

BARRY UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT
DEGREE: MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGY

MISSION/PURPOSE

The Master of Arts in Theology program at Barry University serves those individuals seeking a degree in preparation for teaching theology in secondary school systems, assuming the position of Director of Religious Education, pursuing further study in doctoral programs, and seeking personal enrichment in theology. The Master of Arts in Theology requires 36 credits and provides students in the field of theological and religious education and in the pursuit of a doctoral degree with a rigorous theological foundation geared to their specific needs.

PROGRAM GOALS

The purpose of the M.A. in Theology degree program is to provide a foundational understanding of the theological disciplines of the Christian tradition for the professional education credential and/or further graduate study through:

- Rigorous academic engagement in the areas of biblical, systematic, liturgical/sacramental, and moral theology
- Theological research through historical methods in Scripture, systematic, sacramental/liturgical, and moral theology
- Integrated theological reflection on experience
- Theological engagement with diverse cross-cultural contexts and a global worldview.

These goals were developed by faculty and based up the Standards of the Association of Theological Schools which has accredited this program.

STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING OBJECTIVES/EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Objective 1: Students demonstrate mastery of core theological curriculum through reflective reading, critical thinking, and quality academic writing.

Objective 2: Students constructively engage theological discourse in the context of its historical, philosophical, cultural, and societal development.

Objective 3: Students critically analyze Scripture using a variety of critical hermeneutical methods.

Objective 4: Students accurately elucidate the theological foundations of Christian moral tradition.

Objective 5: Students demonstrate sound theological engagement with diverse sociocultural and religious traditions.

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COURSE/OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT MAP					
EXPECTED OUTCOMES	609	636 or 637	655	601 or 610	630 or 662
Objective 1	X	X	X	X	X
Objective 2	X	X			
Objective 3				X	
Objective 4			X		
Objective 5					X

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY				
Assessment Instrument	Data Collection/ Frequency (assessment cycle)	Objectives assessed	Direct or indirect measure	Expected results
Annotated Bibliography	MA-THEO students in THE 609, 636, and 637 engage in depth one area of systematic theology through an annotated bibliography of no fewer than 8 scholarly sources based upon a Statement of Theological Interest. This statement in which the student writes and presents a 1-page description of one area of theological interest shaping his/her proposed research, focuses the research for the annotated bibliography, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area of theological interest may address one specific contextual theology OR one specific theological discipline. The one-page statement must describe the reason for the student's interest in this one specific contextual theology 	1, 2, 4, 5	Direct	70% of students score 4 or more per Objective assessed on a 5-point rubric.

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	<p>or the student's interest in this one specific theological discipline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the student chooses one contextual theology, the bibliography must include references from a minimum of four different theological disciplines within that context. ○ If the student chooses the one specific theological discipline, the bibliography must include references from a minimum of four different contextual locations within that discipline. <p>In addition to the 1-page statement, the student submits a preliminary bibliography based on his/her issue of theological interest. The statement should conclude with one question that will frame the research contained in the bibliography.</p> <p>The annotation summarizes succinctly and insightfully the main ideas and supporting details of readings and demonstrates keen grasp of context, methods and sources utilized by author through depth of reflection and analysis. The evaluation demonstrates creative, insightful, and explicit assessment of how the readings apply to ministry and/or research concerns, clearly connecting the theoretical and practical. As part of the Core Curriculum, all MA-THEO students must take THE 609, which is offered every three years.</p>			
Annotated Bibliography	<p>MA-THEO students in THE 655 engage in depth one area of systematic theology through an annotated bibliography with evaluation of research of no fewer than 8 scholarly sources.</p> <p>The annotation summarizes succinctly and insightfully the main ideas and supporting details of readings and demonstrates keen grasp of context, methods and sources utilized by author</p>	1, 4	Direct	70% of students score 4 or more per Objective assessed on a 5-point rubric.

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	through depth of reflection and analysis. The evaluation demonstrates creative, insightful, and explicit assessment of how the readings apply to ministry and/or research concerns, clearly connecting the theoretical and practical. As part of the Core Curriculum, all MA-THEO students may take THE 655, which is offered every three years.			
Research Paper	<p>MA-THEO students in THE 662 write a 15-page paper which examines the christology, ecclesiology, biblical hermeneutics, or theological methods that underlie the theologies of liberation surveyed in the course. The final paper promotes the following objective of the MA-THEO program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mastery of core theological curriculum through reflective reading, critical thinking, and quality academic writing. • engagement with theological discourse in the context of its historical, philosophical, cultural, and societal development • sound theological engagement with diverse sociocultural and religious traditions. 	1, 5		70% of students score 4 or more per Objective assessed on a 5-point rubric.
Biblical Exegesis	<p>MA-THEO students in THE 601 write a 10-15 page biblical exegesis arranged according to the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction: Why did you choose that particular book of the Bible and which is your pericope of study. • Consult a minimum of 2 sources. <p>THE WORLD BEHIND THE TEXT: Using one pericope from the synoptic gospels or Acts, give a deeper research about the text: author, date, possible original audience, the social, cultural, religious and/or political background, the reason or circumstance that motivated the writing of the text, and any suggestion of the possible author or date of composition.</p>	1, 3		70% of students score 4 or more per Objective assessed on a 5-point rubric.

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	<p>THE WORLD OF THE TEXT : provide the general outline of the synoptic gospel or Acts from which the pericope was selected and the theological themes proper to that book.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take the same pericope and do the exegetical commentary, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greek vocabulary • Citations from the Old Testament • Echoes of a Christian teaching/preaching in other texts of the New Testament 2. For each scholar consulted, provide a summary view of the scholar's interpretation of the passage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the author's own theological tradition/ perspective (Latino / black / feminist / LGBT, etc.)? • The author's interpretation about this passage from the large context of the letter. • Discuss points of agreement and disagreement among the scholars about the passage under consideration and note whether the authors give any arguments to back up their positions. How convincing are the arguments presented? (within the boundaries of your expertise). 3. Give an interpretative summary of the text in your own words. <p>THE WORLD IN FRONT OF THE TEXT: provide an introduction to your personal context.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Answer the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would YOU read/ understand this passage from your own ministerial/personal context? 			
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In what sense will this passage contribute to your personal or ministerial experience? <p>Conclusion: What did you learn from this letter/passage for you in your faith journey and for your ministry?</p> <p>FORMAT AND STYLE: Double-spaced, typed or word-processed with 12-point font and 1" margins. REFERENCES: Turabian style.</p>			
Research Paper	<p>MA-THEO students in THE 610 write a 10-15 page research paper, explore a theological and/or historical topic or theme that arises within the Prophetic Books.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the relevant biblical passages, discuss ambiguities within the passage(s) and questions you would like to address. Use these questions to focus on a broader thesis statement or question. Choose at least 8 academic works (six articles and two books) that address the thesis topic. Systematically and critically evaluate the salient points of scholars' positions and discuss how the scholars differ from one another. Consider which scholars are compelling, and which are unconvincing. Explain why. Offer your own critical interpretation/assessment of the theological and/or historical thesis topic or theme in light of the research you have done and refer back to the questions you posed at the beginning of your paper. Offer creative, insightful, and explicit reflection on how your insights apply to ministry, praxis, and/or research concerns. 	1, 3		70% of students score 4 or more per Objective assessed on a 5-point rubric.

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Comprehensive Examinations	<p>The Capstone Process for the Master of Arts in Theology consists of two components: Written Comprehensive Examinations, and Oral Examination on the contents of the synthesis and the comprehensives.</p> <p>Written Comprehensive Examinations: Students complete Written Comprehensive Examinations in the four theological disciplines not utilized in the Synthesis Project. Using historical critical method, as well as contemporary, contextual / practical theological perspectives, students are expected to integrate course content as well as other bibliographic resources into each theological area. The Department provides students with questions and a recommended bibliography for examinations in Old Testament, New Testament, Systematic Theology, Liturgical/ Sacramental Theology and Moral Theology at the outset of their studies in the MA-THEO Handbook.</p> <p>Oral Examination: The Oral Examination on the contents of the Written Comprehensives is conducted by at least three members of the Graduate Theology Committee and may take up to one hour. Examiners question students on the theological content and methodology.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Direct	80% of students pass all five sections of the Comprehensive Examinations on the first attempt.
PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION OF THE MATCH BETWEEN ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES:				
<p>Course Embedded Assessment (CEA): The rationale for the use of course embedded assessment to evaluate competency in each of the Student Objectives is threefold. First, CEA makes explicit and practical connections among the MA-THEO Program Goals, the MA-THEO Core Curriculum, and specific Student Learning Outcomes. Second, CEA requires that course content and assignments explicitly address and reinforce the Objectives designed to advance students' theological competency. Third, CEA</p>				

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ensures that these Objectives are assessed multiple times at different intervals during the student's course of study in order to monitor progress in developing each of the Objectives and remediate as needed. The following describes the explicit connection in the course(s) between the assignments and the objectives assessed.

- **Annotated bibliography** with evaluation demonstrates research skill, depth of reflection and analysis, recognition of contextual influences on the theologian/theological discourse, and explicit assessment of how the readings apply to research concerns.
- **Exegetical Papers** demonstrate research skill, depth of reflection and analysis, application of hermeneutical methods, and explicit assessment of how the readings apply to research concerns.
- **Research Papers** demonstrate research skill, depth of reflection and analysis, recognition of contextual influences on the theologian/theological discourse, and explicit assessment of how the readings apply to research concerns.
- **Comprehensive Examinations** demonstrate reflective reading, critical thinking, and quality academic writing; engagement with theological discourse in the context of its historical, philosophical, cultural, and societal development; critical analysis of Scripture using a variety of critical hermeneutical methods; elucidation of the theological foundations of Christian moral tradition; and sound theological engagement with diverse sociocultural and religious traditions.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS (2020-2025)

OBJECTIVE	RESULTS BY OBJECTIVE (PERCENTAGE SCORING 4 OR HIGHER)	INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS																		
THE 609	<table> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Objective 1</th><th>Objective 2</th></tr> <tr> <td>2020</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2021</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2022</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>2023</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr> <tr> <td>2024</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	Year	Objective 1	Objective 2	2020			2021			2022			2023	100%	100%	2024			Results indicate that 100% of MA-THEO students achieved 4.0 or better on the assessment.
Year	Objective 1	Objective 2																		
2020																				
2021																				
2022																				
2023	100%	100%																		
2024																				

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THE 636/637	Year	Course	N	Objective 1	Objective 2
	2020				
	2021	636	3	66%	66%
	2022	637	4	75%	75%
	2023				
	2024				
	The criterion of 70% was met in Spring 2022 but was not reached in Fall 2021. While only one student in each course failed to attain the score of 4, the number of students in the course affects the percentage.				
THE 601/610	Year	Course	Objective 1		Objective 3
	2020				
	2021				
	2022	601	100%		100%
	2023	610	100%		100%
	2024				
	As these results indicates, all student in the MA-THEO program met the criteria in 2022 and 2023.				
THE 655	Year	Objective 1		Objective 4	
	2020				
	2021				
	2022				
	2023				
	2024				
THE 630/662	Year	Course	Objective 1	Objective 5	
	2020				
	2021				
	2022				
	2023				

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COMPREHENSIVES EXAMINATION RESULTS (2020-2025) INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS						
MA-THEO CAPSTONE Criterion: 80% of students pass all five sections of the Comprehensive Examinations on the first attempt.						OUTCOME
Year	Passed/First Attempt	Retake 1 Question	Retake 2 Questions	Retake 3 Questions	Fail to Complete	
2020						
2021						
2022	1					Met the criterion
2024		2				
USE OF RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENTS						
COURSE EMBEDDED ASSESSMENTS (2020-2025): USE OF RESULTS						
Students who entered the MA-THEO since its reinstatement in 2020 have successfully navigated the assessment measures and have met or exceeded the criteria overall.						
COMPREHENSIVES EXAMINATION RESULTS (2020-2025) USE OF RESULTS						
Of the three students who sat for the MA Comprehensives in 2022 and 2024, one passed on the first attempt and two needed to refine one section of on particular question. Overall, each student demonstrated a holistic grasp of Master's level theological knowledge to a successful degree.						

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MASTER OF ARTS IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE	
MASTER OF ARTS IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY STUDENT OBJECTIVES	All Core Courses and Preferred Electives must integrate and assess at least two of the five Student Objectives as indicated in the Course/Objectives Assessment Map:
ASSESSMENT TOOL AND CRITERIA	Describe the assignment to be used to assess the objectives, making specific connection to the skills described in the objectives and indicate a criterion score that indicated mastery of the objectives. For example: <i>Satisfactory demonstration of competency will be indicated by a score of 4 or higher on the assignment rubrics.</i>
RUBRIC	Indicate where the rubric for scoring the assignment is located.

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RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF MA-THEO STUDENT OBJECTIVES (COMPETENCIES)			
	5	3	1
OBJECTIVE 1			
Intellectual Acuity	Responses demonstrate keen awareness of recent theological scholarship with an emphasis on diverse theological viewpoints/ approaches. Assignments completed according to specific directives with a variety of sentence structures and correctly formatted in Turabian style. Minimal digression or unsubstantiated rhetoric. Shows critical consciousness, creative thought, and articulate expression.	Responses show an awareness of recent theological scholarship and includes some recognition of diverse theological views/approaches. Assignments generally cohere with directives and employ some variety of sentence structure. References inconsistently and/or incorrectly formatted. Noticeable digressions and unsubstantiated rhetoric. Demonstrates some reflection on the material assigned with evidence of critical thought and thoughtful expression.	Responses indicate minimal recognition of recent theological scholarship. Assignments seldom follow directives with no recognizable format for research references. Little variety of sentence structure. Significant digression and unsubstantiated rhetoric. Insights and conclusions demonstrate minimal reflection, creative thought, or coherent expression.
OBJECTIVE 2			
Development of Doctrine	Demonstrates deep consciousness of the impact of historical, philosophical, cultural, and societal context on the development of theological discourse. Identifies the major influences producing shifts or revisions in thought.	Demonstrates some awareness of the impact of historical, philosophical, cultural, and societal context on theological discourse. Identifies some influences producing shifts or revisions in thought.	Demonstrates little awareness of the impact of context on theological discourse. Unable to identify influences producing shifts or revisions in thought.

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OBJECTIVE 3			
Biblical Hermeneutics	Demonstrates the capacity to analyze the biblical text through a variety of hermeneutical methods. Recognizes and articulates the impact of the different methods on interpretation.	Applies more than one type of biblical hermeneutics on the biblical text. Recognizes that hermeneutical approach influences interpretation .	Unable to apply more than one type of biblical hermeneutics to the biblical text. Expresses little recognition of the impact of varied methods on interpretation.
OBJECTIVE 4			
Foundations of the Christian Moral Tradition	Demonstrates a depth of understanding of the foundations of the Christian moral tradition with specific insight into and articulation of the development of that tradition over time and the impetus for such development.	Articulates the major foundations of the Christian moral tradition and how the tradition developed over time. Expresses some understanding of the stimulus for such development.	Identifies some of the foundations of the Christian moral tradition. Lacks a sense of its development or the influences stimulating such development.
OBJECTIVE 5			
Theological engagement with diverse cultural and religious traditions	Demonstrates capacity for sound theological engagement with diverse cultural and religious traditions through the effective and insightful application of critical and constructive theological and knowledge in discussion, research, and reflection.	Engages diverse cultural and religious traditions with theological interest; satisfactorily applies insights to theological discourse.	Exhibits reluctance to engage diverse cultural and religious traditions; fails to discern connection between such diversity and theological discourse.