Master of Arts in Applied Theology

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The MAAT program, grounded in the Roman Catholic theological tradition, is designed to prepare students for a variety of church-related ministries: Youth Ministry and Parish Catechetical Leaders, Pastoral Associates, and Parish Life Coordinators among others. To achieve this goal, it seeks to provide both a solid theological foundation for ministry and practical courses aimed at providing the pastoral skills needed to exercise effective leadership in one's chosen ministry. The accompanying practica will enable students to integrate their learning through field experience and theological reflection.

The non-traditional format of this degree program meets the needs of persons already working at full-time jobs. Students are admitted as a cohort and are expected to do the coursework as a group over the entire four years of the program. One course is taught each semester, with the students meeting only once or twice as a group and the rest of the course taking place online. These class meetings are held at various locations within the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. In addition, a week-long summer course is held yearly on the campus of Wheeling Jesuit during the month of June to coincide with the Diocesan TIMELY program sessions.

Students enrolled in the MAAT program will normally be participants in the broader diocesan TIMELY program, which aims at preparing ecclesial lay ministers to serve parishes in this rural diocese. The MAAT program participates in meeting the needs of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston by providing as many of the intellectual and spiritual resources needed to exercise these ministries with compassion, competence, and informed leadership.

Students meeting the stated admission requirements will only begin coursework when their numbers are sufficient to form a new cohort.

Upon completion of the MAAT program, students may expect:

1. To have acquired an up-to-date theological base for understanding, exploring, and reflecting on the truths and richness of the Christian faith as these apply to concrete ministerial situations
2. To have gained the skills essential for leadership in the rural church, for service as religious educators, and for pastoral ministry to diverse populations

Admission Requirements

1. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with at least a 2.75 cumulative undergraduate grade point average as indicated by an official transcript.
2. A completed application form with a Letter of Intent and a brief biographical essay. These should include your reasons for applying for the MAAT: an explanation of how your past studies and life experiences have prepared you for this program. It should also list what you hope to achieve and how the degree will be useful to you and to the community.
3. Three letters of recommendation, including one from your Pastor. At least one other must be from someone who has taught you and has had the opportunity to evaluate your potential for ministry in the Church.

Curriculum Requirements

1. The following courses are required of all students in the MAAT degree program. All are two credit courses:
   - MRE 501 . . . . . . Hebrew Scriptures
   - MRE 503 . . . . . . Systematic Theology
   - MRE 505 . . . . . . Christian Ethics
   - MRE 508 . . . . . . Pastoral Ministry
   - MRE 509 . . . . . . Christian Spirituality
   - MRE 601 . . . . . . Sacramental Theology
   - MRE 603 . . . . . . Jesus and God the Father
   - MRE 605 . . . . . . The Church
   - MRE 611 . . . . . . The Gospels
   - MRE 613 . . . . . . The Letters of Paul
   - MRE 623 . . . . . . The Catholic Social Justice tradition
   - MRE 633 . . . . . . The process of Catechesis
   - MRE 651 . . . . . . Ministry in the Life Cycle
   - MRE 665 . . . . . . Worship and Liturgy
   - MRE 667 . . . . . . Ministry of Healing
   - MRE 669 . . . . . . Leadership for the Rural Church

2. The following practica (each one credit) are required of all students as well:
   - MRE 680 . . . . . . Practicum in Catechetical Ministry
   - MRE 682 . . . . . . Practicum in Pastoral Ministry
   - MRE 683 . . . . . . Practicum in Ministry through the life cycles
   - MRE 685 . . . . . . Practicum in Ministry of Healing
Course Descriptions

MRE 501 Hebrew Scriptures
A survey of the Old Testament literature within its historical context, with an emphasis on major methods of contemporary Biblical interpretation.

MRE 503 Systematic Theology
An analysis of the key concepts in theological method; a study of the major periods in the development of Christian theology, and the principal schools of thought.

MRE 505 Christian Ethics
An analysis of the key concepts and problems involved in the methodology of Christian morality; a rapid overview of the principal schools of Christian ethical thinking.

MRE 508 Pastoral Ministry
Reflections on the Church’s mission to be Christ to all peoples and to embody the gospel ideals of love, fellowhip, justice and peace. Biblical and historical perspectives on the ways the church has carried out this mission, with particular attention given to the emerging role of the laity in fulfilling this mission.

MRE 509 Christian Spirituality
An analytical introduction to the field of spirituality and an historical overview of the body of spiritual writings in Western and Eastern Christendom from the early church to the modern period. Both secondary materials and writings of representative spiritual figures will be employed.

MRE 601 Sacramental Theology
A study of the principal theories of sacramentality in the Christian tradition, especially the contemporary theories; the historical development of each of the seven sacraments.

MRE 603 Jesus and God the Father
A study of the Christology of the New Testament; the classical Christology of the patristic and scholastic period; contemporary approaches to the study of the person of Christ; a survey of soteriology.

MRE 605 The Church
An historical survey of ecclesiology and elements of a contemporary theology of the church.

MRE 611 The Gospels

MRE 613 The Letters of Paul
A survey of the letters attributed to the Apostle Paul, with attention to Paul’s life, ancient literary genres, major elements in Paul’s thought, the unity and authorship of the letters, their role in the development of the early Christian churches and their relevance for today.

MRE 623 The Catholic Social Justice Tradition
An inquiry into the origins and development of Catholic social teachings as found principally in the encyclicals of Leo XIII to John Paul II.

MRE 633 The Process of Catechesis
Basic principles of administration and supervision of religious education programs, sacramental preparation, the R.C.I.A., textbook evaluation, the use of media in catechesis.

MRE 651 Ministry in the Life Cycle
An examination of the necessity to adapt forms of ministry to the varying needs of individuals as they progress through the stages of life cycle development. The course will investigate the nature of each stage, the special problems and tasks associated with each, as well as the role ministry can and should play at those critical times in one’s life.

MRE 665 Worship and Liturgy
Basic theories of ritual and Christian liturgy; a study of the historical development of the Eucharist through the ancient texts; a theology and spirituality of the Eucharist; sacred time and festal celebration.

MRE 668 Ministry of Healing
This course will focus on theologies of suffering, healing and health and their implications for pastoral care and ministry. There will be an emphasis on a parish’s commitment to a comprehensive approach to health that includes mind, body and spiritual health care. The course will also include a discussion on the parish as a place of health with a focus on community and parish assessment.

MRE 669 Leadership for the Rural Church
This course examines contemporary leadership, its theories and practices, specifically focusing on pastoral contexts. The relationship between various ecclesiology and leadership styles will be discussed. Models of leadership will be presented and processed. Distinctions between leadership and management will be explored. The role of the parish in pastoral leadership will be highlighted.

MRE 680 Practicum in Catechetical Ministry
A supervised field experience designed to help the student develop, improve, and feel confident in the skills needed to be a professional leader in catechesis or related ministries. Theological reflection on the experience will also be a part of the practicum. Prerequisite: eight hours of graduate-level theology.

MRE 682 Practicum in Pastoral Ministry
A supervised field experience designed to help the student develop, improve, and feel confident in the skills needed to be proficient in the exercise of various forms of pastoral ministry. Theological reflection on the experience will also be a part of the practicum. Prerequisite: eight hours of graduate-level theology.

MRE 683 Practicum in Ministry through the Life Cycles
No description available.

MRE 685 Practicum in Ministry of Healing
A supervised field experience designed to help the student develop, improve, and feel confident in the skills needed to be proficient in the exercise of ministry in the field of spirituality. Theological reflection on the experience will also be a part of the practicum. Prerequisite: eight hours of graduate-level theology.