

Huron University College  
Faculty of Theology  
Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes  
Professional Degree Programs  
Master of Divinity  
Master of Theological Studies  
March 23, 2010

## **I. Goals for the Professional Degree Programs**

The purpose of the professional degree programs of the Faculty of Theology at Huron University College is to prepare leaders to serve God in the church, the university, and the world faithfully, critically, and imaginatively. Graduates of the professional programs will develop and demonstrate:

- Knowledge of the theological disciplines and other fields of theological and religious studies;
- Knowledge gained through contextual learning in the form of field education, pastoral placements, and community-based learning programs;
- Interpretive skills for critical and integrated theological reflection and, in particular, the ability to translate theory into practice;
- Performative skills for religious leadership, particularly with regard to oral and written forms of communication;
- The capacity to recognize, value, and address the theological implications of social issues in their local and global cultural context;
- Personal discernment, development and formation regarding their vocations to ministries in their diverse forms and communities.

These general objectives are further expanded and refined in the learning outcomes for the M.Div. and M.T.S. degree programs according to the specific purposes of each.

### **1. Objectives for the M.Div. Degree Program**

The M.Div. is normally a three-year degree program that provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for effective leadership in congregations and other ministry settings. In the M.Div. degree program, students study the theological disciplines, develop their knowledge and understanding of the life of the church as well as other religious traditions and faith communities, exercise and refine their skills for ministry, and engage in ongoing spiritual formation to prepare them for ordained ministry and other forms of religious service and leadership. Graduates of the M.Div. program will demonstrate the acquisition of the following knowledge, skills and values:

**A. Knowledge of the Bible and its Interpretation**

1. Competency to read, study, and interpret the Bible using contemporary methods of interpretation, with a basic knowledge of their original languages, composition, historical and cultural contexts, canonical reception, history of interpretation, major theological teachings, and relevancy to ancient and contemporary communities of faith.
2. Ability to read current cultural and social contexts in light of the biblical narratives, poems, themes, patterns and claims regarding the power of God in the life of the church and the world.
3. Awareness of the diverse ways in which the Scriptures have challenged, enlivened, and informed the life and witness of the church.

**B. Breath of Theological Vision:**

1. Informed understanding of, and ability to communicate, Christian doctrines, including their historical expression, interpretation, and continuing relevance.
2. Developed understanding of church history and the history of Christian thought. For Anglican students, this involves particular reference to the history, beliefs, and practices of the Anglican Church of Canada, member churches in the Anglican Communion, and other Christian denominations.
3. Ability to articulate and teach those doctrines and practices that express the life and witness of the church, particularly ecclesiology, sacramental and liturgical theology, homiletics, and ethics.
4. Understanding of historical, methodological, and philosophical approaches to the study of theology and religion.

**C. Cultural Sensitivity and Awareness:**

1. Appreciation for the varied ways in which global Christianity is practiced as a result of different histories and indigenous settings, particularly in the diverse Canadian and North American context.
2. Ability to engage and collaborate across denominational boundaries informed by a generous understanding of the diversity of Christian identity and expression.
3. Understanding of the historical and theological engagement between Christianity and other major world religions, in particular Judaism and Islam.
4. Commitment to, and developed skills for, transformative ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.

**D. Ministerial and Public Leadership:**

1. Competency in preaching and other forms of verbal communication in a way that engages listeners in a variety of contexts.
2. Ability to plan, lead, and evaluate common worship that is faithful to inherited traditions, creative in its implementation, and relevant to existing and emerging needs in the church and the wider community. For Anglican students, thorough grounding in the prayerbooks of the Anglican Church of Canada or of their supporting dioceses in the Anglican Communion.
3. Ability to adapt and to provide pastoral care in diverse contexts with an understanding of appropriate professional boundaries, limits, alternatives, and adaptations needed to meet the changing needs in the wider church and community.
4. Effective skills for leading individuals, groups and/or communities informed by an applied understanding of group dynamics, collaboration, change management, and conflict mediation and resolution.
5. Commitment to, vision for, and the practical skills necessary to facilitate and lead church growth through mission, evangelism, and discipleship.
6. Understanding based on experience of the value of diverse ministries conducted outside traditional parish contexts.
7. Management skills and administrative vision for leading emergent and existing faith communities and other community-based organizations.

**E. Personal and Spiritual Formation:**

1. Ability to discern, articulate and attend to one's calling as it changes and develops during one's degree program and after graduation. For Anglicans, this involves formation and discernment regarding priestly, diaconal, or lay ministry.
2. Psychological and spiritual maturity, integrity, and awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses.
3. Demonstrated commitment to ongoing transformation of life through the nurture of a healthy and disciplined spiritual life.
4. Skills and strategies for integrating personal faith and the public demands of ministry.
5. Integration of theological learning with a life-long commitment to self-understanding and transformation.
6. Openness, sensitivity, and generosity towards all people as created in the image and likeness of God.

## **2. Objectives for the M.T.S. Degree Program**

The M.T.S. is normally a two-year degree program that provides students with the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of the core theological disciplines as well as for more focused study within a particular academic or practical specialization. In terms of specialization, students enrolled in the M.T.S. may seek to concentrate on more graduate-level study in one of the theological disciplines or on acquiring practical skills for ministry and public service. Across this range of goals, graduates of the M.T.S. program will develop the acquisition of the following knowledge, skills, and values:

1. Informed knowledge and interpretive skill in the theological disciplines, in particular the biblical, theological, historical, philosophical, social, and ethical dimensions of Christianity and other faith traditions.
2. Ability to reflect critically and theologically on the church's role in public life.
3. Knowledge and respect for the diverse religious traditions in Canada and the world, in particular for the ways in which Christianity is practiced as a result of local histories and indigenous contexts.
4. A broadened and enriched understanding of social justice and community transformation.
5. Ability to collaborate across denominational and religious boundaries informed by a generous understanding of the diversity of Christian expression in the ecumenical and interfaith context.
6. Developed knowledge, interpretive skill, and evaluated experience in one of the following areas of specialization: biblical studies, theology and ethics, comparative religion and theology, congregational ministry, pastoral counseling, or public service.