

# **MASTER OF THEOLOGY**

## **Introduction**

The Master of Theology (ThM) program is an advanced course of studies, which builds on the first graduate-level theological degree, normally the Master of Divinity. The primary goal of the program is to provide scholarly concentration in a particular area of theology in the context of an Orthodox community. It is intended for candidates who: (a) may later pursue studies at the doctoral level; (b) seek some form of teaching in the future; (c) desire scholarly enhancement of their priestly or ministerial practice; or (d) are interested in personal theological and spiritual enrichment. While it is of particular interest to Orthodox students who have received their first graduate theological degrees from Orthodox theological schools in the United States and abroad, it welcomes all qualified applicants.

## **Admission Requirements**

Admission into the program requires the Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent, such as the Licentiate of Theology awarded to graduates of Orthodox schools of theology abroad. Applicants who hold only the Master of Theological Studies degree (MTS) or its equivalent are normally required to complete an additional four theology courses (12 credits) prior to their matriculation into the ThM program. Applicants must have demonstrated previous academic work of high quality (3.3 grade average or better) and an aptitude for critical thinking and independent study under faculty supervision. Language requirements include intermediate knowledge of New Testament or Patristic Greek, proficiency in English, and a reading knowledge of one of the following languages: French, German, Modern Greek, or Russian. All applicants must complete the Graduate Record Exam (GRE; the school code number is R-34496). Students should bear in mind that GRE scores are viable for only five years after the date the exam is taken. International applicants must show competence in English by scoring at least 550, or 80 for the computer-based testing, on the TOEFL exam (Holy Cross code number 9794).

## **Program Administration**

The ThM program is under the supervision of the faculty, which works through the ThM Committee appointed annually by the Dean. The Director of the ThM program, also appointed by the Dean, chairs the committee. The Director's duties involve providing information to applicants on all matters pertaining to the program, advising them regarding courses and registration, keeping appropriate records on behalf of the Committee, and generally overseeing the entire program. The ThM Committee deliberates on all policy and curricular changes, and recommends proposals to the faculty for final decision.

## **ThM Learning Objectives**

1. Knowledge of the area of concentration
  - Assimilate and critically analyze the data in any of these subjects by taking 6000-7000 level courses.
  - Articulate how the proposed topic relates to current scholarly discussion acquired in the 6000-7000 level courses.
  - Undertake and complete a project (ThM thesis) of specialized research within the prescribed time framework.
2. Acquisition and integration of scholarly tools and skills
  - Read ancient / modern theological texts of moderate difficulty, using the dictionary.
  - Perform thesis research and gain admittance to a doctoral program for those who want to continue their academic work.
  - Produce a bibliography in the subject of a specific area of concentration.
  - Use efficiently library and online resources in the area of research.
  - Produce standard forms of graduate-level scholarly works (e.g., seminar papers and oral presentations) consistent with the requirements of a 6000-7000 level course.

## **Degree Requirements**

The Master of Theology degree is awarded upon the successful completion of:

- 24 credits of coursework with a grade average of 3.3 or better
- A thesis of 75–100 pages in length
- One-year residency

The program is also open to qualified part-time students. However, all candidates must complete the program, including the acceptance of the thesis, within a period of up to four years.

## **Course Requirements**

ThM students normally enroll in upper-level courses (numbered 7000), whether lectures, seminars, or tutorials. All candidates will complete at least 12 credits or 4 courses at the upper level. Courses at the 6000 level may be taken according to a student's program needs and under the supervision of the Director. Candidates without a previous degree in Orthodox theology are required to complete two additional core courses, one in patristic studies and one in dogmatic theology, beyond the 24 required course credits. Students will be expected to meet all the requirements for these courses and will receive a Pass/Fail grade. A minimum of 15 credits or 5 courses must be completed at Holy Cross, while the remaining 9 credits or 3 courses may be taken through

member schools of the Boston Theological Institute (BTI) or other accredited theological schools.

### **Concentration**

Upon enrollment in the program candidates must choose a concentration among the basic fields of theology:

- Biblical (Old and New Testaments)
- Historical (Church history and patristics)
- Systematic (dogmatics and ethics) and
- Practical (liturgics, canon law, and pastoral theology)

4 courses in any of the above fields is considered a concentration. The remaining 4 courses are to be selected from fields other than one's area of concentration.

### **International Students**

For foreign national students, immigration status is granted only for a period of two years when enrolled in the ThM degree program. No extension will be granted beyond the two-year degree program. Optional Practicum Training (OPT) is not available for ThM degree recipients.

### **Thesis Seminar**

A Thesis Seminar for all ThM candidates will be convened twice each semester. The initial meeting in the fall semester will provide an opportunity to review the program requirements and to hear progress reports from each ongoing ThM candidate. At subsequent meetings, an ongoing student will present his or her latest research for discussion. When possible, the reporting student's advisor and members of the ThM committee will be asked to attend.

### **Thesis**

The thesis will be written in the area of concentration in close collaboration with a faculty advisor chosen by the student from among the faculty teaching in that field. The student and the advisor are primarily responsible for the substance of the thesis project. The thesis, which is to be no less than 75 pages and up to 100, must demonstrate critical understanding and competent research at an advanced level. All the appropriate forms and information regarding the thesis may be obtained from the Director who oversees the whole process. Requirements include the writing of a prospectus, to be approved by the ThM Committee, defining the thesis topic, methodology, and organization. The thesis is read by the student's faculty advisor and by one other individual approved by the faculty advisor and the Director of the ThM program. The thesis must be completed within the four-year period allowed for the fulfillment of all requirements. Beyond the one-year residency, candidates must register each semester to continue in

the program and are charged a continuation fee of \$50.00 annually until the acceptance of the final version of the thesis. For a May graduation, the completed thesis is due by the March 15 to allow for reading by the other individuals chosen by the Director in consultation with the advisor, and for subsequent revisions by the student. The final version of the thesis is due by April 30, at which time the advisor and the second reader will each submit a brief evaluation and a grade to the Director.

**Financial Aid**

Candidates are eligible for financial assistance. Students seeking financial aid should apply through the Student Financial Aid Office.