning experiences that are oriented to the professional practice of ministry. Whenever needed, schools shall have effective procedures of faculty development to achieve the particular competencies required for teaching in this program.

F.4.2.2   Library resources and services shall be of sufficient kind and substance to support the DMin program and its goals. This will include adequate existing collections, appropriate collection development, and adequate services and staffing.

F.4.2.3   The regular academic support services and resources of the school (e.g., recruitment, admissions, academic records, academic advisement, faculty consultation and evaluation) shall be available for the DMin program and its students.

F.5   Educational evaluation

F.5.1   Institutions offering the DMin degree shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the goals of the degree program.

F.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

G   Doctor of Educational Ministry (DEdMin)

G.1   Purpose of the degree

G.1.0   The purpose of the Doctor of Educational Ministry degree is to enhance the practice of and theological reflection on educational ministry for persons who hold the first professional degree in religious education and have engaged in educational ministry leadership.

G.2   Primary goals of the program

G.2.0   The goals an institution adopts for this degree should include an advanced under-standing of the nature and purposes of educational ministry, enhanced capacity to reflect theo-logically on issues and practices related to educational ministry, acquisition and refinement of skills and competencies for more effective ministry, an understanding of emerging models in educational ministry and ability critically to evaluate those models, and continued growth in spiritual maturity.

G.3   Program content, location, and duration

G.3.1   Content

G.3.1.1   The Doctor of Educational Ministry program shall provide advanced-level study of the theological, educational, and administrative disciplines in-cluding the following:

G.3.1.1.1   an advanced and critical study of Christian formation from theological and historical perspectives as well as behavioral and social science perspectives;

G.3.1.1.2   an advanced and critical study of organizational and lead-ership development, and the social contexts for ministry;

G.3.1.1.3   an advanced and critical study of educational theory and practice as it relates to congregational and other ministry contexts; and

G.3.1.1.4   the development of skills and competencies necessary for research, planning, and evaluation of the practice of educational min-istry in congregations or other settings.

G.3.1.2 The program shall provide a variety of learning opportunities, includ-ing the following:

G.3.1.2.1   peer learning and evaluation as well as self-directed learn-ing experiences;

G.3.1.2.2   significant interdisciplinary learning experiences that pro-vide integration of theological understanding and ministerial practice, require thoughtful use of the student's ministerial context as a learning environment, and cultivate reflective practice of educational ministry;

G.3.1.2.3   opportunities for personal and spiritual growth; and

G.3.1.2.4   opportunities to learn how to engage in educational min-istry in culturally and racially diverse contexts.

G.3.1.3 The program shall include the design and completion of a doctoral-level project that addresses the nature and practice of educational ministry. The project should be of sufficient quality that it contributes to both the student's and the profession's understanding of the practice of educational ministry.

G.3.1.3.1   The ministry project should demonstrate the candidate's ability, under supervision, to identify an educational ministry need, organize a model of ministry that addresses that need, use appropriate resources in the implementation of the model of ministry, and evaluate the results.

G.3.1.3.2   The ministry project should be documented in a comprehensive, written, doctoral-level report.

G.3.1.3.3   The school shall require a concluding oral exam, in which the candidate demonstrates an advanced capacity to reflect theologically on the practice of educational ministry, to identify critical issues in the context of the ministry project, and to think constructively and imaginatively about the educational and administrative aspects of congregational life and other contexts of educational ministry practice.

G.3.2   Location

G.3.2.1   The program shall provide for substantial periods of interaction on the main campus of the school offering the degree to ensure disciplined reflection on the student's ministry experience, sustained involvement with faculty and other students in the program, and access to the broader educational resources of the institution.

G.3.2.2   Some educational experiences may be structured away from the campus, but such experiences should be justifiable in terms of the educational benefit they provide to this overall program of specialized study.

G.3.3   Duration

G.3.3.0   The degree program shall require the equivalent of at least two full years (four semesters or six quarters) of academic course work and, in addition, the completion of the doctoral project. Normally, the degree should take not fewer than four years nor more than six years to complete.

G.4   Admission and resource requirements

G.4.1   Admission

G.4.1.1   Admission to the degree program requires the possession of a board-approved first professional degree in educational ministry (i.e., MRE, MA in CE). Ministerial experience cannot be considered an alternative to or a substitute for the professional master's degree in educational ministry, nor can other master's degrees in education that do not have a comprehensive exposure to the theological disciplines. Applicants who hold the Master of Divinity (or its equivalent) with appropriate course work may be considered eligible for advanced standing.

G.4.1.2   Because the achievement of a new level of competence in educational ministry practice is a goal of the program, requirements for admission also include at least three years of experience in ministry subsequent to the completion of the first professional degree in religious education or educational ministry. As many as 10 percent of the students in the DEdMin degree program may be admitted without the requisite three years of educational ministry experience provided that the institution has an objective means for determining that these persons have the capacity for the level of competence and reflection appropriate for advanced, professional educational ministry studies. The admission of such applicants should be restricted to persons with educational ministry experience that has prepared them for theological study at the advanced level.

G.4.1.3   Applicants for admission shall be required to demonstrate ability to engage in the practices of educational ministry, superior academic aptitude, and capacity both to contribute to the program and to benefit by participation in it.

G.4.1.4   Applicants should be *employed by or hold an official position in* educational ministry throughout the duration of their enrollment in the degree program.

G.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

G.4.2.0   The program shall have a community of peer learners that is adequate in number and quality for advanced study, a faculty with specialties in educational and theological disciplines, library holdings that reflect a breadth of bibliographic resources, and doctorally trained persons who can serve as mentors and supervisors.

G.4.2.1   Schools offering this degree program shall have faculty with expertise in the range of educational specialties including theological, historical, and philosophical foundations; behavioral science and social sciences; administrative and organizational theory and practice; and the theological disciplines.

G.4.2.2   The faculty should be involved in determining program goals, implementation of the program, and evaluation of the educational effectiveness of the program.

G.4.2.3   The program requires the range of specialty disciplines to be provided by regular faculty who are assigned to teaching and advising duties in this program in a manner comparable to that for other degree programs in the institution. When adjunct faculty are employed, they shall receive appropriate orientation to the purposes and educational goals of the degree program and shall exercise their roles in full collaboration with regular faculty.

G.4.2.4   Library collections shall provide substantial breadth and depth in the various disciplines related to education and administration. The library shall also demonstrate access to electronic databases and periodicals most useful in educational and ministry research. If portions of the program are to be delivered away from the main campus, the library shall have patterns of operation that ensure access both to data about the collection and to items in the collection.

G.4.2.5   Persons who serve in mentor, field supervision, or adjunctive faculty roles shall be doctorally trained in education, ministry, or theological studies.

G.4.2.6   The regular academic support services and resources of the school (e.g., recruitment, admissions, academic records, academic advisement, etc.) shall be available for this program and its students.

G.5   Educational evaluation

G.5.1   Institutions offering the Doctor of Educational Ministry degree shall be able to demonstrate the extent to which students have met the goals of the degree program.

G.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

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H   Doctor of Education (EdD)

H.1   Purpose of the degree

H.1.0   The purpose of the Doctor of Education degree is to equip persons for denominational or interdenominational leadership positions in the field of religious education, and for teaching and research.

H.2   Primary goals of the program

H.2.0   The goals an institution adopts for this program should include mastery of educational disciplines, graduate-level understanding of theological disciplines, and capacity to engage in administration, teaching, and research.

H.3   Program content, duration, and location

H.3.1   Content

H.3.1.1 The program shall provide for advanced study in several areas, including theological disciplines; behavioral sciences (e.g., in human development, learning theory, etc.); the social sciences (e.g., regarding culture and context in which religious communities function, social change, etc.); philosophy and education; and measurement and evaluation.

H.3.1.2 The program shall include a culminating dissertation, written project, or report of field research reflecting a high quality of research skill applied to some problem or area of religious education.

H.3.1.3 The program shall require demonstrated competence in modern languages, statistics, or other research tools determined by the student's research or professional needs.

H.3.2   Duration

H.3.2.0 The program normally requires the equivalent of two years of full-time academic study, plus the time needed to complete a doctoral thesis or dissertation.

H.3.3   Location

H.3.3.0 Courses, seminars, and colloquia for the degree shall be completed on the main campus of the institution offering the degree. If course work completed at other institutions is to be accepted for credit in a board-approved doctoral program, that work shall have been eligible for credit in the doctoral programs offered by the institution at which it was completed.

H.4   Admission and resource requirements

H.4.1   Admission

H.4.1.1 Admission should be based upon the possession of a board-approved MA/MRE degree or its educational equivalent.

H.4.1.2 Applicants must also demonstrate promise of contribution to the educational leadership in churches and denominations.

H.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

H.4.2.1 There shall be faculty members who are specialists in the field of religious education, including a sufficient number in the cognate theological disciplines that are integral to the EdD program. Faculty shall have proven

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competence in teaching and research, with established reputations for scholarship. They should have published the results of their own scholarly work and be currently engaged in productive research.

H.4.2.2 The program should have ready access to sufficient material in religious education, education, related behavioral and social sciences, and the theological disciplines to enable it to achieve its goals and objectives. It should also include or have ready access to educational technologies, educational laboratories, clinical training, and other learning media as required to accomplish its objectives.

H.5   Educational evaluation

H.5.1   The institution shall be able to demonstrate that students completing the EdD have a comprehensive and critical understanding of the educational and theological disciplines, the competence to conduct original research that can contribute to their field, the capacity to teach with skill, and potential to provide leadership for education and ministry.

H.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

I   Doctor of Missiology (DMiss)

I.1   Purpose of the degree

I.1.0   The primary purposes of the Doctor of Missiology (DMiss) include preparing persons for denominational or interdenominational leadership roles in cross-cultural ministries; educating persons with specialized expertise in missiology and its cognate disciplines; and training persons for research and teaching in these disciplines.

I.2   Primary goals of the program

I.2.0   The goals an institution adopts for this program should include mastery of the missiological and cognate disciplines, an advanced understanding of theological disciplines and their relationship to missiology, ability to provide leadership in cross-cultural ministries, and the capacity to engage in research and teaching.

I.3   Program content, location, and duration

I.3.1   Content

I.3.1.1   The program shall provide for advanced study in several discipline areas, including

I.3.1.1.1   the appropriate theological disciplines that undergird doctoral-level study of ministry across sociocultural boundaries;

I.3.1.1.2   the social science disciplines (anthropology, cross-cultural studies, contextual studies) needed for cross-cultural ministry both in North America and around the world; and

I.3.1.1.3   appropriate area studies (culture, history, context, current events in specified areas of the world) and study of world religions.

I.3.1.2   Language requirements will ordinarily include at least one language other than English and such other languages, statistics, or social research methods as are desirable for a student's research area.

I.3.1.3   The program shall include the completion of a culminating dissertation, research project, or report of field research that demonstrates a high level of research skill applied to a problem in the field.

I.3.2   Location

I.3.2.1   Courses, seminars, and colloquia for the degree shall be completed on the main campus of the institution offering the degree. If course work completed at other institutions is to be accepted for credit in a board-approved doctoral program, that work shall have been eligible for credit in the doctoral programs offered by the institution at which it was completed.

I.3.2.2   Because of the potential field work components in some DMiss degrees, it may be necessary to complete some work away from the main campus of the institution offering the degree.

I.3.3   Duration

I.3.3.0   The program normally requires the equivalent of two years of full-time study plus sufficient time to complete the culminating dissertation research project, or field research report.

I.4   Admission and resource requirements

I.4.1   Admission

I.4.1.1   Admission to the DMiss shall be based on the possession of a board-approved MDiv or its educational equivalent, or a master's degree in an appropriate theological or missiological discipline.

I.4.1.2   Applicants should have at least two years of appropriate field experience in cross-cultural ministry.

I.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

I.4.2.1   Institutions offering this degree program should have a core of faculty members with cross-cultural experience who are specialists in missiology, as well as a sufficient number of faculty with expertise in the cognate disciplines that are integral to the DMiss program, such as sociology and anthropology. Faculty shall have proven competence in teaching and research, with a record of publication, and be currently involved in research.

I.4.2.2   There shall be ready access to sufficient library resources in missiology and related disciplines to enable the program to achieve its stated goals at the professional doctoral level.

I.5   Educational evaluation

I.5.1   The institution shall be able to demonstrate that students completing the DMiss have a comprehensive and critical understanding of the disciplines of their doctoral study, the competence to conduct research that can contribute to their fields, and the capacity to teach with skill and to provide leadership in cross-cultural ministry.

I.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

J Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA)
Doctor of Church Music (DCM)
Doctor of Sacred Music (SMD)

J.1 Purpose of the degree

J.1.0 The purpose of these degrees is to equip persons for teaching, research, and leadership in church and sacred music.

J.2 Primary goals of the program

J.2.0 The goals an institution adopts for these programs should include mastery of the various disciplines included in the study of music, including the liturgical and historical repertory of church music; competence in a performance area; and capacity to engage in research and teaching.

J.3 Program content, duration, and location

J.3.1 Content

J.3.1.1 The program shall provide for advanced study in several areas, including liturgy, hymnology, theory, musicology, composition, and conducting.

J.3.1.2 The program shall provide for the study of foreign languages as appropriate for advanced scholarly work in music.

J.3.1.3 The program shall contain a major emphasis on musical performance.

J.3.1.4 The program shall include some comprehensive assessment of doctoral-level knowledge of the course of studies, and a culminating dissertation, reflecting a high quality of research skill.

J.3.2 Duration

J.3.2.0 The program requires the equivalent of three years of full-time study beyond the MCM/MSM.

J.3.3 Location

J.3.3.0 Courses, seminars, and colloquia for the degree shall be completed on the main campus of the institution offering the degree. If course work completed at other institutions is to be accepted for credit in a board-approved doctoral program, that work shall have been eligible for credit in the doctoral programs offered by the institution at which it was completed.

J.4 Admission and resource requirements

J.4.1 Admission

J.4.1.1 Admission should be based on (a) completion of an NASM/board-approved master's degree program, or (b) demonstration that the candidate has the competencies provided by the MCM/MSM degree in church music as prescribed by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), or (c) an acceptable plan for completing these requirements in the course of study for the doctorate if the student has not met them through other prerequisites.

J.4.1.2 Admission should be based on appropriate performance and academic ability as well as the potential to contribute to leadership in church music.

J.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

J.4.2.1   There shall be faculty members who are specialists in the field of church music, including a sufficient number to instruct students at the doctoral level in the variety of relevant disciplines. Faculty shall have proven competence in teaching and research, with established reputations for scholarship. It is desirable that they should have published the results of their own scholarly work and be currently engaged in productive research.

J.4.2.2   The program shall provide ready access to resources for the development of performance skills and opportunities to lead ensembles.

J.4.2.3   The program shall have adequate library resources for research in the fields of music, especially church music, including access to scores, musical texts, recordings, books, and other media.

J.4.2.4   The board strongly recommends that any institution offering the research/performance doctorate in music have programmatic accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music.

J.5   Educational evaluation

J.5.1   The institution shall be able to demonstrate that students completing these degrees have a comprehensive and critical understanding of the music disciplines, advanced performance skills, the competence to conduct original research that can contribute to their field, and the capacity to teach with skill.

J.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

STANDARDS

Advanced Programs Primarily Oriented Toward Theological Research and Teaching

K   Master of Theology (ThM)
Master of Sacred Theology (STM)

K.1   Purpose of the degree

K.1.1   The purpose of this degree is to provide a fuller mastery of one area or discipline of theological study than is normally provided at the MDiv level. The program may serve a variety of aims: further graduate study at the doctoral level, preparation for some forms of teaching, the scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice, or disciplined reflection on a specialized function in ministry.

K.1.2   The nomenclature, Master of Theology (designated as MTh), is also used in some Canadian institutions for programs of continued study of theological disciplines or specialization in an area of ministry practice.

K.2   Primary goals of the program

K.2.0   The primary goals an institution adopts for these programs should include an advanced understanding of a focused area or discipline in the context of general theological study, capacity to use research methods and resources in the discipline, and the ability to formulate productive questions.

K.3   Program content, location, and duration

K.3.1   Content

K.3.1.1   The program of study shall consist of regular course work and forms of independent study and research under faculty supervision.

K.3.1.2   To encourage an appropriate level of academic engagement, at least one-half of the work required shall be in courses designed for students in advanced programs.

K.3.1.3   Requirements for language study and other disciplines necessary for research should be appropriate to the field of specialization, typically one ancient language and one modern language.

K.3.1.4   Degree requirements should ordinarily include a thesis demonstrating scholarly competence and an examination covering the area of the thesis and major specialization.

K.3.2   Location

K.3.2.0   The program shall be undertaken chiefly in courses offered on the institution's main campus, and there should be a sufficient number of students to provide a peer community for mutual criticism and stimulus.

K.3.3   Duration

K.3.3.0   The program shall require one year of full-time study or its equivalent.

K.4   Admission and resource requirements

K.4.1   Admission

K.4.1.0   Admission to the program shall require the MDiv, or first graduate theological degree providing equivalent theological background, or its educational equivalent, and evidence of aptitude for advanced theological study.

K.4.2   Distinctive Resources Needed

K.4.2.1   Faculty teaching in this program should be actively engaged in research that provides effective models of theological research for students and should be of sufficient number to provide a variety of scholarly perspectives.

K.4.2.2   The library shall have collections of sufficient quality to support research in the disciplines in which the ThM/STM is offered as well as appropriate databases and other scholarly resources.

K.5   Educational evaluation

K.5.1   The institution shall be able to demonstrate that students completing the degree have a comprehensive and critical understanding of the disciplines that have been the focus of their study and appropriate scholarly research skills.

K.5.2   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

L   Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
**   Doctor of Theology (ThD)**

L.1   Purpose of the degree

L.1.0   These degree programs are intended primarily to equip persons for vocations of teaching and research in theological schools, colleges, and universities, or for the scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice. The same overall aims and standards apply to both the PhD and the ThD; the nomenclature differs according to the history of its use in a particular school.

L.2   Primary goals of the program

L.2.1   The goals an institution adopts for the research doctorate should include a comprehensive knowledge of the disciplines of study; competence to engage in original research and writing that advance theological understanding for the sake of church, academy, and society; and a breadth of knowledge in theological and religious studies and in other academic disciplines.

L.2.2   The program should also enable the student to develop a sense of and a commitment to the vocation of theological scholarship in its dimensions of teaching, learning, and research.

L.3   Program content, location, and duration

L.3.1   Content

L.3.1.1   The program of study shall either presuppose or provide a grounding in the content and methods of theological studies in general, as a basis for the development of specialized competence.

L.3.1.2   The program shall facilitate an orderly progression of studies toward its goals within a specified length of time, allowing students sufficient flexibility to meet professional interests and special needs.

L.3.1.3   The curriculum shall include training in the research methods and procedures relevant to the area of specialization. Attention should be given not only to commonly accepted approaches but also to newly emerging possibilities for framing inquiries and organizing and examining data.

L.3.1.4   The program shall assist students to grow in those qualities essential for practice of scholarly ministry in theological environments.

L.3.1.5   Opportunities shall be provided for instruction in teaching methods and for the development of competence in teaching.

L.3.1.6   The program shall include course work, comprehensive examinations, and the writing of a doctoral dissertation.

L.3.1.6.1   The course work shall include a majority of courses intended for doctoral students or students in other advanced programs oriented to theological research and teaching.

L.3.1.6.2   During both their course of studies and their dissertation research, students shall be required to use competently the language(s) in which relevant primary texts are written, as well as those in which there is important secondary material. Normally, this would include at least one ancient and one or more modern languages. Students engaged in theological disciplines that use behavioral or social scientific research methods shall be required to demonstrate competence in these research methods.

L.3.1.6.3   Students are expected to devote the kind of attention to their doctoral programs that ensures opportunity for intensive study, research, and interaction with other students.

L.3.2   Location

L.3.2.0   Courses, seminars, and colloquia for research doctoral degrees shall normally be completed on the main campus of the institution offering the degree. If course work completed at other institutions is to be accepted for credit in a board-approved research doctoral program, that work shall have been eligible for credit in the research doctoral programs offered by the institution at which it was completed or other advanced programs primarily oriented toward theological research and teaching.

L.3.3   Duration

L.3.3.0   The total time devoted to the program shall include the equivalent of two years of full-time course work and sufficient time to prepare for comprehensive examinations, to acquire teaching skills, and to conduct the research for and writing of a doctoral dissertation.

L.4   Admission and resource requirements

L.4.1   Admission

L.4.1.1   Admission to the program shall require the MDiv, or first graduate theological degree providing equivalent theological background, or its educational equivalent.

L.4.1.2   Admission should be selective and offered only to students who have demonstrated the intellectual ability, the preparation, and the motivation for a scholarly vocation.

L.4.1.3   Because of the importance to scholarly growth of a sustained period of study in residence, admission should not be offered unless financial resources and arrangements are available to enable students to engage in full-time study for at least a significant part of their program.

L.4.1.4   The number of students admitted in each field should be sufficient to provide a community of peers but should not be so large as to imperil the quality of instruction.

L.4.2   Distinctive resources needed

L.4.2.0   The institution shall demonstrate the availability of resources in addition to those necessary for master's-level degree programs.

L.4.2.1   The faculty shall be broadly representative of the areas or disciplines of theological inquiry, including at least two faculty specialists in each field in which doctoral students may specialize and a sufficient number in cognate fields to support the program.

L.4.2.1.1   The faculty should have been trained in a variety of graduate institutions and should include a variety of scholarly viewpoints and approaches. Working relationships with faculty in other graduate institutions, in both research and graduate instruction, should be encouraged.

L.4.2.1.2   In general, faculty members should be competent in teaching and research, with a record of contributions to their disciplines. They should have published the results of their own scholarly work and should be currently engaged in significant research.

L.4.2.1.3   Faculty members shall be willing and able to offer guidance to doctoral students throughout the course of the program, both with regard to their development as scholars (e.g., in tutorials and independent study projects and in the writing of the dissertation) and with regard to their development as teachers and prospective colleagues in the academic profession.

L.4.2.1.4   The teaching and administrative loads of graduate faculty members—both junior and senior—shall be limited to permit ample time for attending to the needs of graduate students and for faculty research. The faculty shall participate in making academic policies relevant to the program.

L.4.2.2   Freedom of inquiry is fundamentally important for research doctoral programs. The institution must assure that not only faculty but also students have freedom to conduct research in their respective disciplines and, within any formally adopted confessional commitments of the institution, the freedom to communicate the findings of their research.

L.4.2.3   The institution shall allocate sufficient financial resources to support research doctoral education.

L.4.2.4   Research doctoral programs require substantial library holdings and facilities. Provision shall be made for the development and maintenance of research-quality collections and appropriate databases in each field of doctoral studies, together with collections in closely related fields. Adequate study carrels, technological support, and acquisitions and reference staff shall be ensured.

L.4.2.5   Where the faculty of a school participates to a significant degree in a doctoral program offered under the auspices of another institution (or of another division of its own institution), the school shall account for this use of its resources.

L.5   Educational evaluation

L.5.1   The institution shall assess the quality of its research doctoral program by evaluating its staffing, requirements, and the scope of resources required in light of the range of fields in which the degree may be earned.

L.5.2   For the sake of the program as well as of the individual student, students should be carefully evaluated after a year of study so that those who do not show sufficient signs of promise can be so advised.

L.5.3   The institution shall be able to demonstrate that students completing the research doctorate have a comprehensive and critical understanding of the disciplines of their doctoral study, the competence to conduct original research that can contribute to their fields, and capacity to teach with skill and contribute to the scholarly enhancement of ministerial practice.

L.5.4   The institution shall also maintain an ongoing evaluation by which it determines the extent to which the degree program is meeting the needs of students and the institution's overall goals for the program, including measures such as the percentage of students who complete the program and the percentage of graduates who find placement appropriate to their vocational intentions.

M   **Criteria for Admission, Transfer of Credits, Shared Credit in Degree Programs, and Advanced Standing Related to Degree Programs Approved by the Board of Commissioners**

M.1   Admission

M.1.0   While each degree program a theological school offers should have particular admission requirements, all master's-level programs share the following common requirements:

> M.1.1   Students must possess a baccalaureate degree from a member institution of the Association of Universities and Colleges or an institution accredited by a United States agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or the educational equivalent of the baccalaureate degree.

> M.1.2   Educational equivalent of the baccalaureate degree shall be determined on the basis of undergraduate work commensurate in kind, quality, and amount typical of North American baccalaureate degree programs.

> M.1.3   Exceptions to the baccalaureate degree requirement are noted in the Commission standards for individual degrees.

> M.1.4   When an institution admits students to postbaccalaureate courses who lack the baccalaureate degree or its equivalent, the institution must ensure that the course has content, requirements, and student learning outcomes appropriate to postbaccalaureate education. When an institution permits undergraduate students to enroll in its postbaccalaureate courses, the institution must differentiate course requirements and student learning outcomes for postbaccalaureate or undergraduate credit.

M.2   Transfer of credits

> M.2.1   A theological school has the right and responsibility to determine if it will accept credits for work completed at other institutions toward the degrees it grants.

> M.2.2   If an institution determines that it will accept transfer credits, it should ensure that courses in which the credits were earned were eligible for graduate credit in the institution at which they were taken and, preferably, were completed at an institution accredited by a recognized accrediting body.

M.3   Shared credit in degree programs

> M.3.1   Institutions have the right to determine if credits applied toward other graduate degrees can be transferred to the institution's board-approved degree programs. If an institution determines it will accept credits applied to other graduate degree programs, not more than half of the credits required for the other degree may be transferred into a board-approved degree program, and not more than half of the credits required by a board-approved degree may be granted on the basis of transfer credits.

> M.3.2   Students may be either simultaneously or sequentially enrolled in two master's programs as long as each degree program has a clear integrity and meets the stated standards. The programs may in some instances use the same resources and be overlapping. The total time required will be determined by the demands of the two degrees combined but must conform to the stipulations on shared credit in degree programs in M.3.1 above.

M.4   Advanced standing*

M.4.1   Institutions may admit students with advanced standing, if they so choose. If they do admit students with advanced standing, they may grant such standing: (1) without credit by exempting students from some courses but not reducing the total number of academic credits required for the degree, or (2) with credit by reducing the number of hours required for the degree. The term "advanced standing," in these standards, is distinct from "transfer of credits," and refers to decisions about students' competence when no transcripts of graduate credit are presented.

M.4.2   If the institution chooses to grant advanced standing with credit, it must determine by appropriate written and/or oral assessment that students have the knowledge, competence, or skills that would normally be provided by the specific courses for which they have been admitted with advanced standing.

M.4.3   Advanced standing with credit cannot be automatically granted on the basis of ministerial or life experience or the content of undergraduate work.

M.4.4   If advanced standing is granted with credit on the basis of appropriate evaluation, not more than one-sixth of the total credits required for a degree approved by the Board of Commissioners may be granted in this way.

STANDARDS

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* These criteria on advanced standing do not limit or affect the exception on duration contained in the MA standards (Basic Programs Oriented Toward General Theological Studies).