2005


Western Theological Seminary

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mission statement

It is the purpose of Western Theological Seminary to prepare Christians called by God to lead the church in mission. Western equips men and women for Christ-centered, biblically based, theologically integrated, culturally sensitive, mission-oriented Christian leadership.

about the cover...

Kelly Brouwer ’05 painted “Please Make Waves” as an alternative project to writing a paper for CM528 Ministry as Grief Work, taught by Dr. Jaco Hamman. The art represents her pastoral care journey at Western Theological Seminary.

“For so long in my life, I ignored my pain and that of others. There came a time when I could no longer ignore what I saw and what I experienced anymore. So, I made waves. I called pain, pain. And I swam in that pain...never drowning (although I wasn’t always sure), but swimming with my faith as my buoy.

I am still swimming, and I desire to help others do the same. I am no longer in a barren, dry, numb desert. I am making waves in my own life. Waves can be scary, no doubt about that, but we aren’t meant for dry land all the time. It’s not reality there.

So, Please Make Waves.”
Message from the President

Welcome! Western Theological Seminary is dedicated to educating men and women like you to serve the world through the church of Jesus Christ.

We are passionate about preparing people who will preach, teach, counsel, pursue justice, help others in need, and evangelize.

The seminary welcomes students from many denominations and benefits from the perspectives they bring. Students with a wide variety of vocational goals come here to deepen their Christian witness.

As you consider God’s call on your life, I urge you to investigate Western Theological Seminary as a place of nurture, challenge, and preparation for your leadership in the 21st century.

Rev. Dr. Dennis Voskuil
This is an urgent time for the church of Jesus Christ. The challenges of this new century are making themselves felt. Western students will graduate to serve the church in the traditional roles of pastor and teacher, but also as counselors, scholars, chaplains, and in a host of ministries that would have been unimaginable a generation ago. Western Theological Seminary is dedicated to providing them with the finest possible preparation for ministry in the twenty-first century.
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Established by the Reformed Church in America in 1866, Western Theological Seminary is an evangelical and ecumenical community of faith and learning in the Reformed tradition that serves the church of Jesus Christ.

In covenant with the Reformed Church in America, Western equips men and women for Christ-centered, biblically based, theologically integrated, culturally sensitive, mission-oriented Christian leadership.

Western welcomes students from the Reformed Church in America and many other Christian traditions. We are a community of faith, teaching, and learning engaged in theological scholarship, offering graduate degree programs as well as continuing education for clergy and lay leaders in the church.

Professional Ministry
Focusing on applied ministry is central to our mission. Our professional degree programs are structured within the context of on-site learning and personal growth called Formation for Ministry. Students place their classroom learning in context as they work in a variety of short- and long-term ministry placements. In addition, faculty members draw upon their own practical ministry experiences to illustrate what they are teaching.

Theological Study
Ministry is about more than skills, and seminary is more than job training. It’s a place for concentrated biblical and theological study. Without such careful study, ministry too easily falls into technique, manipulation, shallowness, or faddishness rather than exhibiting the vitality of constantly deepening the church’s engagement with the Word of God. That’s why the curriculum is centered on the study of the Bible—its languages, history, themes, and interpretation. Built around that center are studies in the history and traditions of the church, in theology, and in the foundations and practice of ministry—ethics, pastoral care and counseling, preaching, and more.

Western’s faculty participates actively in the larger community of scholars. Professors hold memberships in the professional organizations of their fields and regularly publish books and articles. They provide leadership in the continuing search for greater understanding of the church’s faith and mission.

With a faculty/student ratio of approximately one to twelve, Western provides the intimate atmosphere that best fosters learning. Professors are easily available for formal and informal academic support and often serve outside the classroom as valued mentors and spiritual guides.

Western students build a foundation in biblical studies, theology, history, and the traditions of the church. This foundation enables them to minister out of the deep heritage of the church’s accumulated wisdom and continuing faith. They
are well prepared for further academic study, if they so choose. They are given tools not only to understand the faith and wisdom of the past but to seek out new understandings that the world and the church need today.

**Community**
Western is a community of students, teachers, staff, visitors, and friends united by a common task and a common faith. The chapel has often been called the heart of Western Seminary, and with good reason. Daily worship and weekly communion provide the context for taking up daily challenges, celebrating milestones and victories, mourning losses, and meeting each other before God. Here we remember who we are.

Access is direct and open to professors, staff members, and other students, and all are invited to mingle daily at a morning break in the Commons to share news and friendship.

Between classes students interact, relax, or study in the sunny atrium in the center of the seminary. With The Sacred Page book store/coffee shop, wireless internet access, and comfortable gathering places, the Burggraaff Atrium is the “village square” at the center of the school. Students also meet in the student lounge, complete with computer workstations, a small kitchen, and more gathering areas.

Student housing, too, fosters a sense of community. Townhouse apartments are arranged around a central green where students find pleasant living spaces able to accommodate families as well as single people. Student-led social events provide opportunities to get to know other students, faculty, and staff. Bible study groups encourage spiritual growth.

In all these ways Western seeks to build a community to which all can belong.

**Outreach**
Western is part of communities beyond its walls. Recognizing our participation in the larger church, the seminary provides continuing education for congregational leaders, both lay and ordained; sends representatives to various assemblies, boards, and commissions of the Reformed church; and participates in ecumenical associations. Western has launched a distance learning Master of Divinity program to draw into our life and mission those who long to be prepared for ministry but who are unable to move to Holland, MI for our residential program. The institution also encourages the active involvement of students, faculty, and staff in their home congregations.

In an effort to serve our host community and beyond, Western houses a midday hot meal program called the “Community Kitchen” run by a local relief agency and staffed by volunteers. The seminary also operates a nonprofit store called “The Bridge” in Holland’s downtown shopping area. The store makes the work of artisans around the world available to shoppers, while promoting self-help and fair profits for the artisans.
All of Western’s degree programs seek to impart a theological wisdom grounded in scripture, informed by the history of the church and its doctrines, and engaged with our contemporary world. The professional programs provide opportunities to deepen this wisdom through the actual practice of ministry.
degree programs

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Master of Divinity

The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) is the degree program that usually leads to the ordained ministry. It requires a minimum of three years of full-time study to complete the degree. The applicant usually must have completed a Bachelor of Arts degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university. Western currently offers this degree on-campus in Holland, Michigan, and is developing the same degree program in a distance learning format.

Requirements for the Degree
The Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree requires 96 semester credit hours. All M.Div. candidates are required to take introductory courses in the Biblical, Theological, and Christian Ministry Fields, as well as Formation for Ministry courses. In addition to the required courses, students choose elective courses in areas of their own interest.

M.Div. orientation is held each year during the week prior to the beginning of the first semester and is a required component of the program. During orientation, students are introduced to the M.Div. curriculum and receive information crucial to seminary life. They are assigned to peer groups and ministry settings (also known as their “Teaching Church”). Through worship, conversation, and spiritual autobiography, they begin to form a community of faith and learning. Early in their first year they also undergo evaluation of their capacities and competencies to provide a baseline for future growth and to help each person set individual learning goals.

Suggested Guide for College Students
College students interested in pursuing theological education should seek a balanced undergraduate liberal arts program. The liberal arts equip the college graduate with foundational knowledge for theological studies. We suggest:

English—literature, composition, and related studies. At least 4 semesters.
Speech—at least 2 semesters.
History—ancient, modern European, and American. At least 3 semesters.
Philosophy—orientation in history, content, and method. At least 3 semesters.
Social Science—psychology, sociology, or cultural anthropology, economics, political science, and education. At least 6 semesters, including a minimum of 2 semesters of psychology.
Foreign languages—4 semesters of Greek, including two of New Testament Greek. A modern European language such as German or French is also desirable.
Religion—several courses in the study of Christian and non-Christian religions.

Minimum Undergraduate Requirements
The admissions committee is guided by the following criteria in determining the minimum liberal arts content of a bachelor’s degree or its equivalent for an applicant to Western’s M.Div. program:

- two semesters of world civilization or world history;
- one semester of English composition or two advanced English courses with substantial writing requirements;
- one semester of English literature;
- one semester of philosophy;
- one semester of psychology;
- one semester of sociology or cultural anthropology.
Procedures Leading to Ordination

Each denomination has its own procedures for enrolling, supervising, and examining candidates for ordination. M.Div. candidates should check with their pastors or denominational officers regarding specific instructions for ordination in their particular denominations.

An M.Div. candidate seeking ordination in the Reformed Church in America must apply to his or her classis through the home church consistory for a Certificate of Fitness for Ministry. This certificate and the M.Div. degree are required for ordination in the Reformed Church in America. Western’s faculty reviews M.Div. candidates annually and recommends to the board of trustees that it grants the certificate to those candidates who are deemed “fit for ministry.”

Western Seminary works in a close partnership with other denominational boards and candidate committees responsible for the formation of men and women for ordained ministry.

Formation for Ministry

Formation for Ministry is the experiential education dimension of the M.Div. program. Under the guidance of a mentor, students engage in actual ministry practice. This practice of ministry in ministry settings provides an unparalleled opportunity to integrate personal faith, practice, and theory while growing into one’s ministerial identity. Components for the FM115 and FM125 formation for ministry experiences include: a supervised ministry setting, mentor, site team, and a peer group guided by a ministry professional.

Complementary coursework includes the first year Christian formation retreat and the second year intercultural immersion trip, and integrative seminars throughout the three year M.Div. program.

Formation for Ministry Requirements

Students register separately for four 100-hour part-time units and one 400-hour full-time unit of a supervised in-ministry experience. Students select five ministry categories from the list below and complete a Learning Covenant for each of the categories selected.

- The ministry of education
- The ministry of pastoral care
- The ministry of preaching & worship
- The ministry of leadership & administration
- The ministry of social justice
- The ministry of evangelism
- The ministry of hospitality

A Teaching Church mentor collaborates with the student in identifying appropriate learning goals and strategies. The student and mentor design the Learning Covenants to explore the five chosen ministry categories in an order and manner that fit the context and learning needs of the student. The order in which they are pursued does not need to correspond to the order of courses delivered in the formal curriculum.

Each Learning Covenant must be approved by the teaching church mentor and a theological field education faculty member of the seminary.

The Learning Covenants focus the learning through an action/reflection
model. Action or “doing” refers to the practice of ministry in the supervised ministry settings. Reflection comes after the action by processing feedback from professors, other students, and one’s ministry mentor. In action-reflection, action comes first and then “theory” is distilled from it through critical reflection.

Ministry Settings
Placement in a Teaching Church or other ministry setting begins after a student is accepted for admission to the M.Div. program and places a deposit to secure his or her place in the incoming class. A Teaching Church Internship application is available on the Western Theological Seminary website.

After review by a theological field education faculty member, students are given opportunities to interview with potential sites. Upon discerning a good fit, commitments are made for the upcoming year. Most students spend the first two years in the same ministry setting. These positions receive remuneration.

Examples of ministry settings include:
- Congregations
- Nursing homes
- Hospitals
- Correctional Facilities
- Parachurch ministries

Peer Groups
Peer groups, numbering about six students, meet weekly and are guided by a ministry professional. They are selected to provide varieties of background within the groups—colleges, denominations, ages, etc. Care is given to maintain the same groups when possible throughout the three years. The groups meet for personal support, reflection on ministry practice, and prayer.

Peer Group Facilitators
The ministry professionals selected to guide the peer groups bring a rich background from which students can draw. Examples of facilitator areas of ministry:
- Congregational Life and Mission
- Chaplain of elder care facility
- Minister for Prayer
- Pastoral Counselor/Spiritual Director
- Specialized Ministry
- Minister of Discipleship and Outreach
- Director of Children’s Ministries
- Preaching and Administration
- Senior Pastor
- Church Revitalization
- Adult Spiritual Formation

Intercultural Immersion Experience
In groups of 10-15 students with at least one professor as a guide, Western’s M.Div. students travel to other countries to experience the global character of the church’s witness and mission.

These two-week trips present students with problems and opportunities posed by cultural differences, secularism, social fragmentation, religious pluralism, and ecumenism. The trips are taken during the January Term for residential students and during August for distance learning students.

Trips have been made to various destinations such as Chiapas, Mexico, Borderlands (border towns between Mexico and the USA), Israel, Hungary, and Oman.

I was unprepared for the beauty of Oman. The physical beauty was only matched by the beauty of its people and their culture.

The culture is so different from my own, yet there is a common ground of respect and hope to stand on. We learned that a relationship and conversation between Christians and Muslims has been going on in Oman for over a century now. This experience will continue to inform my thought about mission and interfaith dialogue.

Andy Dragt
M.Div. student, class of 2006
Oman trip 2005
# In-Residence M.Div. Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>J-Term</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Junior Year:</strong> Formation for Church Leadership</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BF100 New Testament Greek (3)</td>
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<td>BF102 New Testament Life and Witness (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TF100 The Church’s Life and Witness (150 A.D.-1536) (3)</td>
<td>FM101 Retreat for Christian Formation (2)</td>
<td>BF101 New Testament Translation and Interpretation (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF104 Introduction to Theology and Worship (3)</td>
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<td>BF103 Old Testament Life and Witness (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM102 Seminar in Spiritual Formation (1.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>TF101 The Church’s Life and Witness (1536-present) (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>CM101 Intro to Preaching (3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CM103 Seminar in Congregational Studies (1.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Middler Year:</strong> Cultivating a Vision for Church Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>BF110 Biblical Hebrew (3)</td>
<td>FM111 Intercultural Immersion Experience (2)</td>
<td>BF111 Hebrew Translation and Interpretation (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TF111 Missional Church (3)</td>
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<td>BF114 Systematic Theology II (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TF113 Systematic Theology I (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>TF115 Introduction to Counseling and Care (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM112 Seminar on Communicating the Gospel (2)</td>
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<td>CM113 Seminar on the Pastor as Person (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1)</td>
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<td>FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective (3)</td>
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<td>Elective (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FM125 Advanced Practice of Christian Ministry (Internship) 400 hours full-time (2 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Senior Year:</strong> Acquiring Skills for Church Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>TF121 Christian Ethics (3)</td>
<td>CM121 Church Governance and Denominational Standards (2)</td>
<td>CM124 Worship (1.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM122 Empowering Christian Education (3)</td>
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<td>CM120 Leading Christian Communities (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM123 Seminar on Teaching and Learning (1.5)</td>
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<td>TF124 Credo (1.5)</td>
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<td>Upper Level Biblical Field Requirement (3)</td>
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<td>Upper level Biblical Field Requirement (3)</td>
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<td>Elective (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective (1.5)</td>
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<td>Elective (1.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FM126 Launching Your Ministry (year-long) (2 credits)</td>
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**Degree Programs**
Western Theological Seminary offers its Master of Divinity degree through a five-year format utilizing both online and face-to-face learning within each 15 week semester. This unique hybrid distance learning model offers students the opportunity to complete an M.Div. without moving to campus. Plus, the adult student has the best of online and face-to-face learning across the entire curriculum. This is not a traditional distance learning program that eliminates community. Rather, the interaction is extremely rich, and students are amazed at the exceptional community they experience.

This 96 credit hour program utilizes Western’s full faculty and offers similar curriculum as the residential Master of Divinity program. For specific curriculum details, contact the director.

The program incorporates spiritual formation retreats, peer groups facilitated by experienced mentors, supervised ministry in teaching churches, and rich community experiences through worship, community fellowship and shared meals.

The curriculum is structured into two 15-week semesters and one 9-week term. The 15-week semesters include a two-week on-campus intensive coming in the middle of the semester. Courses begin online, move to a face-to-face campus classroom in the intensive, and then conclude online. This allows for up to fifty percent of the required contact hours to be done in a face-to-face setting. The program is carefully structured and requires regular and consistent participation in order to complete the degree in five years. On-campus intensives are required to receive academic credit.

**Semester Schedule**

- Winter semester begins in November, concludes in March and includes holiday breaks and a two-week January intensive.
- Summer semester begins in late March, concludes in July and includes a one-week break and a two-week May intensive.

Students admitted into the program travel to Western Seminary’s campus for the intensives, where they interact directly with peers and faculty.

**Admissions**

Applicants are required to meet the same admissions standards as required for the in-residence program and must demonstrate a capacity for success in distance learning. Admissions are limited to one cohort group per year. Each yearly cohort group begins in the winter semester (November). Only matriculated students are eligible to enroll in distance courses.

For further questions, contact the director of admissions, Rev. Mark Poppen, at 1-800-392-8554.

**Course Design**

Western’s program is designed for asynchronous learning with an occasional real-time chat or conference call. Students work most often within the time frame of 1-2 week units. This allows a student to create his/her own individual schedule for completing assignments while keeping the whole class together within a set time frame for collaborative work, a high value in Western’s courses.
Message boards are a regular part of each course, and often students work collaboratively on course assignments. Effective communication and a commitment to collaborative learning are important for a student’s success in this type of distance program.

**On-Campus Intensives**
The distance learning office will assist with housing in the Holland area if students do not have their own arrangements. Western Seminary provides transportation from the airport and to and from housing. Breakfast is provided Monday through Saturday at the seminary, and students are expected to participate. Lodging and travel to Holland, MI are not included in the cost of the program and are the responsibility of the student.

**Technological Requirements**
Each student is required to provide his/her own computer. The required standards are on Western’s website (www.westernsem.edu). A laptop purchase plan is available for enrolled students.

During the on-campus intensive periods, some computers are available for student use in the Cook Center, the student lounge, and the distance learning lab, but the evening hours are limited. Wireless connection is available in the library and in classrooms off the Burggraaff Atrium.

**New Student Preparation**
Western seeks to ensure the best start for each new student. The process begins with a special preparation day. This event is held on-campus during the May intensive and begins with dinner Thursday evening for all current and newly admitted students. This evening is devoted to building relationships among students. Conversations focus on discovering from current students their first-hand experience in the program. Spouses are strongly encouraged to attend.

Preparation continues on Friday with a day filled with information about the program and opportunities to get to know seminary leaders and the distance learning team. The day concludes with lots of time for Q&A.

New student preparation concludes with online modules created within the program’s learning management software (ANGEL). These are designed to give students the experience needed for successful navigation and communication within an online course.

For additional program information go to Quicklinks at www.westernsem.edu.

This program began with the first student cohort group in 2003. All courses are fully accredited and the program is moving through the standard multi-year process for full approval which follows the first graduating class.
Dual Track Master of Divinity-Master of Social Work

The Dual Track Master of Divinity-Master of Social Work (M.Div.-MSW) degree is designed for students who want versatility in the disciplines of theology, social work, counseling, social justice, biblical study, and spiritual formation. Students can earn their Master of Divinity and Master of Social Work degrees in four academically challenging years. Students acquire skills in the theory and practice of Christian ministry, social work, and counseling.

Students in the program develop an integrated interdisciplinary identity. Western facilitates this by using cohort learning groups during the M.Div. coursework. These groups continue online during the students' completion of the MSW requirement. This integration, which spans all four years, makes our program unique.

Western Theological Seminary will grant an M.Div. degree upon completion of the required M.Div. seminary courses. Some of these M.Div. courses are taken during completion of an MSW degree from an accredited university.

Students apply and are admitted separately to both institutions. (If you have already earned your Master of Social Work, you may still apply.) Students benefit by completing both degrees one year sooner than those who do not make use of the Dual Track M.Div.-MSW.

Students who drop out of the Dual Track program will receive their M.Div. degree from WTS if they complete the requirements for the residential M.Div program.

Requirements for the Degree
The four-year Dual Competency Track M.Div. degree requires 96 credits. Electives (11 credits) are fulfilled through the transfer of credits from the MSW degree program. Students enrolled in Western Theological Seminary's Dual Track program choose between the following two options to assure that they complete 96 credit hours of coursework:

Option 1:
- CM513 Clinical Pastoral Education (6 credits)

Option 2:
- CM113 Seminar on the Pastor as Person (2 credits)
- FM125 Advanced Practice of Christian Ministry (2 credits)

FM125 is a 400 hour full-time supervised pastoral ministry experience. This is an undefined pastoral ministry experience that needs to meet the standards for ministry experience set by the faculty. Students interested in a social justice ministry or counseling ministry can complete a SCUPE residency (see pg. 72) or an internship at a hospital or community agency. Those interested in pastoral ministry can accept a vacant church as a summer assignment.

Cohort Learning Groups
Students participate in cohort learning groups during the M.Div. coursework, meeting for a minimum of four years. The Cohort Learning Group prepare students for specialized ministry by providing a setting where knowledge gained
through academic study can be integrated with experience in ministry. This group helps candidates form ministry identities and sharpen ministry skills in a conversive reflective evaluative format. This group is designed to augment theological discussion especially when students are completing their degree in social work.

- **Year Two**: CM332 Meets every week for one hour (2 credits)
- **Year Three**: CM333 Online group; 1.5 hours a week; requires clinical setting (1.5 credits)
- **Year Four**: CM334 Online group; 1.5 hours a week; requires clinical setting (1.5 credits)

The Cohort Group is not a peer group, which is affiliated with FM115. M.Div.-MSW Dual Track students also participate in the FM115 peer groups during years 1-3 (see pgs 9-10).

Sequence and Duration of Studies
The Dual Track is a four-year M.Div. degree program. It is not possible to receive the M.Div. degree in less than three years (full time; residential) or four years (Dual Track program; Residential).

WTS recognizes that students who complete a BSW degree at some schools (such as Calvin College, Hope College, etc.) can receive “advanced standing” toward a degree from certain MSW programs (University of Michigan, for example). “Advanced standing” allows a student to finish a MSW degree in less than two years.

The following courses are folded into the work of the group:
- **CM123 Seminar on Teaching and Learning** (1.5 credits)
- **FM126 Launching Your Ministry** (2 credits).

Years Three and Four address interdisciplinary issues of identity, theory, and practice in an online discussion format.

CM331/2/3/4 Dual Track M.Div.-MSW Cohort Group:
- **Year One**: CM331 Meets every other week for one hour (1 credit)

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The dual degree has been challenging. It takes a great deal of time and energy, but I know that I am working toward a future grounded in the work that I have been called to and love—serving the Lord and the people around the world.

I will begin my second field of training next year in social work focusing more specifically on interpersonal therapy. Interestingly, so far I have found that the dual degree has offered me a woven experience of both fields. I have found that I love serving therapeutically and pastorally inside the church as well as in the larger community.

Becky Pratt
M.Div.-MSW student
M.Div. Class of 2006
MSW Class of 2008
### Dual Track M.Div. - MSW Curriculum

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<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>J-Term</th>
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<td></td>
<td>BF103 Old Testament Life and Witness (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF100 The Church’s Life and Witness (150 A.D.-1536) (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>TF101 The Church’s Life and Witness (1536-present) (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TF104 Introduction to Theology and Worship (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>CM101 Intro to Preaching (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM102 Seminar in Spiritual Formation (1.5)</td>
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<td>CM103 Seminar in Congregational Studies (1.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CM122 Empowering Christian Education (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM331 Dual Track Cohort Group (1) (all year)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1)</td>
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</table>

| Year Two: | | |
| BF110 Biblical Hebrew (3) | FM111 Intercultural Immersion Experience (2) | BF111 Hebrew Translation and Interpretation (3) |
| TF111 Missional Church (3) | | TF114 Systematic Theology II (3) |
| TF113 Systematic Theology I (3) | | CM113 Seminar on the Pastor as Person (2) |
| TF121 Christian Ethics (3) | | CM115 Introduction to Counseling and Care (3) |
| CM112 Seminar on Communicating the Gospel (2) | | CM120 Leading Christian Communities (3) |
| FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1) | | CM124 Worship (1.5) |
| CM332 Dual Track Cohort Group (1) (all year) | | FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (1) |
| Upper Level Biblical Field Requirement (3) | | Upper Level Biblical Field Requirement (3) |

**Summer Requirements:**

- CM121 Church Governance and Denominational Standards (2) (Done with MFCA; for RCA students only)
- FM125 Advanced Practice of Christian Ministry (2) (Optional, see description of Option 2)
- CM513 Basic Clinical Pastoral Education (6) (Optional, see description of Option 1)

**Years Three and Four, Online seminars:**

- CM333 Dual Track Cohort Group (1.5) (online format)
- CM334 Dual Track Cohort Group (1.5) (online format)
- TF124 Credo (1.5) (Year Four, online format)
Master of Theology

The Master of Theology (Th.M.) program assembles a community of international scholars who pursue advanced study to enhance their ministries. By design, the one-year (25 semester credit-hours) program provides for focused research and reflection within the context of cross-cultural dialogue.

Research is done within three areas:
- Ministry and Mission focuses on missiology, evangelism, preaching, education, and the practical application of Christian faith and discipleship.
- Theology in Context encompasses historical theology, systematic theology, and theological reflection within specific historical/cultural settings.

International and North American applicants must have completed an M.Div. degree or the equivalent, normally have three years of practical experience in ministry, and have the ability to relate theological study to the social, cultural, and historical contexts of their ministries.

Core requirements include an orientation seminar (1.5 semester credit-hours), a seminar in contextual analysis (1.5 hours), a seminar in contextual theology (1.5 hours), a seminar in research design (1 hour), a seminar in intercultural hermeneutics (1.5 hours), and completion of a master’s thesis (6 hours).

Candidates are required to take a Focus Area Preliminary Examination that includes a two-hour written examination and a 45-minute oral examination (3 credit hours).

The remaining nine hours of course work are taken in the candidate’s chosen focus area, in consultation with his or her advisor and the Th.M. director. These courses are chosen from among the upper level courses in the M.Div. curriculum.

Master of Theology curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>J-Term</th>
<th>Spring Semester/Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MT210 Orientation Seminar</td>
<td>MT220 Research Design</td>
<td>MT250 Seminar in Intercultural Hermeneutics</td>
<td>MT252 Preliminary Examination</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MT230 Seminar in Analysis</td>
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<td>MT260 Thesis</td>
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<td>MT240 Seminar in Theology</td>
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</table>

In addition to these courses, Th.M. candidates must take three additional M.Div. courses (nine semester credits) related to their focus area.
The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree program is offered to those who hold the Master of Divinity degree and who are currently engaged in ministry within the church.

WTS has designed the D.Min. program to enhance the practice of ministry. The program encourages students:

1) to grow in their understanding of how God has called and formed them;
2) to integrate insights from the various scientific, social scientific, and theological disciplines into their ministry;
3) to discern the religious and cultural traditions of their life and ministry;
4) to increase their skill in ministry;
5) to grow in their capacity to work with others; and
6) to make a significant contribution to the practice of ministry. The successful design and completion of the student's major project in the third year will demonstrate that the student has met these six goals.

The program emphasizes self-designed learning and consultation. Students have the flexibility to shape their program around their particular needs while working in collaboration with their peers and supervisor. The self-designed learning encourages growth at four levels simultaneously: who students are as persons (emotional and psychological formation), who they are as children of God (spiritual and ecclesial formation), what they do (skills formation), and what they know (intellectual formation).

The D.Min. program at Western is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).
Non-Degree-Seeking Students

Western Seminary allows those who wish to register for courses without enrolling in one of the degree programs to apply for non-degree-seeking status. Those admitted as non-degree-seeking students may audit courses or take courses for credit. Those wanting academic credit for a course are subject to all regular academic requirements.

Non-degree-seeking students may not register for more than 15 semester credit hours without receiving permission from the academic dean.

Formation for Ministry courses and directed-study courses are not available to non-degree-seeking students.

Applications are available from the admissions office or online at: www.westernsem.edu, click on “Apply”, then “Application Forms”.

All non-degree-seeking students must have the B.A. degree or its equivalent.

SCUPE

In addition to its regular degree programs, Western participates in SCUPE, the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education, located in Chicago. SCUPE offers specialized intensive courses and internships in urban ministry. See page 72 for course listings.

The Certificate Program in Urban Pastoral Ministry

This new study option at Western admitted its first students in the Fall Term of 2005-2006.

Certificate students take four core curriculum courses and four elective courses, a total of 24 credit hours, in order to strengthen their skills and deepen their awareness of issues particular to the practice of urban pastoral ministry. Students take a core course in the fall and an elective in the spring. Electives in the program are taught by adjunct professors whose race and ethnicity is other than Caucasian.

For the first year of the program (2005-6), the Fall class for certificate students was TF104 Introduction to Theology and Worship, and the Spring class was CM547 Preaching in the Urban Context, taught by Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter.

The other three core curriculum courses are:

- TF101 The Church’s Life and Witness (1536-present)
- BF102 New Testament Life and Witness
- BF103 Old Testament Life and Witness

The remaining three elective courses are yet to be announced.

Students in the program often serve as pastors in established ministries in a variety of urban contexts in western Michigan.

Upon successful completion of the Certificate, graduates can enter the Master of Divinity program through a separate application process. All Certificate courses can be applied to the Master of Divinity program at Western or at other ATS accredited seminaries.

Persons interested in the Certificate Program should contact the Program Director, Dr. Cynthia Holder Rich, or email journey@westernsem.edu.

More information can be found on the Journey pages of our website at www.westernsem.edu.
The Admissions staff encourages prospective students to visit the campus and experience firsthand a day in the life of the seminary.
applying to the seminary

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Should I attend seminary? Which seminary should I attend? We will help you discover answers to these life-defining questions. Western Theological Seminary seeks students who are committed to following Christ. It is expected that students will be emotionally and morally suited for Christian leadership and intellectually capable of rigorous academic scholarship.

Campus Visits There is no better way to explore the ethos of this institution and to discover how you might fit. During a campus visit you will experience a normal day in the life of our community. We will enfold you into the student life of our school. Our campus visitors say they leave with fresh clarity. New insights emerge as they reflect on their campus experience and discern their next steps. Come be our guest! You will:

- Attend classes
- Experience a daily Chapel experience
- Be introduced to our community during morning coffee break
- Eat lunch with a current WTS student
- Meet President Dr. Dennis Voskuil and/or other faculty members
- Learn about Admissions, Housing, Financial Aid and the Teaching Church

Contact us to arrange a campus visit on a day that works best for you: 800-392-8554 or admissions@westernsem.edu.

If you are reading this catalog, you may already sense God calling you to Christian leadership. I invite you to visit our community. We can pray together, asking for God's clear leading and direction.

This seminary is an excellent place to prepare for a lifetime of effective ministry. I encourage you to contact me by phone or email.

Rev. Mark Poppen '80
Director of Admissions
mark@westernsem.edu
1-800-392-8554, x132

exceptional compensatory qualifications may be admitted to the degree program under a special provision of the Association of Theological Schools standards. Such acceptance will normally be provisional pending satisfactory academic performance during the first semester.

A 2.75 grade point average (GPA) is required for admission to the M.Div. program. An applicant with less than 2.75 GPA may be admitted on probation if the Admissions Committee believes there is potential for academic success. A GPA of 2.5 or higher must be sustained to qualify for the lifting of academic probation and continuation in the degree program.

An applicant whose college record shows an obvious deficiency in some area of the liberal arts may be required to make up any such deficiencies prior to admission. The minimum liberal arts content of a bachelor's degree or its equivalent is:

- Two semesters of world civilization or world history
- One semester of English composition or two advanced English courses with substantial writing requirements
- One semester of English literature
- One semester of Philosophy
- One semester of Psychology
- One semester of sociology or cultural anthropology

Master of Divinity Minimum Undergraduate Requirements
Applicants to Western's M.Div program must earn a bachelor of arts degree or its academic equivalent from an accredited college or university in order to be admitted as a candidate. In rare cases, an applicant without a bachelor's degree but with

Dual Track M.Div.-MSW Applicants
Those pursuing our Dual Track degree program must complete a Master of Divinity application and a one-page statement
detailing future vocational and educational plans. A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 is required.

**M.Div. Application Check List**
- Completed application form
- Four reference forms
- All undergraduate transcripts
- Spiritual Autobiography
- Recent Photo
- Statement of Church Membership
- Signed agreement for a Criminal Conviction Check
- $50 non-refundable application fee.

Applications will be regarded as incomplete without permission for a criminal background check for convictions. Any felony conviction discovered that is not disclosed on the application for admission form will be grounds for denial of admission.

**Certificate for Urban Pastoral Ministry**
Certificate candidates must complete a shortened two-page application form, include all academic transcripts and submit a one-page statement of how their learning might enhance and empower their future ministry.

**Transfer Students**
Western Theological Seminary accepts credits from other graduate institutions accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. Courses with grades lower than a B- are ineligible for transfer. An academic assessment will identify class status and determine the steps toward completing the degree program at Western. Transfer students must earn at least 30 semester credit hours in our institution to earn a degree.

**International Applicants**
Western Theological Seminary does not encourage applications from international students for our Master of Divinity degree program. Instead, we encourage international students to complete a M.Div. degree or its equivalent in their own cultural context and then apply to our Master of Theology degree program.

Exceptions might include:
- Applications from a student who has completed an undergraduate degree in North America.
- A clear endorsement from the ecclesiastical body to which they are accountable.

A minimum TOEFL score of 550 on the written exam or 213 on the computer-based exam is required with a certified statement showing sufficient financial resources and medical insurance for the duration of the degree program.

**Application Forms**
www.westernsem.edu, click on “Apply”, then “Application Forms”.

**Begin your journey in theological education:**
1. Contact Western's Admission staff
2. Seek out vocational conversations with church leaders, family, and friends
3. Visit our campus for a day
4. Complete application (checklist & deadlines, pg 23)
5. Receive notification of admittance within 3 weeks
6. Confirm your intent to come with a $100 deposit
7. Discuss your student housing need with our business manager, Norman Donkersloot
8. Receive mailings 3 months prior to start of classes:
   - Application for financial aid (see pg 24)
   - Application for Teaching Church (see pgs 9-10)
   - Course registration forms
9. Financial aid award letters are mailed by the last day of March, May, July, and August
10. Attend orientation one week before classes begin
11. Purchase your textbooks at the Sacred Page, our seminary bookstore
12. Begin classes!

**Application Deadlines**
M.Div. and M.Div-MSW program:
- Fall semester admission, July 15
- Spring semester admission, Dec. 1
- Distance Learning admission, Oct. 1

Non-degree-seeking admission: Aug. 15

Master of Theology program:
- International and scholarship applicants, November 30
- Non-scholarship applicants, July 15

Doctor of Ministry program: February 1

Certificate for Urban Pastoral Ministry:
- Fall semester admission, July 1
- Spring semester admission, Oct. 1
Financial Aid
Western's financial aid program is designed to help students meet their educational expenses as they prepare for Christian ministry.

The 2005-2006 cost of educational and living expenses for nine months ranges from around $17,220 for single students to approximately $21,650 for married students.

We recommend that students contact their home congregations and governing ecclesiastical bodies for potential assistance in their seminary education.

To determine eligibility for financial aid, students can request an application from business manager Norman Donkersloot at 800-392-8554, x107 or by emailing norman@westernsem.edu.

If a student cannot match expected expenses with equivalent income, savings, and assistance from his or her home congregation, the next step is to request and complete Western's financial aid application and the government's FAFSA forms. The FAFSA forms are available at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The deadline for submitting a financial aid application is July 18 for returning residential and distance learning M.Div. students. The deadline is August 18 for new residential M.Div. students and October 18 for new distance learning M.Div. students.

Scholarships, loans, and work opportunities are available to help meet educational costs. Scholarships range from $400-$4500 and usually involve the opportunity to meet the benefactor at the seminary's annual scholarship luncheon. Loans are granted through government programs or through banking institutions. Work opportunities are available in maintenance, the bookstore, the library, and administrative assistance.

Registration Deadline Penalty
A financial penalty of $25 will be applied to any class registrations that occur after the posted registration deadline.

Drop Dates
Each semester the dean's office publishes a drop date for courses. This is usually five days after the start of the semester. A student will bear no academic or financial penalty for any course dropped prior to that date. Tuition will be refunded if a course is dropped prior to, but not after, the drop date. If the course is dropped after the drop date, a student will be responsible for the full tuition.

Intern Supervision Fee
The intern supervision fee of $200 is the responsibility of the churches and is therefore not listed in the student fee schedule.

Housing
After being accepted to Western and submitting a $100 confirmation fee, students can apply for housing by contacting business manager Norman Donkersloot at 800-392-8554, x107 or by email: norman@westernsem.edu.

Housing is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The townhouses are an especially attractive option to families with young children. They are within walking distance of parks, churches, and the downtown shopping district.
## 2005-2006 Tuition and Fee Schedule

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<tr>
<td>$280 per credit hour</td>
<td>$300 per credit hour</td>
<td>$8,500 total tuition for the three-year program, for students beginning in 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>$97.50 per credit hour to audit*</td>
<td>There is no auditing in the distance learning program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50 Application fee (non-refundable)</td>
<td>$50 Application fee (non-refundable)</td>
<td>$50 Application fee (non-refundable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>$100 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)</td>
<td>$100 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)</td>
<td>$100 Acceptance confirmation (applied toward tuition)</td>
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<tr>
<td>$15 Matriculation fee</td>
<td>$15 Matriculation fee</td>
<td>$15 Matriculation fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15 Registration fee (yearly)</td>
<td>$15 Registration fee (yearly)</td>
<td>$15 Registration fee (yearly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30 Activities fee (yearly)</td>
<td>$30 Graduation fee</td>
<td>$30 Graduation fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20 Noon luncheon fee (each semester)</td>
<td>The cost of transportation, meals, and lodging for the intensives courses are the responsibility of the student.</td>
<td>A continuation fee of $750 is charged for each additional year beyond the first three years in the program.</td>
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<td>$350 January-term retreat (junior year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>$300-$1000 Intercultural Immersion trip (middler year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>$30 Graduation fee</td>
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* Free audits for certain courses are permitted to spouses of full-time degree students by applying to the academic dean.

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**Insurance**

Students should carry adequate hospitalization and life insurance for themselves and their families. A major medical insurance program with G-M Underwriters is available at the seminary. Term life insurance of $175,000 is also available through the Reformed Church in America. Students who want to participate in these programs must fill out application cards in the business office within thirty days of the first day of class.

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In addition to the townhouses, the seminary owns traditional apartments and houses near the campus.

In 2005, townhouse, apartment, and house rentals ranged from $490 to $680 per month depending upon the location and number of bedrooms.
Activities are open to all and regularly mix professors, students, and staff in worship, social, and study settings.
# WTS community & resources

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<td>Table Fellowship</td>
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<td>Journey Overseas</td>
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Many of Western's students come here to prepare for ministry in the context of their denominational home, the Reformed Church in America. A number of others come from different denominational backgrounds. While many students enter directly into a degree program, others come simply to test the possibility of a ministry vocation or to enrich their own theological understanding. In addition, each year international students and practicing clergy come to Western to study for advanced degrees. Together these men and women form a student body that is diverse in age, life and family circumstances, experience, education, ethnicity, and tradition.

As each new class enters, its members become not only part of Western's student body but part of a community that includes faculty and staff, as well. The seminary is itself a member of the community of Holland, Michigan, and of the Reformed Church in America. Western works to promote a sense of community at all these levels.

The seminary encourages students to build ties to its larger communities in a variety of ways. These include becoming involved in local church life, serving or eating at the Community Kitchen, serving as student representatives to a variety of church bodies, and learning about the denomination's worldwide mission through international study opportunities.

The City of Holland
Western Theological Seminary is located in the heart of Holland, Michigan, on the southeastern shore of Lake Michigan. A wide variety of industry and commerce provides a prosperous economy, while Holland's proximity to larger urban areas (25 miles to Grand Rapids, 150 miles to Chicago, 170 to Detroit) makes a whole spectrum of cultural activities and other services accessible to Holland residents.

Holland was founded as a deeply religious city. In the 1840s, a group of Dutch Reformed Christians separated from the state church in the Netherlands. They came to America looking for a place to worship according to their beliefs and to escape poverty in the Netherlands. Led by the Rev. Albertus Van Raalte, some of those immigrants founded Holland in 1847. By 1866, Western Theological Seminary had its humble beginnings as a theological department of Hope College.

Western students find many options open to them in Holland for worship, for membership in local congregations, and for places to engage in ministry.

Today people of many ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs call Holland home. The city population is about one third Hispanic with a growing number of Laotion, Vietnamese, Thai, and other ethnic groups. Western students have opportunities to reach out to those who are struggling in this community and in more distant parts of the world.
Worship and Spiritual Growth

Chapel services, led by faculty, students, and visiting preachers, are held every morning during the academic year. These take place in the John R. Mulder Chapel and the more informal setting of Semelink Hall and encompass many styles of worship.

Students participate in seminary-sponsored Bible studies, community conversations, spiritual growth groups, or other activities, depending on their interests. In addition, the city of Holland and nearby communities are filled with opportunities for worship, musical performances, retreats, spiritual conferences, and small-group study.

Fall Retreat

Each academic year begins with a day-long retreat for students, staff, and faculty at Geneva Camp and Conference Center, located north of Holland on the Lake Michigan shore. The day’s study, worship, and recreation in the relaxed and beautiful outdoor setting afford students and their families an opportunity to become acquainted with each other and the entire Western community.

Table Fellowship

Students are invited to gather with faculty and staff each morning for refreshments immediately following worship, and for all-seminary luncheons once each month. Lunch at the Community Kitchen is open to students. Holidays and special events also provide opportunities to celebrate together.

The Community Kitchen

The Community Kitchen is sponsored by the Community Action House and Western Theological Seminary and operates out of the seminary Commons. The kitchen is staffed by volunteers from local churches and the seminary and feeds about 100 people five days a week all year round. Lunchtime in the Commons is a time and place where people of all backgrounds, incomes, faiths, and social positions are welcome to nourish their bodies with food and their spirits with the companionship of others. Students are invited to volunteer their time, if possible, and to join others in this ministry that links Western with the community in which it resides.

The Bridge

A few short blocks from Western’s campus, Holland’s downtown thrives with specialty shops and galleries. One of the shops, The Bridge, is an unusual type of “specialty” store—a developing-world store staffed entirely by volunteers. The merchandise is purchased from cooperatives of artisans around the world who depend upon their work for economic survival. Because The Bridge bypasses expensive importers and operates with minimal overhead, it can offer reasonably priced handmade goods to shoppers and insure a fair return to the artisans who produce them. The Bridge is owned and operated by Western Theological Seminary.
Writing Studio
Students who wish to improve their writing skills may access tutorial assistance by contacting Beth Smith. Tutors are equipped to help writers learn how to conceive, develop, organize, and clarify their writing efforts.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)
This program provides our students with an opportunity to experience individual counseling, spiritual direction, formative workshops, and general education-for-ministry opportunities. Each of these can provide significant insights into one’s person and calling. Special group opportunities are also regularly available.

The SAP is underwritten by Western Theological Seminary and the Dr. Stanley Rock Preparation for Ministry Fund and underscores the seminary’s commitment to a holistic approach to persons. Dr. Jaco Hamman, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, coordinates the Student Assistance Program.

Wellness Program
Monthly programming in wellness issues like exercise, diet, blood pressure, etc. is provided by professionals from the medical community for the entire seminary.

Placement Services
While the seminary does not technically “place” its graduates, helpful support is offered to those who will be candidates for a variety of ministry positions. These include workshops covering topics like the RCA Ministerial Profile, interviewing as a candidate, and compensation for clergy.

During their final year, students may have their biography and photo posted on the seminary website to introduce them to potential places of service. Western Theological Seminary regularly hosts guest Classes, churches, and other ministries that wish to make our graduates aware of ministry opportunities. “The Call” is posted online to alert students to ministry openings.
The John Walter Beardslee Library, housed in the Cook Center for Theological Research, is the seminary's center for access to information resources supporting student studies, faculty research, and area ministries. Beardslee Library's resources include more than 110,000 books and bound periodicals. Approximately 1,500 books are added to the collection each year. Current periodical subscriptions number 450.

Library users find information on the collection through an automated system shared with Hope College's Van Wylen Library. Beardslee Library and Van Wylen Library maintain reciprocal borrowing privileges and work cooperatively to develop strong collections for each institution. In addition, seminary students and faculty can request materials from libraries across North America through interlibrary loans.

Electronic Resources
The library has a growing collection of electronic resources, which includes access to e-journals and databases.

Students access a computer network with specialized theological software on the main and mezzanine floors. Wireless access is also available on those floors. Audiovisual equipment and computer workstations are available for student use.

Special Collections
Several special collections complement Beardslee Library's core of materials. A Japanese collection includes Japanese translations of significant theological works. An area on the library's fourth floor is devoted to religious education curricula from a wide range of publishers. Historical denominational materials and faculty publications are also available. The Kolkman Memorial Archive (housed at the Theil Research Center on the corner of 10th St. and College Ave.) contains papers documenting the history of Western Theological Seminary and of the Reformed Church in West Michigan.

Study Environment
The Cook Center for Theological Research provides an excellent environment for study, offering study carrels, tables, lounge chairs, seminar rooms on the 2nd and 5th floors, and computer access to the library's catalog on each floor. A sight reader is offered to help the visually impaired.

Beardslee Library is a member of the American Theological Library Association, the American Library Association, the Michigan Library Association, and the Michigan Library Consortium.
facilities & resources

Classroom Resources
Western Seminary provides a learning environment designed to meet the special requirements of theological education. Special audiovisual resources, such as video- and audio-recording/playback, overhead and film projection, and sound amplification equipment, are available. All learning areas are handicapped accessible.

The De Witt Theological Center provides state-of-the-art classrooms, conference rooms, and gathering areas. Wireless internet is available in the Burggraaff Atrium and in the classrooms surrounding the atrium. A teleconferencing classroom allows instruction to be offered at multiple sites around the country or even the world.

The Sacred Page Bookstore & Coffee Shop
The bookstore’s purpose is to provide ready, helpful access to books and materials that support and fulfill the seminary’s mission. These include textbooks; materials supporting faculty and student research; materials to sustain the ongoing learning of pastors, church leaders, and laity; Bibles; music; and worship materials.

The bookstore’s goal is to become the premier west Michigan source for biblically and theologically well-grounded Christian literature that is relevant to the needs of church members and leaders.

Located off the Burggraaff Atrium of the De Witt Theological Center, The Sacred Page offers a coffee shop featuring “Fair Trade” coffees and a relaxing atmosphere to enjoy them.

Housing
Western Theological Seminary offers on-campus townhouse apartments to its students. Apartments are available as single bedrooms, communally sharing kitchen and living rooms; or as one-, two-, or three-bedroom units. Handicapped accessible units are available. Many of Western’s students live in an on-campus townhouse complex, which is built around a central green and includes play space for children. These units are recently built, pleasant, economical, and adjacent to the classroom building. They are equipped with air-conditioning, dishwashers, and laundry facilities. The townhouses are an especially attractive option for families with young children and are within walking distance of an elementary school, parks, churches, and the downtown shopping district.

Students are advised to make their housing plans early, as space is limited and the seminary cannot guarantee housing to all students. Townhouses can be rented by contacting the business manager, who will also help locate housing in the greater Holland area for those who do not wish to live in seminary housing or if none is available (see Housing, p.24, for details).
Before the followers of Jesus were ever called Christians, they were known as followers of the Way. For every generation of Christ-followers the way of Jesus opens up before us, calling us to follow on the JOURNEY of a lifetime. The people of God are always learning Christ, always learning in the company of others, and finding ourselves made new by God’s Spirit.

Journey, Western Theological Seminary’s center for the church’s learning, serves not only ministry professionals but the whole people of God. Journey offers events like lectureships, conferences, courses, and workshops, as well as other ways of cultivating the learning of the church: mentored learning groups, strategies for revitalizing the church, resources for discipleship and mission, and partnerships for collaborative learning.
Journey Groups
Journey has initiated a pilot set of six Journey Groups as part of a national program from Lilly Endowment, Inc. called, “Sustaining Pastoral Excellence.” A Journey Group consists of five to seven pastors (or similar pastoral agents) who commit themselves to a three-year, shared learning path in some particular field of ministerial identity and practice. The program is founded on three fundamental convictions:
- Learning happens with peers
- Learning unfolds on a path
- Congregations and pastors learn together

Each Journey Group hosts a public conference on the area in which its own learning goals are focused. Current Journey Group topics include ministers in transition as a result of congregational conflict, multi-cultural ministry, planting new missional communities, leadership in the emerging church, women in ministry, and urban pastoral ministry.

Journey Academy
Journey Academy is a school for the whole people of God. The Academy offers six-week courses in daytime and evening formats, geared toward laypeople and taught by WTS professors. Recent courses covered topics such as “Christianity and Literature,” “Prayer as a Way of Life,” “Christian Views of War and Peace,” and “Living the Christian Faith in a Science-Wired World.”

Kerygma, a leading publisher of biblical study materials is partnering with Journey to offer online Kerygma courses, available to the public starting Fall of 2005. The pilot course on the book of Job uses the text written by WTS professor, Carol Bechtel.

Seminars & Programs
Seminars and special events provide diverse opportunities for learning and celebration hosted by the seminary, alone or in cooperation with other local associations and
The Gospel and Our Culture Network Journey hosts the administrative offices of the Gospel and Our Culture Network, coordinated by Dr. George Hunsberger. The network consists of pastors, scholars, church administrators, students, and others involved in ministry from a wide range of denominations and geographical locations. These leaders collaborate to provide useful research regarding the gospel’s encounter with North American culture and to encourage local action for transformation in the life and witness of the church. For more information, visit www.gocn.org.

Urban Ministry
The Certificate in Urban Pastoral Ministry is a non-degree study program whereby students take eight graduate level courses taught by regular faculty and adjunct racial-ethnic faculty. The courses give students tools for ministry in the urban context, and the program can be completed in two years. All coursework can be applied toward the credit requirements of the M.Div. degree, if the student desires to pursue further education. Interested applicants to this program should contact the Admissions Director.

These international travel seminars are crafted for clergy and laity wanting a full learning experience while exploring lands rich in biblical and church history.

The well-traveled director of the program, Dr. Donald J. Bruggink, taught historical theology at Western Theological Seminary for 36 years. He hosts two 2-3 week tours each year to destinations such as Rome, Turkey, Greece, Russia, Switzerland, Portugal, France, and Spain.

For further information on upcoming tours, contact Dr. Bruggink directly at donb@westernsem.edu or 616-392-8555, x145.
With a faculty/student ratio of one to twelve, Western provides the intimate atmosphere that best fosters learning. Professors are readily accessible for academic assistance, mentoring, and spiritual guidance.
faculty and staff

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Carol Bechtel
Professor of Old Testament

“The Bible is more than just a collection of ancient stories about strange people in faraway lands. It is, in a very real sense, our story. Watching students come to that realization is one of the most exciting things about teaching the Bible.”

A.B. Hope College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Yale University

Before joining Western’s faculty in 1994, Carol Bechtel taught at the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia. She has also served as a teaching fellow at Yale Divinity School and as interim pastor of Turn of River Presbyterian Church in Stamford, Connecticut. Dr. Bechtel preaches and teaches widely, and is a General Synod Professor of Theology in the Reformed Church in America.

Carol Bechtel has written several books, including Esther: A Commentary for Teaching and Preaching in the Interpretation series, and two devotional collections, Glimpses of Glory and Life After Grace. Her love for music is evident in two of her Bible study curricula: Hallelujah! The Bible and Handel’s Messiah and Sowing Tears, Reaping Joy: The Bible and Brahms’ Requiem. Her most recent publication is a curriculum entitled Job and the Life of Faith: Wisdom for Today’s World.

J. Todd Billings
Assistant Professor of Reformed Theology

“Emerging from a rich theological heritage and a diverse worldwide communion, Reformed theology has the depth to nourish the church and the dynamism to be open to God’s new work. The study of Reformed theology is not just an academic exercise, but a part of a transformative encounter with God as we follow the radical gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

B.A. Wheaton College
M.Div. Fuller Theological Seminary
Th.D. Harvard University
Divinity School

The joys and challenges of Christian ministry that Todd Billings experienced in college led him to pursue the study of theology. Six months of Christian community development work in Uganda redirected his path toward theological reflection for the sake of the church. Since then he has been active in the church’s varied ministries: teaching theology in Ethiopia, working on staff at an urban homeless shelter, and serving his local church as an elder in various leadership roles.

Dr. Billings has a passion for Reformed theology and the rich resources the Reformed tradition offers for church renewal and global ministry. He seeks to reclaim the way in which classical Reformed theology appropriates the insights of patristic and medieval theological traditions, rediscovering “ancient” insights which can provide alternatives to Enlightenment versions of Christianity.

Dr. Billings has published articles in a variety of journals, including Modern Theology, Missiology, and Christianity and Literature.
thomas a. boogaart
Professor of Old Testament
Director of Doctor of Ministry Program

"I help students recover the sacred in the scriptures, that is, its power to bless them and energize their ministries. Together we explore the ways Western culture has silenced the scriptures, and together we listen again to its song of peace."

A.B. Calvin College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
Ph.D. University of Groningen

Tom Boogaart has spent a lifetime immersed in the scriptures, as a student and teacher in the Netherlands and in England, and later at Central College in Iowa and at Western. The biblical vision he has gained has sent him deep into the issues facing Western Christians, and he sees, through Old Testament lenses, the clear opposition of Western cultural values to those of scripture. Dr. Boogaart works to help his students renew their own biblical vision; he has also worked to bring his to life by helping to initiate such ministries as The Bridge and the Community Kitchen and Witness, an organization of support for women in church leadership.

Dr. Boogaart has extended his teaching ministry outward by leading many retreats and seminars and by teaching regularly in area churches. He is the author of two books and many articles in Perspectives: a Journal of Reformed Thought and Western's Reformed Review.

g e o r g e b r o w n , j r.
Associate Dean
G.W. and Eddie Haworth Professor of Christian Education
Director of Master of Divinity Program

"I am committed to preparing leaders for the church's teaching ministry who will be concerned about personal and social transformation, the empowerment of persons for mission, and the faithful transmission of the Christian tradition."

A.B. Central College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
Th.M. Princeton Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Michigan State University

As an ordained minister in the Reformed Church in America (RCA), George Brown spent nearly twenty years in parish ministry before joining Western's faculty. Whether serving as pastor of a small church, minister of Christian education for a larger congregation, or as seminary professor, Christian religious education has been at the heart of his ministry.

Dr. Brown has developed denominational and ecumenical curriculum, helped shape the RCA's Associates in Ministry certification program, led workshops and spoke at Christian educator conferences, and has written numerous articles on Christian education. In 1996 he was named RCA Christian Educator of the Year. Dr. Brown serves on the RCA's General Synod Commission on Christian Education and Discipleship and is a member of the Association of Professors and Researchers in Religious Education.
timothy l. brown  
Henry Bast Professor of Preaching

A.B. Hope College  
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary  
D.Min. Western Theological Seminary

"As a young man and a new convert in the late 1960s, I can still see the aging and ill Henry Bast ascending the pulpit to preach. I thrilled then, as I do now, to the gospel he preached. He spoke winsomely of the risen Christ, with the full authority of the Word of God. I've pledged myself to the task of raising up a new generation of preachers in the Reformed Church in America to do the same!"

Tim Brown brings to the task of teaching homiletics twenty years of preaching and pastoral experience, most recently in a joint position held with Hope College as the Hinga-Boersma Dean of the Chapel. At Hope College he participated in a highly charged student spiritual renewal movement that gained national acclaim. Prior to coming to Western Theological Seminary, Dr. Brown was the senior pastor of Christ Memorial Church in Holland, MI, from 1983 to 1995. During that time the church became one of the fastest growing congregations in the U.S., as well as one of the largest in the Reformed Church in America (RCA).

Dr. Brown is a frequent speaker at pastors conferences, college campuses, and church renewal events. He has served on the RCA's Board of Theological Education and is currently a General Synod Professor. He writes often for the Church Herald, the Reformed Review, and Perspectives and is a frequent contributor to Preaching Today, a preaching resource of Christianity Today. He is also the author of Witness Among Friends and Let's Preach Together.

A.B. University of Michigan  
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary  
Ph.D. Princeton Theological Seminary

James v. brownson  
James and Jean Cook Professor of New Testament

"I try to teach the New Testament in a way that helps students understand the gospel more deeply. That means understanding both the central message of Christian faith and the different ways in which that faith was lived out in the New Testament church. Understanding the unity and diversity of the New Testament is critical to understanding how Christians are to minister today."

Jim Brownson's passion is to equip students to understand the gospel both in its stunning simplicity and in its incredibly diverse applications to our lives. His teaching and thinking moves between close and careful readings of the biblical text and wide-ranging exercises in theological imagination that bring the biblical text into conversation with life in the postmodern world.

Dr. Brownson's scholarly and teaching interests include the Gospel of John, the Synoptic Gospels, biblical hermeneutics, contextual theology, and theology in service to the church.

He is deeply involved in service to the Reformed Church in America, both in theological scholarship and in theological education. He is a long-standing member of the Gospel and Our Culture Network and a contributor to its ongoing research and publication. Dr. Brownson is the author of Speaking the Truth in Love: New Testament Resources for a Missional Hermeneutic and a co-author of Stormfront. He often contributes to a variety of journals and magazines as well.
Steven Chase has a varied background in academic and practical aspects of Christian spirituality. He served as adjunct professor of Christian spirituality at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. He taught Christian spirituality, Christian mysticism, historical theology, and theology in Roman Catholic and Reformed seminaries throughout the U.S., Canada and Korea. He has twice been a member-in-residence at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, NJ. He founded and co-chairs the Christian Spirituality Group of the American Academy of Religion and was a member of the governing board of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality. Dr. Chase served as Director of Prayer Formation at the Institute of Spirituality at the Dominican Center, Grand Rapids, MI, and as a spiritual director on staff and in private practice.


“Formation in Christian living is a lifelong process. Habits and disciplines acquired during seminary years serve as guides and markers for our spiritual journey as we move out from the seminary to become compelling witnesses to the transforming message of Jesus Christ. My vocation as a teacher of Christian spirituality is to aid students in discerning God’s presence in all of God’s good creation.”

B.A. University of Washington
M.Div. Princeton Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Fordham University

Matthew Floding
Dean of Students
Director of Formation for Ministry

“I am passionate about issues surrounding discipleship and faith maturity, calling and vocational discernment. That’s why I’m delighted to serve as Dean of Students and Director of Formation for Ministry at Western—these issues are taken very seriously here. We are all challenged to grow in grace in community. Our commitment to provide significant student support in a number of areas is evidence of this.

B.A. Bethel University
M.A. Wheaton College
M.Div. McCormick Theological Seminary
D.Min. Western Theological Seminary

Matt Floding brings twenty years of ministry experience to his position at Western Seminary. He has served as a youth pastor, pastor, and—in the ten years prior to coming to Western—as chaplain at Northwestern College in Orange City, IA.

Dr. Floding has been active in the Reformed Church in America at the denominational, regional synod and classis level. Matt especially enjoys participating in the local church through teaching and preaching opportunities.

Professionally, Dr. Floding serves on the national board of the Association of Theological Field Educators and is currently editor of Theological Field Educators Abstracts.

Each year Dr. Floding travels to Khartoum, Sudan, to be a visiting teacher for the Khartoum Evangelical (Presbyterian) Church’s pastors and Christian workers training conference.
“Made in the image of God, we are relational beings. Pastoral ministry depends on one’s relationship’s with one’s self, with God, with others, and with nature. Furthermore, health, wholeness, and holiness are found in these relationships. I feel called to educate and empower seminarians and clergy to support and guide individuals, families, and congregations to redefine their ways of being in the world.”

Born in South Africa, Jaco Hamman left his native country to pursue further training in hospital chaplaincy. After two residencies, his interest in the emotional, relational, and spiritual experiences of people became the focus of a Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Dr. Hamman spent three years as a pastoral psychotherapist at the Blanton-Peale Graduate Institute. He has clinical experience as a marriage, family, and group therapist and served as a hospital chaplain for the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. Jaco became an American citizen in December 2002.

Dr. Hamman assists church leaders, congregations, and denominations in understanding spiritual, emotional, and relational dynamics. He is a pastoral-theological consultant in the U.S. and South Africa and the author of *When Steeples Cry: Leading Congregations through Loss and Change*. He is an ordained pastor in the Reformed Church in America. Dr. Hamman is currently working on a book asking: *How does one become a pastor?*

After serving 14 years in parish ministry and six in mission service in Madagascar, Cynthia Holder Rich joined Western’s faculty in 2003. She taught previously at the Lutheran Graduate School of the Malagasy Lutheran Church and the Amboniavatra Pastoral College of the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar, both located in Fianarantsoa, Madagascar.

Cynthia’s experience in congregational life and ministry and her global perspective shine through her work as faculty in Journey, Western’s Center for the Church’s Learning. Her passions include women in ministry, multicultural ministry, and working to heal divisions in the worldwide Body of Christ.

Dr. Holder Rich has written a book (avail. Feb ’06) on Christian education and worship ministry for children, youth and families who struggle with learning disabilities. She is also researching an indigenous charismatic Christian movement in Madagascar and continues to be involved in research and development work on women’s empowerment globally, with a particular emphasis on the women of Madagascar.
George Hunsberger brings a rich variety of personal experience to the teaching of mission and to the leadership of Journey, Western's Center for the Church's Learning. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), he has been a campus staff member of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship; a pastor; a missionary team leader for Africa Foundation in Nairobi, Kenya; and a teacher at Princeton Theological Seminary and at Belhaven College.

George R. Hunsberger
Dean of Journey
Professor of Congregational Mission

B.A. Belhaven College
M.Div. Reformed Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Princeton Theological Seminary

“Churches in North America can no longer do business as usual, because the culture has changed. We must recover what it means to be a body of people sent on a mission. This requires leaders who know God, who teach with insight, who form genuine Christian community, and who can lead congregations into their mission.”

Chris Kaiser began his professional life as a scientist and went on to become a theologian, and his teaching vocation has always included working to build bridges between his two disciplines. He has been part of Western's faculty since 1976. He has also served as lecturer at the University of Edinburgh and at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI, and has been a resident member of the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, NJ.

Christopher B. Kaiser
Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology

A.B. Harvard University
Ph.D. in astrophysics, University of Colorado
M.Div. Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
Ph.D. in Christian dogmatics and divinity, University of Edinburgh

“I look at the scientific and technological framework of our culture and ask what the meaning of Christian faith might be for people at work in that world. The question leads me to an interest in the history of how our cultural framework developed and what its relation is to Christian theology—especially the doctrines of God, creation, and the person and work of Jesus Christ.”

He is a frequent contributor to theological journals, and his 1991 book, Creation and the History of Science, was awarded a John Templeton Prize for Outstanding Books in Science and Religion. A second edition of his textbook on The Doctrine of God came out in 2001.

Dr. Kaiser has served on the Commission on Theology of the Reformed Church in America and is active in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Gospel and Our Culture Network.
Theresa Latini
Assistant Professor of Pastoral and Congregational Care

“The Body of Christ is the central context for pastoral care. As we participate in the inner life of the church, koinonia, we are connected to God, one another, and our truest selves. Transformed again and again, we are thrust into solidarity with the world as witnesses to this in-breaking reality. My own call to ministry involves equipping students to participate in and practice redemptive koinonia in their own lives and ministries.”

B.A. Roberts Wesleyan College
M.Div. Princeton Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Princeton Theological Seminary

Theresa Latini brings to her teaching and scholarship a passion for the “church to be the church.” She seeks to equip future ministers and congregations to reflect critically on and interpret three forms of practice—societal, ecclesial, and Trinitarian—so that current church life and ministry might be reformed according to the life-act of God in Jesus Christ for the sake of the world.

Professor Latini has served as a spiritual life director for a human service agency and, most recently, as an associate pastor in the Presbyterian Church (USA), where her ministry focused on faith formation and pastoral care.

Currently, Professor Latini is participating in a national study of congregational ministry, *Faithful Practices*, co-sponsored by the Lilly Foundation and the practical theology department of Princeton Theological Seminary. As a research fellow, Professor Latini is studying multi-dimensional community formation in well-developed small group ministries in Presbyterian and Reformed congregations.

Meri MacLeod
Associate Professor of Educational Leadership
Director of Distance Learning Master of Divinity Program

“Engaging a diverse and complex culture meaningfully, compassionately, and courageously is one of the enormous and exciting challenges facing the church today. My passion is to engage seminarians and congregational leaders in learning new ways of being the church and creating adaptive cultures that are both theologically rooted and culturally responsive.”

B.S. Bridgewater State College
M.R.E. Gordon-Conwell Seminary
Ph.D. Educational Studies, Trinity International University

Meri MacLeod has served on staff at an urban/suburban transitional congregation, a large suburban congregation, and a new church plant. Dr. MacLeod led these congregations into new ministries and created new leadership development practices. She pioneered a collaborative-style partnership ministry between congregations and a national parachurch organization, providing new ministry resources, consulting, and leadership development. In addition, she has led and expanded two university campus ministries.

Meri frequently speaks and trains and has published an interactive Bible study series designed for a postmodern culture. She also co-authored a discipleship handbook.

Dr. MacLeod serves on the board and executive committee of Presbyterians for Renewal. She has taught at Fuller Theological Seminary and was the dean of an adult education program in a Christian university. Dr. MacLeod teaches at WTS in the area of congregational change and postmodern culture.
Paul M. Smith
Director of Beardslee Library
Associate Professor of Theological Bibliography

A.B. Hope College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
M.A. University of Iowa

“Electronic communications media has drastically changed the ways in which we intersect with and learn about our world. I seek to acquire and make available a variety of media—books, journals, computer programs, internet sites—that will enhance our efforts to train leaders for the church. I also attempt to help students reflect theologically upon the effect computers have in our lives.”

Vernon Sterk
Richard C. Oudersluys Associate Professor of Missiology and Evangelism

A.B. Hope College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Fuller Theological Seminary

“Crossing cultural barriers to communicate the Gospel is one of the most challenging tasks facing the church today. Equipping students to contextualize the Good News to diverse ethnic populations is essential to the life and ministry of the church in this century.”

Vern Sterk and his wife, Carla, have served as missionaries of the Reformed Church in America for 37 years. After nearly ten years of evangelism in a previously unreached tribal area in Chiapas, Mexico, Vern helped establish the Tzotzil Bible School to train leaders for the growing church. When persecution became a major part of the work in Chiapas, Dr. Sterk led the relocation and defense of suffering Christians and completed his dissertation on “The Dynamics of Persecution” to earn his Ph.D. in the area of Intercultural Studies.

From 1988-1998 the Sterks coordinated the translation of the first complete Bible in the Tzotzil language. In the years following the Zapatista insurgency movement they have been involved in reconciliation and the defense of Christian leaders falsely accused of civil war atrocities.

Vern continues to coordinate the Chiapas Mission Agency, which is preparing to send out missionaries from Chiapas.
david l. stubbs
Assistant Professor of Ethics and Theology

“Christian ethics and theology are about making connections—connections between the patterns of God’s activity, the shape of our living, and the patterns of our thinking. Students must develop such discernment as they prepare to lead the people of God further into ways reflective of our glorious and crucified God—and as they learn to protest and strive against ways within our church and society that are not.”

B.S. Stanford University
M.S. Stanford University
M.Div. Princeton Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Duke University

A central interest of David Stubbs’s scholarly work is the impact different philosophies and cultures have had on the church’s theological and ethical imagination.

David has worked in college ministries and worship leadership for many years, served as a construction manager for Habitat for Humanity, taught English in China, and participated in and led several mission service projects in the U.S., Argentina, and Mexico.

Dr. Stubbs currently is working on a project on the theme of union with Christ in Karl Barth’s theology as well as a commentary on the book of Numbers for the Theological Exegetis of the Bible series. He is also part of a task force on sacramental practice in the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Stubbs has published and presented in narrative theology and ethics, the theological ethics of Karl Barth, Eastern Orthodoxy, and the impact of Anglo-American postmodernism on ethics.

leanne van dyk
Academic Dean
Professor of Reformed Theology

“Theology is articulating the faith of the church for each new age. When it is grounded in scripture, responsive to the needs of the church, and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, it fulfills its task as a servant of the church. My own call to ministry is to help students see the great beauty, drama, and strength of the gospel—and then, how to express the gospel for the church today.”

B.A. Calvin College
M.A. Western Michigan University
M.Div. Calvin Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Princeton Theological Seminary

Leanne Van Dyk combines her love of teaching with a passion for theology and a conviction that the teaching theologian must always keep in mind the present needs of the church. Her years in San Francisco, where she served on the faculty of San Francisco Theological Seminary, sharpened her focus on the issues of cultural diversity facing the church. She brings to Western an excitement for the rich resources within the Reformed tradition for speaking theologically across cultural and religious boundaries.

Dr. Van Dyk served as a member of the core doctoral faculty at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA; as a member-in-residence at the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, NJ; as a member of the Wabash Center’s Consultation on Theological Education; and on the Catechism Committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She is the author of The Desire of Divine Love: The Atonement Theology of John McLeod Campbell, Believing in Jesus Christ, and A More Profound Alleluia: Theology and Worship in Harmony. She serves on the editorial boards of Perspectives, a Journal of Reformed Thought, and the Scottish Journal of Theology.
Robert E. Van Voorst
Professor of New Testament

B.A. Hope College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
S.T.M., Ph.D. Union Theological Seminary, New York City

Ortained in the RCA, Bob Van Voorst served 12 years as a pastor for an RCA church. He taught at Lycoming College (United Methodist) and chaired its religion department for three years. During that time he served as an interim pastor for four Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations. He was also a visiting professor in Westminster College in Oxford, England.

At Western, Dr. Van Voorst teaches courses in New Testament language and literature, in world religions, and in Christianity and popular culture. He serves as the editor of the Reformed Review, Western’s theological journal, and maintains an active schedule of preaching and teaching in churches.

Dr. Van Voorst has authored eight books, including The Ascents of James and Jesus Outside the New Testament, as well as textbooks for Greek, Church history, world religions, and the New Testament. Dr. Van Voorst has contributed to recent reference works such as the Eerdmans Bible Commentary, the Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible, and Jesus in History, Thought and Culture. Currently he is working on a major commentary on Galatians for the Eerdmans Critical Commentary series.

Dennis N. Voskuil
President
Professor of Church History

B.A. University of Wisconsin, Madison
B.D. Western Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Harvard University

Dennis Voskuil came to Western as president in 1994 after serving as a teacher, pastor, and student of church history. He was a professor of religion at Hope College for 17 years and also served as pastor of several churches. He has served on the Reformed Church in America’s Commission on History and Commission on Theology and as chair of its Ad Hoc Committee on Ecclesiastical Office and Ministry.

Dr. Voskuil’s publications include essays for several books on religion in Americana and articles in the Reformed Review, Perspectives, a Journal of Reformed Thought, and the Church Herald. He is also the author of Mountains into Gold Mines: Robert Schuller and the Gospel of Success.

Areas of special interest for teaching and scholarship include American religious history, the Reformation, American religious thought, the Reformed Church in America history and missions, and Christian leadership.
emeriti and adjunct faculty

emeriti

Donald J. Bruggink
James A. H. Cornell Professor of Historical Theology
B.A. Central College
B.D. Western Theological Seminary
Ph.D. University of Edinburgh

James I. Cook
Anton Biemolt Professor of New Testament
A.B. Hope College
M.A. Michigan State University
B.D. Western Theological Seminary
Th.D. Princeton Theological Seminary

Robert A. Coughenour
Cornelius Van der Meulen Professor of Old Testament
B.S. Indiana University of Pennsylvania
B.D. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
M.A. Western Reserve University
Ph.D. Case-Western Reserve University

I. John Hesselink
Albertus C. Van Raalte Professor of Systematic Theology
B.A. Central College
B.D. Western Theological Seminary
Dr. Theol. Basel University
L.H.D. Hope College
D.D. Central College

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Professor of New Testament
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adjunct

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M.Phil. Institute for Christian Studies
M.Div. Fuller Theological Seminary
Ph.D. University of Chicago

Burt Braunius
New church development
B.A. Barrington College
M.A. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
M.A. Michigan State University
Ph.D. Michigan State University

Tom DeVries
New church development
B.A. Wheaton College
M.Div. Fuller Theological Seminary
D.Min. Western Seminary (Portland, OR)

Evelyn Diephouse
Ministry studies
B.A. Calvin College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary

Ken Eriks
Church revitalization
B.A. Hope College
M.Div. Western Theological Seminary
D.Min. Princeton Theological Seminary

Mary Huist
Homiletics
B.A. Calvin College
M.Div. Calvin Theological Seminary
Ph.D. (ABD) University of Illinois

D. Rhashell Hunter
Homiletics
B.A. University of Houston
M.F.A. Trinity University, San Antonio, TX
M.Div. McCormack Theological Seminary
D.Min. McCormack Theological Seminary
What does the Dean's Office do?
The Academic Dean and her team encourage and oversee the degree programs, the courses, the faculty, and the students at Western Seminary.

What information is available from the Registrar?
The academic calendar, advisor assignments, class and exam schedules, transcripts, grades, class enrollment forms, drop/add forms, withdrawal forms, and current enrollment data.

How do I enroll for classes?
Students admitted to WTS may enroll for classes by completing a form from the Registrar. Degree-seeking students must obtain their advisor’s signature prior to submitting the completed form to the Registrar.

How do I drop or add a course?
Students may drop or add courses before the second week of an academic semester. Complete a drop/add form, get the professor’s signature, and return it to the Registrar.

Students may withdraw from a course after the drop/add deadline. However, the tuition charge for a class will be refunded only for students who withdraw from a class during the drop/add period. Students are responsible for 100% of the tuition for a class if they withdraw after the drop/add deadline. Students use the same drop/add form to withdraw after the deadline and must obtain the professor and the dean’s signatures.

How do I withdraw from the seminary?
Students wishing to withdraw must complete a withdrawal form. It must be signed by the business manager and the director of the library and then submitted to the academic dean.
president's office
Dennis Voskuil, president
Rayetta Perez, administrative assistant to the president

business office
Mary De Blaay, accountant
Norman Donkersloot, business manager
Kerry Weavers, receptionist and accounts payable
Myra Bonzelaar, receptionist and secretarial assistant

not pictured:
Mary Huisman, bookstore manager

Other administrative and support staff are pictured on the catalog pages related to their area of work.
What does the Advancement staff do?
The Advancement staff “advances” the cause of Western Theological Seminary to individuals, congregations, alumni, and organizations interested in supporting the education of leaders for the church of Jesus Christ.

Support for the seminary can be financial, or it can come in the form of involvement. Congregations can decide to become a Teaching Church for our students. Individuals can attend classes or workshops. Alumni can recommend the school to potential students. Advancement promotes various aspects of involvement in the work of the seminary.

In addition to raising money for the operational costs of the seminary, the Advancement staff nurtures relationships with people and churches who are willing and able to set up endowed scholarships for our students. Other people decide to support the work of Western through planned giving arrangements.

The total cost of educating one student each year is over $25,000. Because of the generosity of our donors and the support of RCA churches, each student can expect to pay tuition reflecting only 30% of the actual cost of his or her education.

Seminary Publications
The Advancement office publishes most of the seminary communications.
- *The Commons* is a newsletter for Western alumni/ae and friends, published in November, March, and June.
- “WesternNews” is a two page update in the *Church Herald* magazine in October and April.
- The honor roll of churches appears on the back cover of the *Church Herald* each September to thank churches with high levels of support.
- The annual report is mailed to donors in November of each year.
- The academic catalog is published every two years in coordination with the academic dean’s office.
- *The Reformed Review* is a theological journal published three times a year under the direction of WTS Professor of New Testament, Dr. Robert Van Voorst.
The Advancement Staff thanks the friends of Western Theological Seminary who have made these funds available to our students.

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Merle and Alyda Boes Fund
Bouwens Scholarship Fund
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The Jurries Scholarship Fund
James P. Kamp Endowed Scholarship
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Robert L. Wade and Lyda H. Wade Memorial Scholarship Fund
James and Margaret Wayer Fund
Rev. Jay Weener Scholarship Fund
Nell E. Wichers Scholarship Fund

Each year the Advancement staff offers students who have received scholarships the opportunity to meet their benefactors at a special luncheon. (Wes & Nell Kiel pictured with students)
The following endowed funds have been established to provide scholarship assistance to international students studying at Western Seminary:

- Nancy Bedingfield International Scholarship Fund for Th.M. Students
- Cornelia Dalenberg Scholarship Fund
- The Jeanette Fieldhouse Scholarship
- The Piet Family Scholarship Fund
- Mildred Schuppert Endowed Scholarship
- The Annette Ter Louw Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Evie Van Dorp Endowed International Student Fund
- Gilbert, Mina and Margaret Vandenvoort Memorial Fund
- Nellis and Pearl Wagner Overseas Graduate Student Scholarship Fund
- John Rose Foreign Scholarship Fund
- Agnes VanderHart Memorial Scholarship Fund

The following scholarships have been established for graduate study:

- Erwin and Edith Bach Scholarship for Pastoral Care and Counseling
- Henry J. Beukema Graduate Scholarship
- Osterhaven Graduate Scholarship

Library Memorial Funds:

- Lena Kolkman Memorial Fund (for archives)
- John P. Luidens and G. John Koolker Memorial Fund (for books)
- Lewis Scudder Memorial Fund (for books on Middle East study and missions)
- Menno and Ida Smith/Frank and Christine Mastenbrook Memorial Fund.

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- Dr. Dennis N. Voskuil president
- Western Theological Seminary

Board of Trustee members serve three year terms with members eligible to serve up to three consecutive terms.

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**Student Loan funds:**

- Church Agency Loan Fund; The Rev. Donald Boyce Memorial Loan Fund; John De Haan Student Loan Fund; Perkins Loan Program (formerly NDSL); Western Theological Seminary Memorial Loan Fund, including the following memorial funds in the names of: John Benes, George R. Brandt, Francis and Reina De Jong, Nettie De Jong, Clarence Denekas, John Den Ouden, Mr. and Mrs. H. John Hoffs, Henry Huenemann, Marguerite E. Kinkema, Fanny Ludwig, Herman and Helen Meurs, Henry Mollema, Albertus Pieters, Rens Van Westernburg, Randy Rosenberg, Henry and Minnie Ten Clay, S., Fanny Vande Bunte, Robert and Samuel Vander Ploeg, Lucille B. Van Heest, First Reformed Church, Ravenna, MI; anonymous donor.

**Other funds:**

- Dr. Stanley Rock Preparation for Ministry Fund

**Internship funds:**

- Robert and Martha De Bruyn Internship Fund
- Mabel Kemper Fund
- Wesley and Nell Kiel Scholarship Fund
- Vande Bunte Family Trust
Intercultural immersion trips present students with problems and opportunities posed by cultural differences, secularism, social fragmentation, religious pluralism, and ecumenism.
### Course Descriptions

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Master of Divinity courses

All courses receive three semester credit hours, except where otherwise indicated.

Biblical Field

Required Courses

BF100  New Testament Greek  
Boelkens, Van Voorst, J. Brownson  

BF101  New Testament Translation and Interpretation  
Boelkens, Van Voorst, J. Brownson  
Continues BF100, with special emphasis upon syntax and translation. Introduces the tools and principles of biblical interpretation. Emphasis is given to engaging the New Testament in its own linguistic, historical, and canonical context. Prerequisite: BF100.

BF102  New Testament Life and Witness  
J. Brownson, Van Voorst  
An introduction to the content, history, and theological dynamism of the writings of the New Testament. Emphasis is placed upon missiological interactions among gospel, culture, and tradition in the New Testament writings as the foundation for the church’s witness.

BF103  Old Testament Life and Witness  
Boogaart, Bechtel  
An introduction to the content, history, and theological dynamism of the Old Testament. Emphasis is placed upon the significance of the altar, tabernacle, and temple for Israel’s experience of God.

BF110  Biblical Hebrew  
Boogaart, Bechtel  
An introduction to biblical Hebrew vocabulary, grammatical forms, and sentence structure, with emphasis on reading the biblical text and using biblical Hebrew as a resource for ministry.

BF111  Hebrew Translation and Interpretation  
Boogaart, Bechtel  
Continues BF110, with special emphasis upon syntax and translation. Introduces the tools and principles of biblical interpretation. Emphasis is on engaging the Old Testament in its own linguistic, historical, and canonical context. Prerequisite: BF110.

Advanced Courses, Old Testament

BF513  Studies in Prophets  
Boogaart  
The role of prophets in Israelite society, their theology, and their impact on Western culture.

BF514  Seminar in Psalms  
Bechtel  
An exegetical study of selected psalms in the context of both the Old Testament and the larger canon of Scripture. Attention is also given to the role of the psalms in the liturgical, devotional, and theological life of the church.

BF517  Wisdom Literature of the Bible  
Bechtel  
Explores the forms, vocabulary, and concepts of wisdom in the Bible, emphasizing Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes.

BF520  Esther  
Bechtel  
A theological exposition of the book of Esther that looks to literary issues such as theme, character, and irony as guides for interpreting the book in the contexts of both the Old and the New Testaments. Originally intended as a model for life in the Jewish Diaspora, the book is a potentially important guide for Christians seeking to live faithful lives in a secular society. 1.5 credits.

BF522  Old Testament Narratives  
Boogaart  
A study of the artistry, drama, and theology of Israelite storytelling.

BF523  Old Testament Theology  
Boogaart  
Critical analysis of recent attempts at presenting an Old Testament theology. 1.5 credits.
BF524  Ruth
Bechtel
A literary and theological exposition of the book of Ruth. Emphasis will be placed on improving Hebrew reading and on refining exegetical skills. 1.5 Credits. Prerequisite: BF110.

BF525  Jonah
Bechtel
A literary and theological exposition of the book of Jonah. Emphasis will be placed on improving Hebrew reading and on refining exegetical skills. 1.5 Credits. Prerequisite: BF110.

BF527  Literature of the Second Temple Period
Boogaart
The literature produced during the life of the Second Temple (515 B.C.E.–70 C.E.) provides an essential background for understanding both Judaism and Christianity. This course surveys the relevant canonical books as well as selected literature from the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha in order better to appreciate the continuity between the Testaments.

Advanced Courses, New Testament

BF530  Letter to the Romans
Van Voorst
An introduction and overview of the letter, together with exegetical study of selected portions. Prerequisite: BF102 or equivalent.

BF531  Seminar in the Synoptics
J. Brownson
Explores the major approaches to interpreting the synoptic gospels, along with deeper study of one synoptic gospel. Prerequisite: BF102 or equivalent.

BF532  The Gospel According to John
J. Brownson, Van Voorst
Considers important historical, literary, hermeneutical, and theological issues in the Gospel of John, with exegesis of selected passages in Greek. Prerequisite: BF102 or equivalent.

BF533  Gospel According to Mark
Van Voorst
An exegetical and participatory reading of Mark together with translation of key passages. Prerequisite: BF102 or equivalent.

BF534  Acts of the Apostles
Van Voorst
Introductory material combined with an understanding of the entire book and the exegesis of selected passages in Greek. Prerequisite: BF102.

BF535  Interpreting the Parables
J. Brownson
A survey of recent approaches to interpreting the parables of Jesus provides the context for considering hermeneutical issues in preaching and teaching the parables. Prerequisite: BF102 or equivalent.

BF541  Letters to the Philippians and Galatians
Van Voorst
An exegetical study of two Pauline letters in light of modern interpretation, with attention to their use in modern theology and the preaching and teaching of the church. Selected Greek passages will be studied in depth. Prerequisite: BF102.

Other Elective Courses

BF613  Greek Reading
J. Brownson, Van Voorst
Maintains and enhances Greek language skills through weekly translation practice. Pass/fail, 1 credit.

BF614  Hebrew Reading
Bechtel, Boogaart
Maintains and enhances Hebrew language skills through weekly translation practice. Pass/fail, 1 credit.

BF616  Christianity in Literature
A study of biblical and theological motifs in selected poetry, prose, drama, and film, ranging from John Milton to Frederick Buechner.

BF617  The Ordination of Women: Exploring Biblical Authority and Church Order
J. Brownson
In-depth biblical exegesis and focused theological and hermeneutical reflection around the ordination of women—in an attempt both to assist students to clarify their understanding of this particular issue and to provide handles and tools for wrestling with the use of Scripture in the ordering of the church’s life more generally. A full range of views on the topic will be explored. 1.5 credits.
Theological Field

Required Courses

TF100 The Church’s Life and Witness (150-1536)
Kaiser, Chase
A study of the history of the church and its mission from 150-1536. Attention given to ways in which the church’s life and faith have shaped and been shaped by its various contexts and experiences and by its various forms of worship, proclamation, discipleship, and governance.

TF101 The Church’s Life and Witness (1536-Present)
Voskuil
A study of the history of the church and its missionary expansion from 1536 to the present. Attention given to the American church and to the student’s denominational heritage and the ways its life and faith have been shaped by its various contexts, experiences, forms of worship, proclamation, discipleships, and governance.

TF104 Introduction to Theology and Worship
T. Brown, Stubbs
This introductory course combines concerns that would usually be considered separately in courses in theology and worship, as a reflection of the deeply held Reformed and ecumenical conviction, *lex orandi, lex credendi*. Holding these two basic realities together, we will seek to deepen our understanding of the core aspects of the Christian faith, explore how theology and worship both shape and are shaped by the other, gain a growing capacity for thinking critically about our theology and worship, and develop skills for worship leadership.

TF111 Missional Church
Hunsberger
An introduction to missiology, ecclesiology, ecumenics, and eschatology that provides biblical-theological vision for the life and witness of the church in the contemporary world. Emphasis is given to the way social and cultural factors form the church in any time and place, the missional challenges facing the churches of North America at the present moment, and the unity in mission to which all the churches of the world are called. Prerequisite: TF104.

TF113 Systematic Theology I
Kaiser
This theology course explores the doctrine of God, the doctrine of Christ, and the doctrine of humanity. These three big headings include many other matters of theological importance, including Trinity doctrine, divine attributes, providence, atonement, resurrection, sin, and the image of God. Readings will range from early church to contemporary sources. Prerequisite: TF104.

TF114 Systematic Theology II
Billings
This theology course explores the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and all the implications of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believing community, including justification and sanctification, predestination, freedom, forgiveness, sacramental theology, and an understanding of Scripture and divine revelation. Readings will range from early church to contemporary sources. Prerequisite: TF104.

TF121 Christian Ethics
Stubbs
Explores how the theological vision of the Christian community expresses itself in specific intentions, practices, virtues, and actions and how Christian communities can grow in moral discernment. Prerequisites: TF104, TF113.

"The Church’s Life and Witness" class taught by Dr. Voskuil has been one of the most meaningful experiences I’ve had at Western. Not only did the history of the church come to life for me, I also established a personal link with figures who paved the way for Christianity. That link was especially strong with those who shared my Reformed heritage. In a word the class was... exciting.

Billy Norden
M.Div. student, class of 2007
TF124  Credo  
Kaiser, Billings  
This senior seminar will guide the student in the writing of a theologically comprehensive statement of Christian belief and vision of life and ministry. Students must either have completed or be concurrently registered for TF111, TF113, and TF114.

Advanced Courses, Systematic Theology

TF450  RCA Standards  
A survey of the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort designed to highlight distinctive elements of the Reformed tradition and to prepare RCA candidates for their ordination examinations. 2.5 credits.

TF518  Barth's Doctrine of Reconciliation  
Van Dyk  
Focuses on the very important Vol. 4 of Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics. Topics for reading and discussion include atonement, incarnation, and resurrection, as well as Christian virtue and the work of the Holy Spirit.

TF523  Doctrine of the Atonement  
Van Dyk  
This course will survey the rich variety in the doctrine of the atonement throughout Christian history, will examine the range of important theological issues and themes in the doctrine, and will raise lively pastoral issues that surround this doctrine. Sources will include the biblical materials, devotional and liturgical texts, and a selection of theological materials from the patristic period to the present.

TF525  Reformed Theologies: Calvin, Edwards, Schleiermacher, and Barth  
Stubbs  
Students will examine the historical context and primary texts of four major Reformed theologians: John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Karl Barth. We will consider the cultural and theological pressures they faced and how they addressed the three main theological questions: providence and election, revelation and natural theology, and the roles of Christ and Church in redemption.

TF527  The Holy Spirit  
Billings  
Few topics in churches are more contentious yet important than the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This course will examine theologies of the Holy Spirit in scripture and the various Christian traditions manifested in global Christianity. Through historical and contemporary readings, we will consider topics such as the personhood and work of the Spirit, the relation of the Spirit to the Christian life, and the nature of the gifts given by the Spirit to the community of faith.

TF528  Theological Hermeneutics  
Billings  
How are we to understand scriptural texts which may appear “unworthy of God”—texts which seem confusing and offensive? What is the relationship between biblical hermeneutics and the revelation of the mysterious God? Through classical and contemporary readings, this course will examine various Christian theories of scriptural interpretation. As a special focus, we will assess three exegetic and theological strategies for relating problematic scriptural texts to the transcendent God: accommodation, analogy and apophaticism.

TF574  Salvation and Deification  
Billings  
Theologies of salvation as deification begin at the end: when believers are united to God, participating in Christ's glorification and transfiguration. Instead of seeing salvation as primarily a matter of forgiveness of sin and guilt, these theologies emphasize how creation is fulfilled as believers are incorporated into the Triune life. We will critically evaluate theologies of deification from Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions, and assess their fruitfulness for the preaching and teaching of the church. 1.5 credits

Advanced Courses, Historical Theology

TF451  RCA History  
Voskuil  
Examines the development of the Reformed Church in the context of North America. Special attention will be devoted to the leaders, approaches, and philosophies of RCA missions. 2.5 credits.

TF526  Continuing Judaism as a Theological Partner in the Early Church  
Kaiser  
It is important for Christians to learn as much as possible about early Jewish literature, particularly as it relates to the New Testament.
and the developing rule of faith. We shall read some of the principal texts and discuss the development of ideas like the attributes of God (mercy and justice), and the supernatural light. In addition to reading these texts, students will create their own files of NT texts along with the Jewish texts that throw some light on them. Seven weeks. 1.5 credits. Prerequisite: TF100.

TF530 Ante-Nicene Theologians
Kaiser
Analysis and seminar-style discussion of the Apostolic Fathers and other primary sources from the second and third centuries. The class will develop a methodology for reconstructing the context of the authors’ theologies from the texts themselves. Seven weeks. 1.5 credits. Prerequisite: TF100.

TF531 Nicene and Post-Nicene Theologians
Kaiser
Analysis and seminar discussion of the writings of Saint Athanasius and other theologians of the fourth century. Topics include the Trinity, creation, Christology, and the Atonement. Seven weeks. 1.5 credits. Prerequisite: TF530.

TF532 Augustine of Hippo
Kaiser
Analysis and seminar discussion of the Confessions and other writings of Saint Augustine. The class will develop a methodology for reconstructing the context of the author’s theologies from the texts. Seven weeks. 1.5 credits. Prerequisite: TF526.

TF537 The Church in the Age of Reason (1648-1800)
Kaiser
The development of modern theology is traced from the rise of classical mechanics to the Industrial Revolution.

TF540 Reformed Church in America (1628-)
The history, liturgy, polity, missiology, and theology of the RCA.

TF544 Currents in 20th Century Theology
Stubbs
Close readings of some of the "classic" works of 20th century theology by theologians such as Barth, Bonhoeffer, Gutiérrez, Lindbeck, Rahner, Russell, Schmemann, and Moltmann. We will highlight the place of these works in larger theoretical and cultural currents.

TF549 Christian Prayer: Theology and Practice
Chase
Explores models of prayer in Christian faith, theology, and practice. Students will experience and practice many forms of prayer, meditation, and contemplation. Integrating theory and practice, students will consider the nature of prayer in their personal spiritual journeys within the life of the worshiping community and as an aid to discernment. Readings, lectures, practices, and discussions will cover Christian prayer from the biblical period to the present.

TF563 History of Christian Mysticism
Chase
An investigation of the theological, historical, biblical, philosophical, and contemplative roots of the Christian mystical traditions. One goal of this course is to develop the ability to appreciate and evaluate diverse forms of spirituality and mysticism. Course will include lectures, readings of primary and secondary sources, discussions, exposure to meditative and contemplative practices, and journaling.

TF570 American Theologies: Culture and Religious Thought in the U.S.
Voskuil
Employing H. Richard Niebuhr’s classic Christ and Culture typology, we will examine the interplay between religious thought and American culture during the last century, exploring how movements such as Evangelicalism, Pentecostalism, Fundamentalism, Protestant Liberalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, New Thought, Liberation Theologies, the death of God and New Age have developed in a culture that has nurtured individualism, freedom, competition, consumerism, pluralism, activism and optimism. The principal goal is to identify and understand the cultural forces which affect Christian thought during the 21st century.

TF572 The Missiology of Lesslie Newbigin
Hunsberger
A half-semester seminar researching and discussing Newbigin’s writings on mission theology, ecclesiology, cross-cultural witness, ecumenism and church unity, interreligious dialogue, encounter with Western culture,
"New Testament Life and Witness," taught by Dr. James Brownson, had a profound effect on me. Going into the class, I felt like I had limited knowledge and little understanding of how the whole New Testament fit together as a whole, but after taking this class, I feel like the world of the New Testament has been opened up for me. This course challenged me to explore the deeper implications of what it means for the Church to follow Christ and enter into God's story in dynamic and unconventional ways.

Anna Bogertman
M.Div. student, class of 2007

eschatology, and pastoral leadership. The seminar group will engage some foundational writings together, and each student will explore some particular facet or theme within Newbigin’s writings. 1.5 credits.

Advanced Courses, Ethics

TF545  Ecclesiology, Politics, and Economics
Stubbs
Building on an ecclesiological foundation, we will examine foundational principles of modern political and economic thinking, evaluate responses to contemporary capitalism and the emerging global economy, and examine models of Christian churches, organizations, and movements concerned with political and economic issues.

TF546  War and Peace
Stubbs
We will consider Christian views on war, peace, and peacemaking. We will survey some of the key theological and biblical perspectives on war from both a historical and a theoretical perspective, and then look more carefully at various Christian responses to select wars and Christian movements of peace and reconciliation.

TF555  Theology and Ministry in the Computer Age
Smith
How should the church proclaim the gospel in a world pervaded by computer technology? Through readings, discussions, media presentations, and visits to the workplace, the class explores questions related to human self-understanding and develops a theological framework for addressing specific situations created by the use of computers.

TF566  God and Mammon
Stubbs
In this course, we will wrestle with biblical and theological foundations for thinking about economics and politics, engage with three primary traditions of economic and political thinking within Christianity, read selections from the most important economic thinkers in modernity, and examine some concrete examples of individuals, communities and organizations that are self-consciously engaged in these matters. The main goal is to equip students to lead the church in thinking through matters of economic justice and possible concrete church practices. 1.5 credits

Other Elective Courses

TF512  Ministering to Science-Minded People
Kaiser
Reviews the present scientific account of the origin and evolution of the universe as well as the biblical teaching about creation to equip students in relating to scientists and engineers.

TF516  Pulpit, Pundits and Politics
The last presidential election reminded us of the important and multi-faceted relationship between politics and faith. This course will explore different theological and pastoral ways to consider the connections between the earthly city and the Heavenly City, as well as what it might mean to be faithful citizens of both. 1.5 credits

TF547  Gospel in Context
V. Sterk
This course will explore how the church can best present the supracultural message in understandable and culturally relevant forms. Worship, leadership, music, healing ministry and political involvement are some of the areas to be considered. 1.5 credits
TF655  Spiritual Theology  
*Chase*
Academic theology has tended to narrow its focus in regard to spiritual theology. This course will approach spiritual theology with questions that involve both heart and mind. It will cover the foundation of spiritual life in Christian doctrine, theology and the life of prayer, the spiritual journey and its goal, discernment of spirits, mystical theology, the relationship between contemplation and compassion, and devotional practice as new ways of knowing.

TF657  Jesus in America  
*Voskuil*
This course examines how Jesus is portrayed in American culture, and how this portrayal of Jesus impacts the mission of the church. 1.5 credits

TF617  Ecclesiastical Latin  
An introduction for students who have had little or no Latin, beginning with classical Latin grammar and syntax and moving on to ecclesiastical Latin readings. (Offered on request.)

TF618  Theological German  
Inductive study of basic German grammar and syntax and of selected texts in contemporary German theology. (Offered on request.)

TF621  Apologetics in Post-Christian Culture  
*Voskuil, K. Voskuil*
Helps students to interpret and commend the Christian faith in a non-Christian culture. If we are to be effective apologists today, we must have a clear understanding of and a firm conviction about the core beliefs of the Christian church, as well as a keen awareness of the cultures in which they are received and interpreted.

TF622  Mission and Ministry across Cultures  
*V. and C. Sterk*
An introduction to the intercultural dimension of the church’s life and mission, including insights drawn from cultural anthropology, communications theory, mission history, biblical hermeneutics, and mission theology. Special attention is given to developing a theology of cultural plurality with implications for witness, conversion, and ministry.

TF631  Christianity and Popular Culture  
*Van Voorst*
An analysis from an interdisciplinary viewpoint of the relationship of Christianity and popular American culture, especially the electronic mass media. Students will build a theological understanding of this relationship and will gain ministry skills to help Christians relate to popular culture in a faithful way.

TF632  Christianity and World Religions  
*Van Voorst*
An introduction to the beliefs and practices of the major religions of the world, with a study of their scriptural traditions. New religious movements such as Baha’i, The Unification Church, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (“Mormons”) are also treated, paying special attention to their relationship to Christianity. The Christian theological response to other religions is also considered.

TF633  Made in America: A Study of Indigenous Sects and Cults  
*Voskuil*
This course will examine several religious groups that have been spawned in the U.S. and Canada, such as the Latter-day Saints (“Mormons”), Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Scientists, Seventh-day Adventists, the New Age movement, and the Nation of Islam.
Students will study these movements and examine the North American culture that produced and nurtured them. 1.5 credits.

**TF634  Religion & Film**
The course examines religious experience in contemporary films, observing the variety of religious statements the films make and how they make them; tracing their dramatic movements from darkness to light, from despair to hope, and from evil to redemption; and reflecting on audience response. Special focus is given to filmmakers Krzysztof Kieslowski, Lars Von Trier, and P. T. Anderson.

**Christian Ministry Field**

**Core Requirements**

**CM101  Introduction to Preaching**
*T. Brown*
First-year students explore and grasp a biblical and Reformed vision of preaching. Includes a sermon preparation workshop and a “lab” in which written and preached sermons are carefully analyzed by faculty and peers. Significant homiletical concerns are presented, discussed, clarified, and applied to the task of preaching. 3 credits.

**CM102  Seminar in Spiritual Formation**
*Chase*
Our vocation to love God “with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” is a challenge for people of faith today as it has been throughout the centuries. The seminar will survey diverse traditions of Christian faith to see how believers throughout history have responded to and struggled with being formed in faith and love. Using a variety of spiritual practices and through critical reflection, students will explore formation in loving God with heart and soul and mind. 1.5 credits.

**CM103  Seminar in Congregational Studies**
*G. Brown*
This seminar cultivates the art of knowing a congregation—its context, character, and vocation. Skills of observation, discovery, and interpretation are practiced, and the capacity for theological discernment in peer collegiality is nurtured. 1.5 credits.

**CM112  Seminar on Communicating the Gospel**
*V. Sterk*
This seminar cultivates the ability to communicate the gospel in articulate, relevant, and true ways among people for whom faith in Jesus Christ is not yet formed. The seminar nurtures personal practices and patterns of communication that correspond to the calling of the whole people of God to give witness to Christ in life, word, and deed. 2 credits.

**CM113  Seminar on the Pastor as Person**
*Hamman, Latini*
This seminar asks students to call on their own selves as God calls them to the ministry. Students will be empowered to address their wholistic health proactively, while being warned against the inherent dangers of being in the ministry. Through the processing of verbata and through pastoral preaching, the students will reflect on the selves they bring to their ministries. Students must either have completed or be concurrently registered for CM115. 2 credits.

**CM115  An Introduction to Counsel and Care**
*Hamman, Latini*
In this introductory course, students explore giving counsel and offering care as ministers of Word and sacrament. They develop an understanding of the fundamental principles of pastoral care and acquire basic skills required for giving counsel and offering care. Numerous pastoral themes are addressed in lectures, learning labs, and small group interaction. Students will be encouraged to develop their own pastoral presence in offering counsel and care.

**CM120  Leading Christian Communities**
*Voskuil, MacLeod*
An introduction to the theory and practice of Christian leadership from a missional and theological perspective. A course for seniors.

**CM121  Church Governance and Denominational Standards (J-Term)**
*G. Brown*
Within the context of an overall theology of church governance, explores the candidate’s specific ecclesial tradition (including polity and standards) as a framework for mission. 2 credits.

**CM122  Empowering Christian Education**
*G. Brown*
This course is designed to introduce learners to the field of Christian religious education and to equip them for the church’s teaching
ministry. In addition to developing an understanding of fundamental principles of teaching and learning, learners will be exposed to five basic models of teaching and locate themselves within one of four distinctive approaches to Christian religious education.

**CM123 Seminar on Teaching and Learning**
*G. Brown*
This seminar integrates experiential learning in teaching churches under the supervision of mentors with critical reflection in peer group settings on the practice of Christian religious education. The focus is on developing competence as a teacher and learner through the practice of ministry and critical reflection. Students must either have completed or be concurrently registered for CM122. 1.5 credits.

**CM124 Worship**
An exploration of the ways in which the church’s worship declares God’s worth, expresses the church’s faith, mediates divine grace, and empowers God’s people for mission. 1.5 credits.

**Required Courses, Dual Track Master of Divinity-Master of Social Work**

**CM331 Dual Track Cohort Group**
*Hamman*
Cohort group meets bi-weekly during the first year of the Dual Track degree program. 1 credit

**CM332 Dual Track Cohort Group**
*Hamman*
Cohort group meets weekly during the second year of the Dual Track degree program. 2 credits

**CM333 Dual Track Cohort Group**
*Hamman*
Cohort group meets online during the third year of the Dual Track degree program. 1.5 credits

**CM334 Dual Track Cohort Group**
*Hamman*
Cohort group meets online during the fourth year of the Dual Track degree program. 1.5 credits

**Vocational Courses,**
**Pastoral Care and Counseling**

**CM499 Family of Origin Group**
*Hamman*
Teaches the theory of family relationships and assesses the very impact of those relationships on a pastor’s person and call to the ministry. This group, which meets weekly, will empower students to discover ways of being with people (rather than doing to people). Seeking both cognitive and emotional knowledge, the Family of Origin Group gives students the opportunity to carefully look at the relationships that formed them and the ways of being in relationship they bring to their ministry.

**CM513N Basic Clinical Pastoral Education**
*non-accredited*
A pastoral ministry practicum that integrates the theory and practice of ministry in a clinical setting with special attention given to the person in ministry. A basic practicum accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. 6 credits

**CM522 Counseling Youth**
*Hamman*
Students will be equipped to understand teenagers and adolescents from a developmental framework (i.e., physiological, emotional, cognitive, relational, social, and spiritual development) and will gain effective counseling skills to inform any youth ministry. The class will involve lectures, collaborative learning groups, and role-play before video cameras. Prerequisite: CM115 and current engagement in a ministry that includes working with youth.

**CM527 Ministry at the End of Life**
*Floding*
Provides a broad introduction to the privilege of ministry at the end of life. The class will consider practical issues such as the dying experience, pastoral care of the dying, partners in ministry, the funeral sermon and worship service, and bereavement ministry. Students will examine the theology and ethics surrounding the end-of-life and look at the social history of death in America. This course equips Christian caregivers with knowledge and skills for effective ministry to the dying and their loved ones.

**CM528 Ministry as Grief Work**
*Hamman*
Identifies the life-giving work of mourning and grieving as essential to any pastoral ministry. Embracing interdisciplinary, this course draws on biblical, theological, psychological, and sociological insights. It has three distinct
foci: 1) Students will be empowered to grieve personal losses in their lives and disappointments experienced in ministry; 2) Students will be equipped to facilitate the work of mourning in the lives of individuals and families; 3) Students will be prepared to guide the grief process for a large group of people (such as a congregation).

CM535 Theory and Practice of Small Group Ministry

Latini
A survey and critical analysis of a variety of models of small group ministry (e.g., bible study, spiritual direction, covenant discipleship, self-help, and leadership groups). Groups will be studied in light of the history of the small group movement, contemporary sociological trends, and a normative ecclesiology. Students will learn group process as they observe and participate in small groups throughout the semester. (limit 24 students)

CM578 Wounded Healer

Hamman
Addresses the relationship between a pastor's personality (which includes the desire for healing, wholeness, and holiness) on the one hand, and a pastor's conviction of being called by God to enter the ministry on the other. To highlight the dynamic relationship between the deeply personal and the grace-filled mystery, the class will look at the psychobiographies of pastors and prominent theologians (Luther, Bonhoeffer, and others).

CM580 Group Spiritual Direction

Chase
The spiritual direction relationship begins with an invitation from God to be together. It is surrounded by prayer and the contemplative art of listening with one's whole being. Group spiritual direction involves a facilitator and three to five other persons seeking the guidance and will of God together. The process involves a time of silence, sharing of a participant, silence, response from the group, and silence. The process is repeated for all members of the group. 1.5 credits.

Vocational Courses, Religious Education

CM531 Curriculum Evaluation and Design

G. Brown
Analysis and evaluation of Christian education resources and curricula designs. Students develop skills for evaluating and designing a Christian education program.

CM532 Equipping for Teaching and Leadership

G. Brown
Skills taught in this course include discerning spiritual gifts, calling people to service, and equipping teachers and leaders for their ministries and affirming their contributions. A variety of methods and media will be used.

CM534 Educating for Transformation

G. Brown
Church education frequently limits its focus to information and formation. Romans 12:1-3 reminds pastors and religious educators that education in the church also needs to attend to transformation. This seminar-style course is designed to introduce participants to the thought of James E. Loder and other educators. Participants will explore practical implications of the theoretical perspectives of Loder and others. 1.5 credits

CM582 Developing Education Programs in the Local Church

G. Brown
A minister serving a congregation is both a teacher and the key leader in the congregation's education ministry. This course is designed to help prepare learners to develop, implement, and evaluate teaching and learn-
CM621 Christian Education of Adults
G. Brown
Developmental characteristics and religious needs of adult learners, learning styles and appropriate instructional methods, and program design and resources are covered in this course. Students develop a philosophy of Christian education with adults.

CM529 Tuned For Praise
Bechtel
Discover the beauty and potential of the human voice singing in harmony. This class focuses on learning music for worship, including opportunities for leading the WTS community in song. Bring whatever musical gifts God has given you (instrumentalists, too). Sample styles like Iona, Taizé, Jewish, and whatever else the class would like to explore. Make beautiful music, enrich the worship life of the community, and praise God all at the same time. 1 credit

CM547 Preaching in the Urban Context
Participants will explore authentic strategies for preaching and effectively communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ to urban, contemporary hearers. In dialogue with peers and the professor, the participants will reflect on the person of the preacher, examine the urban context, explore the homiletical demands in diverse, city congregations, and incorporate experiential context and theological content in sermons. Participants will explore new strategies for preaching, reflective of their commitment to the biblical text, the urban community, and their personal voice.

CM548 Keeping and Talking the Word
T. Brown
A course designed to both consider and practice the centuries long spiritual discipline of scripture memorization. With specific consideration to the nature and history of the oral transmission of the scriptures and building on specific training in contemplative exegesis, each participant will prepare and perform selected portions of the biblical witness and participate in a larger group performance of the same.

CM549 The Rhythms of Preaching: How to Prepare for a Year in the Pulpit
This course addresses particular preaching events in pastoral ministry: liturgical seasons, weddings, funerals, and holidays. It includes an initial look at how preaching the catechism provides a time-tested way of teaching doctrine to long-time believers as well as seekers. Assesses classic and contemporary resources for preaching. Participants will prepare and preach at least two sermons and will prepare
a draft preaching calendar with scripture texts and topics for Advent through Ordinary Time.

**CM555 Seeker-Sensitive Preaching**

*T. Brown*

Investigates, evaluates, and implements strategies for preaching in a “post-Christian” culture. The course will evaluate the phenomenon of “seeker-sensitive worship” and offer a vision for preaching that is both responsive to the Reformed heritage and sensitive to contemporary culture.

**CM557 Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible**

*T. Brown*

An exploration of the particular demands of preaching from the apocalyptic literature of the Bible. Focusing largely on the Apocalypse of St. John, the course will investigate preaching themes in corresponding Old Testament works such as Daniel and Ezekiel. Preaching is required, and each student will leave the course with a specific preaching plan.

**CM564 The Ministry of the Word and the Land and Culture of the Bible**

*T. Brown*

The Bible, by God’s design, was written by human beings living in a specific time and place. A faithful interpretation, application, and proclamation of the biblical witness requires an understanding of the cultural, political, and geographical context from which it arose. Material will be drawn from work done previously in the biblical field, Jewish and rabbinic studies, and an intensive travel seminar in Israel itself. The Jewish roots of the Christian faith make significant implications for the ministry of the Word in the twenty-first century.

**CM567 Spirituality for Preaching**

*T. Brown*

Participants explore and exercise the classic disciplines of the Christian life that for centuries have sustained those whom God has called to preach. The course focuses on a “contemplative exegetical” reading of St. Paul’s letter to the Colossians. In alternating rhythms of lectio continua and lectio divina, prayer, silence, meditation, and mutual encouragement, participants ready themselves for “a long obedience in the same direction.”

**CM568 Preaching and Pain**

*T. Brown*

Skill development for dealing with the deep pains of the human experience in relation to the biblical vision of hope and healing. Preaching is required in this course. Seven weeks; 1.5 credits.

**CM576 Called to Preach**

*T. Brown*

A course for the person sensing a call to a life of proclamation in the parish setting. Students will examine varying homiletical models to help them discover their “voice” for the task of preaching, to consider a range of sermon planning possibilities, and to investigate approaches for dealing with the inevitable conflicts of preaching in a parish setting. The course involves the regular rhythm of lectures, discussions, and preaching labs. Prerequisite: CM101.

**Vocational Courses, Leadership**

**CM450 RCA Polity**

*G. Brown*

A survey of the *Book of Church Order* and the organizational theory, structure, and function of the Reformed Church in America. 1.5 credits.

**CM523 Leading Missional Innovation and Change in Ministries and Congregations**

*MacLeod*

Will examine the theory of leading change in ministries and congregations through empowering learning. The theory of the learning organization and its primary focus on guiding change will be applied to ministry and congregational cases. Students will draw upon their Teaching Church experience as actual cases to investigate. Assignments will include applying the five principles for leading learning organizations.

**CM526 Leadership for a Revitalized Church in Mission**

This course will help students understand the leadership issues necessary for shaping a healthy and missional congregational culture. Nurturing congregational health and vitality, leading change, shaping congregational culture, and organizing for mission are the key components of this course. A wide range of church and community leaders will be invited to help introduce students to central concepts and contextual applications for what is being learned.
CM537  Leadership within the Complex Social Systems of a Congregation

MacLeod

Effective pastoral leadership entails the wise leadership and management of a complex and multi-layered social system. This course will explore the collective social patterns deeply lodged within congregations. Students will develop skills in discovering social patterns, assessing the implications for ministry and congregational health/change and determining types of leadership responses.

CM575  New Church Development

This course will provide an overview of strategies for church planting and church multiplication, with particular attention to the skills, gifts, and aptitudes needed to serve as the founding pastor of a new church.

CM588  United Church of Christ History and Polity

With denominational roots spanning four centuries, the United Church of Christ brings together a variety of theological, ethnic, and ideological perspectives. This course explores its history, structure, mission, and ethos. Seven weeks; 1.5 credits.

Other Vocational Courses

CM524  Introduction to Campus Ministry

Floding

Examines the issues confronting the chaplain or church-based campus ministry position including worship, faith development of eighteen- to twenty-four-year olds, pastoral care challenges, engaging faculty, working with the administration, international student ministry, self-care, and proven models. 1.5 credits.

CM525  Ministry in a Postmodern World

MacLeod

Many of today’s congregational practices find their roots in mid-twentieth-century culture and are now colliding with aspects of the emerging twenty-first-century culture. This course will examine dominant social aspects of the emerging culture often called “postmodern.” Values, beliefs, and assumptions of modernity and postmodernity will be theologically and socially critiqued and examined with regard to their implications for congregational and ministry practices.

CM536  Popular Culture, Practical Theology, and Ministry to Adolescents and Young Adults

Latini

Using various forms of popular culture—e.g., music, movies, fashion, TV—this course will examine the psychological, social, and spiritual challenges and questions of adolescents and young adults living in contemporary North America. Students will learn both to interpret popular culture from multiple perspectives and to develop strategies of ministry to adolescents and young adults.

CM577  Rural Church Ministries

Floding

Students sensing a call to serve in a rural ministry setting will explore the opportunity and challenge from a social systems perspective. Sixty percent of RCA congregations are in town and country settings with populations of 50,000 or less. Students will consider rural church leadership in light of its spiritual, geographic, social, economic, demographic, and political contexts. This learning experience includes significant interaction with a rural RCA pastor, the Rural Church Network, and a field trip. Seven weeks; 1.5 credits.

I spent my supervised ministry experience in Fort Jackson, SC in the Chaplain Officer Basic Course class. CHOBC was an excellent learning experience. There have been so many changes in the Army since my military days that it was almost “new” to me. Being an officer was also new. I found much to struggle with and consider regarding this ministry while moving towards this goal and God’s will. It was all good.

Lt. Nicholas Knebl
M.Div. student, class of 2007
Formation for Ministry

FM101 Retreat for Christian Formation (J-Term)
Floding
A spiritual retreat using autobiography, peer engagement, and the spiritual disciplines to assist students in clarifying and embracing God's call upon their lives. 2 credits.

FM111 Intercultural Immersion Experience (J-Term)
Provides cognitive and experiential knowledge of the global character of the church's witness and mission in North America and around the world, with concern for the problems and opportunities posed by cultural differences, secularism, social fragmentation, religious pluralism, and ecumenism. 2 credits.

FM115 Practice of Christian Ministry (Part-time Ministry)
Four 100-hour units of supervised part-time ministry in a Teaching Church setting selected in consultation with the Formation for Ministry office. The student establishes appropriate learning covenants in cooperation with a ministry-setting mentor. Learning goals are pursued using an action/reflection model that integrates theory, practice, and the person in ministry. This learning/serve commitment is evaluated by the student, the mentor, and the site team. Concurrent participation in a peer group is required while completing these units. 1 credit.

FM125 Advanced Practice of Christian Ministry
This 400-hour full-time supervised ministry experience requires the student to exercise a wide range of ministerial skills at the highest personal, professional, and pastoral levels. This requirement may be satisfied in a number of settings including participation in Clinical Pastoral Education, parachurch ministries, cross-cultural ministries, and congregational ministry. Due to the significant level of ministerial and educational investment, it is highly recommended that the student invest time in a discernment process with the Formation for Ministry office before selecting a placement. This learning experience will be evaluated by the student, a supervising mentor, and a lay support committee. 2 credits.

FM126 Launching Your Ministry
Identifies and discusses leadership issues related to making a positive transition from seminary student to called and ordained clergy in a new ministry setting. 2 credits.
DM810 Orientation Seminar  
*Boogaart, Hamman*  
Introduces major components of the program. During the seminar, students refine their program of study, work on designing two learning units and one elective, and set goals for increased competency in ministry during the ensuing year. Meets for three weeks in May-June; 4 credits.

DM811-812 Learning Units  
Learning units are primary building blocks of the D.Min. program. A learning unit is a specific action-reflection exercise that furthers the candidate's knowledge, skill, and personal competence in ministry in a specific discipline with carefully defined objectives related to the overall program goal. Students develop two learning units during the first year. 4 credits.

DM813 Elective 1  
Students select electives that will deepen the focus of their program of study or that will strengthen them in a particular area of the practice of ministry. An elective may be self-designed, or a formal educational course or intensive may be chosen. 4 credits.

DM820 Candidate Seminar  
*Smith*  
Begins the second year of the program, culminating and integrating the first year's work and providing a foundation for the second year. Meets for three weeks in May-June; 4 credits.

DM821-822 Learning Units  
Learning units are primary building blocks of the D.Min. program. A learning unit is a specific action-reflection exercise that furthers the candidate's knowledge, skill, and personal competence in ministry in a specific discipline with carefully defined objectives related to the overall program goal. Students develop two learning units during the second year. 4 credits.

DM823 Elective 2  
Students select electives that will deepen the focus of their program of study or that will strengthen them in a particular area of the practice of ministry. An elective may be self-designed, or a formal educational course or intensive may be chosen. 4 credits.

DM830 Project Seminar  
*Kaiser*  
Begins the third year, in which students design a project based upon their first two years' work. Students are expected to have completed four learning units and two electives prior to entering this seminar. Meets for two weeks in May-June; 4 credits.

DM840 Project  
Design and execution of a project is the final stage of the D.Min. program. The D.Min. project consists of an original investigation or activity in ministry and affords students an opportunity to develop a mature practice of ministry characterized by careful scholarship. 12 credits.

Twelve years after earning my M.Div. degree, I returned to Western to pursue a Doctor of Ministry degree. One of my favorite professors had told me, “You will never push yourself with the same level of intensity apart from the accountability of a degree program.” He also said that pursuing a doctoral degree would be a blessing to my ministry. He was right. My thesis topic, “Racism and Revival” led to great change in my own life and that of my congregation.

Rev. Jeff Porte  
M.Div. 1987; D.Min. 2002
MT210  Orientation Seminar  
*Karsen* 
Introduces the Th.M. program by forming a “cross-cultural community of scholars” in which scholarly reflection is done. Creates new configurations of self-understanding for theological reflection in community and introduces the philosophy, format, and thesis requirements of the Th.M. program. Meets annually during the last two weeks in August. 1.5 credits.

MT220  Research Design  
*Chase* 
Assists the Th.M. students in the preparation of a thesis proposal by introducing the basics of academic research and writing. By the end of the course the student 1) will be able to construct a well-designed research proposal; 2) will be familiar with basic strategies and tools for research and academic writing; and 3) will plan a research strategy for writing a Th.M. thesis. Meets monthly during the first semester. 1 credit.

MT230  Seminar in Contextual Analysis  
*V. Sterk* 
Develops theoretical orientations and methodological skills for contextual analysis with three foci: sociological, cultural, and psychological. Meets during the first half of the first semester. 1.5 credits.

MT240  Seminar in Theology and Its Contexts  
*Stubbs* 
Explores issues surrounding the cultural embeddedness of theology. Examines how the idea of “context” is related to debates about theological method and considers how to understand the relationships between theology and the Holy Spirit, the “culture” of the church, and the larger cultures in which we find ourselves. Meets during the second half of the first semester. 1.5 credits. Prerequisite: MT230.

MT250  Seminar in Intercultural Hermeneutics  
*Biblical Field Faculty* 
Explores and applies methodologies for the interpretation of Scripture in cross-cultural contexts and addresses the interaction of gospel and culture in intercultural dialogue. Meets during the January-term. 1.5 credits. Prerequisites: MT230, MT240.

MT252  Preliminary Exam  
A faculty advisor and a faculty colleague, in consultation with the candidate, assign discipline and thesis-related bibliographies. The lists reflect the major contributors to a particular discipline, the methodological issues involved in that discipline, and the current questions or debates among scholars in that discipline most relevant to the thesis topic. The exam is given at the end of January and has two components: a two-hour written examination conducted by the Th.M. Director and a 45-minute oral examination conducted by an examination committee.

MT255  Independent Research  
In the event that courses critical to a Th.M. candidate’s program are unavailable within current curriculum offerings, the candidate may request an independent study in a particular field of inquiry within the chosen focus area. It may be done only with the consent of a professor who provides guidance and evaluation and only with the approval of the Academic Dean. It may combine course materials from a required M.Div. course with additional independent work, at the professor’s discretion.

MT260  Thesis  
A major research paper that builds upon and extends in a focused area the knowledge and critical ability gained in the basic divinity degree. The topic and plan are subject to the approval of the Th.M. Committee. The candidate’s Faculty Advisor, in conjunction with a Second Reader, provides guidance for the research. 6 credits.
**SCUPE courses**

**SCUPE M305: Dimensions and Dynamics of Urban Ministry: The Gospel in the City**
This course, organized as a sequence of days concentrating on particular neighborhoods and the ministries at work within them, demonstrates a variety of approaches to gospel in the city. These conversations with Urban ministers provide a comprehensive view of SCUPE's approach to Urban Work. 3 credits

**SCUPE B-Th302: Urban Principalities and the Spirit of the City**
Drawing from recent theological work on the biblical language of power, this course will seek to understand the city, its systems and its ministries by understanding the “principalities and powers.” 3 credits

**SCUPE M304: Christology and Culture**
Employing a narrative hermeneutic, introduces Christology from a global, cultural and liberationist perspective – and its significance for urban missiology. 3 credits

**SCUPE S-H303: Public Issues in Urban Ministry**
Examines the critical issues affecting the quality of life for those living in major metropolitan areas. An in-depth examination of the contributions of faith communities to social analysis, public theology, and transformation in relation to issues such as welfare reform, racism, poverty, violence, gentrification and the like.

**SCUPE M306: Urban Preaching Intensive**
Acknowledging the diverse rhythms and styles of city congregations, takes biblical approach, with particular attention to the prophets and Jesus as Spirit preachers. Emphasis on discerning signs of the times and on proclamation that breaks the grip of urban principalities. 2 credits

**SCUPE Supervised Ministry Practicum**
Focuses on personal formation for ministry by integrating work in the ministry setting with SCUPE's academic course load. A case study approach, provides a forum for faith sharing, self-awareness of gifts for ministry, and peer group theological reflection on actual ministry. It is the course vehicle for SCUPE's internship field education/ministry credit. Credit varies by seminary.

**SCUPE M302: Cross Cultural Ministry Intensive**
Using the city as a multicultural global laboratory, this two-week intensive provides a practical theology for ministry in a multicultural context, engages biblical study of the early church's struggle with cultural barriers, encourages respect and appreciation of world-views and value systems different from one's own, offers training in movement and communication across cultural divides, and exposes students directly to a wide variety of ministries in diverse cultural settings. 3 credits

**SCUPE S-H305: Restoring Urban Communities**
Introduction to principles and practices of church-based community development. Presents the relationship between biblical faith and development practice through site visits to effective models and an overview of the resources and leadership skills necessary for effective community development. 3 credits

*Western Theological Seminary participates in SCUPE, the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education, located in Chicago (www.scupe.com). SCUPE offers specialized intensive courses and internships in urban ministry.*

To take a course, students register with Western Theological Seminary, pay the course fee here, and send SCUPE a completed single course registration form. Information on schedules and registration for these courses is available from Western's student support services department.
### Academic Calendars


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<tr>
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<tr>
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#### Residential M.Div. 2006-2007

<table>
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<td>Junior M.Div. orientation</td>
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### Distance Learning M.Div. 2005-2006

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<td>July 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer semester grades available</td>
<td>July 31</td>
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</table>

"Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." **Isaiah 40:31**
Western Theological Seminary is an institution of the Reformed Church in America and an accredited member of the Association of Theological Schools. Its degree programs are authorized by the Department of Education of the State of Michigan. The seminary is approved for veterans' education under the provisions of the Veterans Administration.

Copies of the Association of Theological Schools standards for theological schools and the accreditation process are available for review at the registrar's office. A copy of Western's current accreditation certification is also available for review at the registrar's office.
preparing Christians called by God
to lead the church in mission