

MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES CONCENTRATION IN ETHICS & VALUES



Program Description The Liberal Studies degree was first offered in the United States in the 1950's to meet a variety of educational needs. At Valparaiso University, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program was established in 1963, making it the second oldest such program in the US and marking the beginning of a commitment to graduate education at VU. This MALS concentration in Ethics & Values is intended for professionals in a variety of fields who could benefit from an understanding of and sensitivity to issues of ethics and values. The program enables students to develop the framework necessary for making informed, values-based decisions in fields such as law, ministry, health care, business and human services. The 36 credit program--which is most easily completed through a combination of evening and day study--is made up of core requirements in liberal studies, concentrated study in ethics, and a capstone integrative project. The program is one of several at Valparaiso University that reflect the institution's longstanding commitment to promoting the highest standards of personal and professional behavior not just among students, but within the community, church, and larger society. While most coursework must be completed in residence, permission may be granted for up to 6 credits of off-campus study.

The Core Curriculum MALS programs at VU require a 12-credit core of interdisciplinary study drawn from seminars in the humanities, social and natural sciences, and fine arts. These core seminars provide students with diverse perspectives and methodological tools that help prepare them for in-depth study in their concentration. Although the specific topics of these seminars change regularly, all share the common thread of viewing the human experience through both classical and contemporary perspectives, and all can be approached from the perspective of the student's concentration in Ethics & Values. Each seminar involves significant reading, writing, and reflection.

Ethics & Values Concentration
The concentration in Ethics & Values consists of a minimum of 15 credits of coursework. All students take one course dealing with ethical theory and principles. They then choose at least four courses that deal with the application of ethical principles to specific professions. These include, but are not limited to, law, business, mental health and counseling, medicine, communication, and general professional ethics. The program culminates with an integrative project providing the opportunity for students to apply ethical principles to some aspect of their professional discipline. This project is conducted under the supervision of one of the faculty associated with the program, and may involve significant independent work either on or off campus.

A Capstone Experience No thesis is required for

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completion of the MALS in Ethics & Values, however, research papers are regular part of graduate coursework in the program. MALS students are encouraged to culminate their studies with a capstone experience, a research project, a creative or artistic work, a service-learning endeavor, or even a travel/study experience. Regarding this last option, MALS students may earn academic credit by taking advantage of 4-6 week stints of study at one of VU's overseas centers in Cambridge, England; Reutlinger, Germany; Puebla, Mexico; or Hangzhou, China.

Curriculum

MALS Core Requirements		12 credits
LS 650	Seminar in Religion, Culture & Value	3 cr
Select three from the following:		
LS 610	Seminar in the Humanities	3 cr
LS 620	Seminar in the Social Sciences	3 cr
LS 630	Seminar in Natural Sciences	3 cr
LS 640	Seminar in the Fine Arts	3 cr
Concentration Requirements		15 credits
Ethical Foundations (<i>Select one course</i>)		3 cr
THEO 540	Topics in Religious Ethics	3 cr
THEO 546	Contemporary Moral Issues	3 cr
THEO 630	Advanced Topics in Contemporary Theology (approved)	3 cr
THEO 640	Advanced Topics in Religious Ethics	3 cr
THEO 643	Marriage & Sexuality	3 cr
THEO 644	Religion in the Age of Science	3 cr
Ethical Studies & Applications		6 cr
LS 659	THEO 641 Biomedical Ethics	3 cr
(Select three courses below or from remaining Foundation level courses)		
THEO 641	Integrative Project in Ethics	3 cr
PSY 693	Professional Issues & Ethics in Counseling	3 cr
LS 555	Ethics in Business	3 cr

LS 591/691	Topics in Ethics	3 cr
LS 655	Professional Ethics	3 cr
LS 656	Legal Profession and Ethics	2 cr
Electives		9 credits
Six credits of electives are selected from 600-level LS courses. The remaining three elective credits may be selected from any department as long as the student meets course prerequisites.		

What Can You Expect? Graduate study at Valparaiso University requires motivation, dedication, and reflection. The involvement of master teachers ensures that courses are challenging yet rewarding. Class sizes are small, and both peer and faculty interactions contribute a critical component to the learning experience. MALS students become acquainted with one another through the core seminars and they become acquainted with faculty in their discipline through coursework in their selected concentration. Periodically, the Office of Graduate Studies assembles students in the MALS program for informational and social events.

Criteria for Admission Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate Division, which include:

- Undergraduate degree from an accredited University;
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 (paper version), 230 (computer-based), or Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT) score of at least 80; minimum IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 6; CET score of 6, or an INTERLINK Language Center Level 5, or the equivalent for non-native English speakers;
- An overall grade point average of at least a 3.25 is preferred, although students with lower GPA's will be considered on an individual basis.

As part of the application process, students must provide:

- [Valparaiso University Graduate Application](#);
- Official transcripts of all prior undergraduate and graduate coursework. If you have received an undergraduate or graduate degree from Valparaiso University, you are not required to submit an official transcript from Valparaiso University;
- Two letters of reference;
- A reflective essay detailing your reasons for pursuing graduate study;
- Application Fee: \$30 for U.S. citizens, \$50 for International Students.

The MALS program features a continuous admission process, so application materials may be submitted at any time. Once received, the admission decision normally takes 2-3 weeks.

Financial Considerations Students may be surprised to discover the affordable tuition rate at Valparaiso University. Tuition for the 2008-2009 academic year is \$450 per credit hour, highly competitive for a private institution of recognized national quality. Students enrolled in graduate courses pay a \$80 general fee each semester. [Financial aid](#) is available through direct and indirect student loans

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for students taking 6 credits or more during fall and spring semesters. Because most course offerings are scheduled for the evening, many students hold part- or full-time employment during their study.

For more information about the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Ethics & Values program Interested students should [request an application packet](#) from the Office of Graduate Studies through our website or by e-mailing Graduate.Studies@valpo.edu.

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