



SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Master of Divinity with a Certificate in Spiritual Care

Eligibility

This Certificate is open to all Master of Divinity students as part of the degree program. Students must complete all requirements of both the Certificate in Spiritual Care program and the M.Div. degree in order to receive the Certificate in Spiritual Care. Students in the Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies and other Non-Degree Students, as well as MACM and MTS students, are not eligible to participate in this certificate program.

Description

The Certificate in Spiritual Care is designed for students who are called to ministries of emotional support and spiritual guidance in a variety of settings, including congregations, public and private institutions, and community ministries. The Certificate offers two areas of focus. The chaplaincy/pastoral care focus prepares students for vocations as chaplains in institutional settings (e.g., hospitals, prisons, military, universities) or as ministers of pastoral care in congregational settings. The spiritual formation focus prepares students for careers as spiritual directors in congregational or other settings.

The Certificate requires nine credit hours of advanced elective coursework in pastoral theology and spirituality, a contextual ministry placement in the practice of pastoral care or spiritual formation, and a final written self-reflective paper or project. Its coursework and training activities emphasize self-reflective learning that integrates theological knowledge, practical skills, and awareness of one's personal identity, relational abilities, cultural awareness, and spiritual commitments.

Required Courses

Students will complete 9 hours of Advisor approved courses of advanced electives (beyond the 69 core hours of the M.Div.) from the following courses:

- *Chaplaincy/Pastoral Care Focus*
 - THPT 503 Spiritual Care through Crisis Ministry
 - THPT 642 Spiritual Care with Addicted Persons
 - THPT 643 Spiritual Care through the Interpretation of Dreams
 - THPT 644 Toward a Theory & Practice of Love
 - THPT 645 Spiritual Care with African American Families
 - THPT 646 Counseling Couples in the Congregation
 - THPT 647 Trauma Stewardship
 - THPT 648 Pastoral Care with Women
 - THPT 649 Coaching for Spiritual Growth
 - THPT 650 Spiritual Direction
 - THPT 651 Forgiveness and Reconciliation
 - THPT 652 Gender & Sexuality
 - THPT 704. Clinical Pastoral Education Unit 2
 - THPT 800 Special Topics: Subtitle
 - Other courses approved by Advisor

- *Spiritual Formation Focus*
 - THCH 701 Classics of Christian Devotion

- THCH 703 Celtic Christianity
- THCH 712 Contemplation in a World of Action: The Life and Writings of Thomas Merton
- THSP 601 Spiritual Disciplines for Christian Spiritual Formation
- THSP 602 Christian Pilgrimage
- THSP 604 Christian Formation for Racial Reconciliation, Part 1
- THSP 605 Christian Formation for Racial Reconciliation, Part 2
- THSP 642 Spiritual Care with Addicted Persons
- THSP 643 Spiritual Care through the Interpretation of Dreams
- THSP 649 Coaching for Spiritual Growth
- THSP 650 Spiritual Direction in Ministry
- THSP 701 Classics of Christian Devotion
- THSP 703 Celtic Christianity
- THSP 706 Creation Theology, Spirituality, and the Arts
- THSP 712 Contemplation in a World of Action: The Life and Writings of Thomas Merton
- THSP 800 Special Topics: Subtitle
- Other courses approved by Advisor

Professional Formation

Students will complete one experience in each of the following areas of professional formation:

- **Contextual Ministry Placement:** Students in the chaplaincy/pastoral care focus will complete a unit of clinical pastoral education (CPE) at an ACPE-accredited training center. Students in the spiritual direction specialization may complete: (1) a unit of CPE; (2) at least one semester of contextual education in a church or community organization setting where providing spiritual formation to individuals or groups is a significant component of their responsibilities; or (3) one semester of supervised teaching ministry (THPT 626) with a focus on spiritual formation
- **Personal Spiritual Direction or Counseling:** Since competent and ethical practice of spiritual care necessitates self-reflection, personal growth, and attending to one's own physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, students in the Certificate in Spiritual Care are expected to participate in activities geared toward their ongoing formation, growth, and well-being. This can include participating in days of reflection, spiritual retreats, counseling, or spiritual direction, as well as personal practices of self-care and students should complete at least 6 hours of activity per academic year
- **Final Reflection Paper:** In the final year of their program, students will complete a four-to-six page paper documenting their understanding of their professional identity and how it influences their conduct as a spiritual care provider

Note: Completion of the Certificate in Spiritual Care does not in itself qualify graduates to become board-certified chaplains or certified spiritual directors. However, the coursework and training experiences will help graduates acquire the foundational knowledge and skills to support their applications for certification.

**Rubric for Final Reflection Paperⁱ
Certificate in Spiritual Care**

Criterion	Score		
	1: Needs Improvement	2: Meets Criterion	3: Exceeds Criterion
Demonstrates awareness of one’s strengths and how they contribute to one’s provision of spiritual care. Articulates their self-perceived limitations and how they adapt, manage, or work through them.			
Articulates ways in which one’s feelings, attitudes, values, and assumptions affect one’s professional practice.			
Describes how one attends to their own physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, and how personal practices of self-care impact their ability to care for others more competently.			
Discusses their understanding of boundaries as it informs their spiritual care. Provides a concrete example of how they practice humility and respect within the boundaries of the physical, emotional, cultural, and spiritual needs of the diverse populations they serve.			
Describes the role of advocacy in providing spiritual care and how/when they incorporate advocacy in their spiritual practice.			
Describes how they ensure that their provision of spiritual care abides by the <i>Code of Ethics for Spiritual Care Professionals</i> .			

ⁱ Adapted from Board of Chaplaincy Certification, Inc., Competencies Writing Guide, Section II: Professional Identity and Conduct Competencies.