

MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES CONCENTRATION IN THEOLOGY OR
THEOLOGY & MINISTRY



Program Description

The Liberal Studies degree was first offered in the United States in the 1950s to meet a variety of educational needs. At Valparaiso University, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies 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. The Theology programs--which are most easily completed through a combination of evening and day study--are made up of core requirements in liberal studies, the concentration, and electives. Both programs reflect Valparaiso University'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. The Core Curriculum Specific core requirements depend on the program, but in general the interdisciplinary seminars making up the core provide students with diverse perspectives and methodological tools that help prepare them for in-depth study in their concentration. Although the specific topics of the core 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 area of concentration. Each seminar involves significant reading, writing, and reflection. Theology Concentrations Students may choose the general 36-credit Theology concentration which requires 15 credits of coursework in the concentration. Or they may choose the more rigorous and professionally oriented 39-credit Theology & Ministry program, designed for those seeking to enlarge their theoretical understanding of theology as well as develop practical skills in ministry. Professional church workers and lay volunteers in particular may benefit from this latter program. A Capstone Experience 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 up to 6 credits of travel/study by taking advantage of 4-6 week periods of study at one of VU's overseas centers in Cambridge, England; Reutlingen, Germany; Puebla, Mexico; or Hangzhou, China. Theology (36 credits)

Core Liberal Studies	12 credits
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LS 650	Seminar in Religion, Culture, & Value	3 cr
Select two from the following:		
LS 610	Seminar in the Humanities	3 cr
LS 620	Seminar in the Social Sciences	3 cr
LS 630	Seminar in the Natural Sciences	3 cr
LS 640	Seminar in the Fine Arts	3 cr
Concentration Requirements		15 credits
Five Theology courses with at least two at the 600 level.		
Electives		9 credits
Two courses may be selected from any area of the humanities, social and behavioral sciences, or fine arts, as well as approved courses from other specialty areas. One elective must be a 600 level LS seminar course.		

Theology & Ministry (39 credits)

Core Liberal Studies		9 credits
LS 650	Seminar in Religion, Culture, & Value	3 cr
Select two from the following:		
LS 610	Seminar in the Humanities	3 cr
LS 630	Seminar in the Social Sciences	3 cr
LS 640	Seminar in the Natural Sciences	3 cr
Concentration Requirements		24 credits
Bible & Christian History:		
THEO 510-519/610-619	Biblical Studies	3 cr
THEO 520-529, 620-629	Topics in Christian History	3 cr
Ministry:		
THEO 551	Theology of Diaconal Ministry	3 cr
THEO 552-557, 640-649		3 cr
THEO 680	Practicum	3 cr
Capstone Course:		

THEO 692/695		3 cr
Theology Electives		6 cr
Electives		6 credits
Any two lecture/seminar courses from MALS offerings.		

What Can You Expect? Graduate study at VU requires motivation, dedication, and reflection. Master teachers ensure 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 Graduate Office 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 3.00.

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 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 Theology and Theology & Ministry program To learn more about the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Theology and Theology & Ministry program, visit their department

Graduate Studies & Continuing Education - Valparaiso University
website at <http://www.valpo.edu/theology/>. 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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