GTU COMMON MA PROGRAM
A Quick Guide for Steps and Procedures

Program Requirements
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Coursework
➤ Forty-eight units of coursework, comprised of 14-15 three-unit courses and 3-6 capstone units of in the last two semesters in the program.
  • MA 1000 Research Methods is required in the first year in the program or before the student submits their thesis proposal.
  • One course must be in Interreligious Studies (IR or other approved courses) that engages with one or more religious traditions.
  • Only academic courses of three units or more, with a grade of B- or above will count towards the degree.
  • Courses in Functional Theology (FT) and Field Education (FE), courses taken as Pass/Fail and courses less than 3 units will not count towards the degree.
➤ Course Distribution Requirement: One course in each of the following departments.
  • Sacred Texts and Their Interpretation (BS, NT, OT)
  • Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion (HS, HR, RA, SP)
  • Theology and Ethics (CE, PH, PT, RS, ST)
  • Religion and Practice (ED, HM, LS, PS)
➤ Concentration Requirement: Four courses are required within the student’s concentration, two of which must be advanced, over 4000
➤ Consortial Requirement: Two courses must be taken outside of the student’s School or Center of Affiliation.
➤ Online Course Restriction: No more than five 3-unit online courses (8000) may be used to fulfill MA requirements.

Modern Foreign Language Requirement
MA students are expected to demonstrate competence in a foreign language for the purposes of pursuing academic research through the course of their study of religion. As a result, students must fulfill this requirement 90 days prior to submitting their Thesis Proposal Form.
➤ MA students are expected to fulfill this requirement no later than their third semester in the program. Students may fulfill this requirement through examination, coursework or petition.

1 The GTU Common MA Program Handbook is the official source for navigating the GTU Common MA Program; this “Quick Guide” is meant only to provide a convenient reference for faculty advisors and students. It does not replace the handbook as the definitive source for policies and procedures.
• The GTU Modern Foreign Language Exam is offered the last Wednesday of September, February and May through the Office of Student Services. The GTU certifies proficiency in Chinese, French, German, Modern Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin and Spanish.
• The GTU also offers summer courses in French, German and Spanish focused on preparing the student for the Summer Modern Foreign Language exam. The students must participate in the course and pass the exam to fulfill this requirement.
• Students can also petition to have their Foreign Language requirement certified by providing appropriate documentation of their language ability. Contact the Office of Student Affairs for details.
• Non-Native English speakers may certify English as their foreign language with a TOEFL score of 80 or higher.

Program Checklist
Students and advisors can use the one page program checklist as a guide to establish a game plan of what courses to take and when so the student can fulfill all of their program requirements. This one page document lists all of the course designations, fulfillment of the Modern Foreign Language Requirement and ensures the student has completed all of the relevant steps prior to submitting their thesis proposal. Students should complete this document by their second and third term in the program and include the courses they are scheduled to take in the last term of their program. The student will meet with the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs in the third term of their program to go over these requirements and the forms needed for the MA Thesis requirement.

MA Capstone
MA Students are required to present a culminating project. In consultation with their advisor, students may choose a 3-unit 30-40 page paper or a 6-unit 75-90 page thesis. All of the requirements – forming the committee, passing the oral defense, and filing the thesis – must be completed while the student is enrolled in the program.

➢ The student’s capstone must be in the student’s concentration and is drawn up in consultation with the Capstone Committee, which they form prior to writing their capstone proposal.
➢ The student must submit their MA Capstone Proposal Form with attached proposal 90 days before their defense date.
➢ The Capstone Defense date should be scheduled at least eight weeks prior to when the student would like to defend but two weeks prior to the filing deadline to allow ample time for revisions and filing procedures.
➢ The Capstone Certification form will be taken to the defense and filled out by the Capstone Coordinator with the result.
➢ The Capstone must be filed prior to the filing deadline in each term. The Academic Programs Coordinator has the necessary paperwork.