

# MDiv: Master of Divinity

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The Master of Divinity program is recommended as the basic training for Adventist ministry by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the North American Division. It is a three-year professional program beginning in the summer or autumn semester of each year. Students can complete the 96-credit program in six semesters with summers free. However, the Seminary schedule is so arranged that MDiv students who have no deficiencies and who have adequate financial support may accelerate their studies by taking six semesters in sequence, including summers, and complete the program in less than three years.

The professional education provided by the MDiv program seeks

- to provide training in biblical, linguistic, historical, theological, philosophical, ethical, missiological, pastoral, and evangelistic fields to meet the professional needs of the Seventh-day Adventist minister,
- to engage all seminary departments in seeking to integrate cognitive and practical preparation for professional ministry,
- to foster spiritual growth in personal, family, and corporate life in formal and informal settings,
- to cultivate a seminary environment conducive to learning in a variety of settings such as colloquia, group discussions, assemblies, the library, preaching practicum, field assignments, and spiritual formation groups,
- to integrate contributions of several departments on major Christian themes basic to Seventh-day Adventist heritage and proclamation,
- to involve seminarians in the practice of ministry through field work,
- to raise awareness of, and sensitivity to, the multicultural characteristics of society through special activities, courses, and fellowship,
- to foster sound methods of study and investigation aimed toward lifelong professional service and growth,
- to promote the development of professional skills requisite for the propagation of Biblical faith and Christian commitment within the Adventist framework.

## ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

All MDiv applicants must meet the Graduate Programs Admission Requirements applicable to all graduate students found on p. 38 and the general seminary requirements on p. 277.

Applicants to the MDiv program must also meet the qualifications listed below:

- hold a baccalaureate degree, usually in theology or religion,
- demonstrate undergraduate work that includes the items specified below in the list of Undergraduate Prerequisites,
- normally hold membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church inasmuch as the MDiv program is specifically designed for SDA ministers and is sponsored and financed by the SDA church,
- represent high moral integrity with a character, lifestyle, and spiritual commitment reflective of the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and show promise of usefulness for Adventist ministry through personal maturity and adequate experience in the Church. (Persons of other faiths who are willing to live in harmony with these standards are welcome to apply.),
- submit an autobiographical history and statement of purpose reflecting the applicant's family and religious development,

sense of calling to ministry, experience in church work, and future goals in relationship to the MDiv program. (If married, the spouse of the applicant is also asked to complete a statement in regard to her or his feelings and relationship to the partner's aspirations for future ministry.),

- an interview with a representative of the MDiv program may be required, either by personal contact, telephone, or video,
- complete the 16 Personality Factor Inventory and accompanying questionnaire which are sent to the applicant after the initial application has been received.

Completion of the MDiv program does not in any way or at any time guarantee employment in Adventist ministry or any other church employment.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

**Summer Course Load.** The 12-week summer session is divided into three 4-week sessions and normal course load for any of these sessions may not exceed 5 credits. The total amount of course work during the summer session may not exceed 12 credits.

**Workshop Credit Limit and Grading Pattern.** Master of Divinity students may apply up to 4 workshop credits appropriate to degree requirements. If workshops are taken during the semester breaks, the credits are counted as part of the class load for either the previous or the following semester.

Workshops are graded S/U. Any deviation from this pattern must be approved by the dean prior to the conclusion of the workshop. Students must register at the Academic Records Office for all workshops for which academic credit is desired.

**Independent Study Restrictions.** Students in the MDiv program are allowed to register for Independent Study only for a compelling reason such as a schedule conflict or the need to take a subject that is not offered. Normally, Independent Study cannot be used to meet a core requirement. Students must first seek approval from the office of the MDiv director before arranging with a teacher to do Independent Study.

**Residency Requirements.** On-campus residence is broken if a student fails to enroll for at least one semester within a period of three consecutive semesters. When residence is broken, the student must follow the bulletin in force at the time residency is reestablished. Where 12 semester credits or fewer are lacking, the student may graduate under the bulletin in force at the time of his/her initial entrance.

**Re-enrolling in the MDiv Program.** Following an absence of two years or more, a student's previous admission status will have lapsed and the student will need to reapply to the program.

**Transferring Credits to the MDiv Program.** Up to 9 semester credits (earned on a level which corresponds to 500-course numbers of the SDA Theological Seminary) may be transferred from the School of Graduate Studies of Andrews University or from an accredited university provided the courses to be transferred are relevant to the MDiv program and have not been used for a previous degree (in which case only 6 credits may be transferred).

Seventeen credits may be transferred to the MDiv program from an MA in Religion conferred by an accredited SDA institution granting such or similar degrees.

Students who have attended other approved theological seminaries and plan to take an MDiv degree from Andrews University must complete a minimum of 50 semester credits in the Seminary.

At least 30 of these credits must be taken in residence programs.

Transfer credit is granted only for courses in which the grade is B or higher.

**Reduced Class Load.** MDiv students whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.50 are required to reduce their course load to no more than 12 semester credits. MDiv students whose cumulative GPA remains below 2.50 for a second consecutive semester are required to withdraw from the Seminary.

When an incomplete has not been cleared by the beginning of the next semester, the course load must be reduced as follows:

- One I—no reduction
- Two I's—load reduced by one 2-3 credit course
- Three I's—load reduced by two 2-3 credit courses

With more than three I's, the student must withdraw from the program until the I's are cleared.

**Student Assessment.** Since the MDiv program prepares individuals for professional and pastoral leadership, periodic assessments are made of the students by the faculty in areas other than academic standing. Areas reviewed are students' spiritual growth, lifestyle reflective of the beliefs and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, social/family relations, and developing potential for ministry. As a result of these assessments, students are affirmed in the MDiv program, advised of needed adjustments, or discontinued from the program.

**Graduation.** The Seminary follows the University graduation procedures and requirements for the conferral of degrees as outlined in this Bulletin. A special ceremony for graduating seminary students is held during the last chapel period before graduation.

## **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Students needing Homiletics/Biblical Preaching should take

**General Electives****up to 13**

Students take electives to complete the total of 96 credits required for the MDiv degree. Up to 8 credits in relevant courses offered by other schools of the university on the graduate level may be included in the general electives, including up to 4 appropriate workshop credits.

Students can earn a maximum of 8 more elective credits by formal assessment and increase this number of elective credits to a maximum of 21 credits. Students can request that some predetermined courses in the basic curriculum be waived after the proper formal assessment has been done. Courses that may be waived by assessment are determined by each department including General Seminary courses, and a student can waive by assessment a maximum of 8 credits. If a student waives more than one course within a department, the second elective course must be taken in that department.

Students obtain a Thesis Completion Form from the dissertation secretary. They must take the form to the Academic Records Office no later than noon on Friday, a week preceding graduation. A fee is charged by the university for binding the three copies of the dissertation, two of which are deposited in the library and one in the department in which the student earns the degree.

Students who do not adhere strictly to the deadlines noted above will have their graduation postponed.