The Master of Arts (Religion) is a graduate degree for persons who, having completed a baccalaureate degree, now seek advanced study in religion as an aid to their vocational, spiritual and intellectual development. Fundamental to the Master of Arts (Religion) program is the understanding that there are many callings other than ordained ministry for which individuals may wish to prepare. Thus, the Master of Arts (Religion) is designed as a flexible degree program that is adaptable to the personal goals and particular occupational needs of committed laypersons who are not seeking ordination.

Students who pursue the MA(R) may include persons who are discerning their vocational direction, and are eager to explore whatever "calling" they may have through a course of theological study. It is not unusual for students entering the Master of Arts program to decide to apply for admittance into the Master of Divinity program at a later date. Others may be clear that they will not pursue ordination, but are seeking further study, either as a means of personal enrichment or as a preparatory step for advanced graduate studies in religion. Some may be preparing for commissioned, licensed, or some other form of non-ordained recognized ministry, such as educational ministries and ministries of music or social service. Still others may be those who are already ordained, or soon will be, and serve in denominations for which no formal theological education is required. These persons complete the Master of Arts (Religion) program, structuring their courses of study to strengthen the ministries in which they are engaged.

The MA(R) program seeks to [1] provide religious insights and training, both practical and theoretical, for those wishing to pursue non-ordained, church-related occupations; [2] prepare persons who want to undertake careers and roles informed by religious commitment and perspectives; and [3] provide a means through which individuals may seek religious knowledge or probe questions of personal religious concern.

While the program allows a student to undertake a broad-based study in the traditional theological disciplines, it also provides the opportunity to concentrate in one or more fields of special interest. Each candidate for the Master of Arts (Religion) is expected to work closely with a faculty advisor in designing a course of study appropriate to his or her stated goals.

Students in the Master of Arts (Religion) degree program who continue full-time study may be assured that the basic requirements for completing the degree, as set forth in this handbook, will remain the same until graduation. The degree must be completed within 12 semesters (6 years).

Students in the Master of Arts (Religion) program may also pursue the Certificate in Youth and Young Adult Ministry Master of Arts (Religion) or a Specialization in Spiritual Direction in partnership with Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation.

Requirements for graduation in the Master of Arts (Religion) Program include the successful completion of 52 academic credits, including the following curricular and program requirements:

- Twelve credits must be completed according to the following distribution:
  - 3 credits from the Biblical Field (BI, OT or NT courses), excluding biblical languages;
  - 3 credits from the Historical Field (CH courses), excluding courses in denominational polity;
  - 3 credits from the Theology and Ethics Field (TH courses);
  - 3 credits from the field of Church Life and Work (EM, PH, PL PT, RS, WP or WR courses)
- An additional 12 credits must be completed in the area of the student’s chosen concentration.
- Completion of MA100: Theological Studies Foundational Seminar [3 credits]
- Completion of MA300: Master of Arts (Religion) Capstone Project (a Capstone Project fee will be charged upon registration for MA300) [3 credits]
- Submission of a portfolio consisting of four representative projects from the student’s course of study: one each from the biblical, historical, theology and ethics, and church life and work fields
Participation in the Interpretive Task and First-year Students Retreat (MS101) in the first fall semester of study (2 credits) is highly recommended but not required. The remaining credits to reach 52 may be chosen according to the student's vocational goals, occupation or interests.

**Master of Arts (Religion) with Certificate in Youth and Young Adult Ministry**

In the context of their studies, Master of Arts (Religion) students may choose to also pursue the Certificate in Youth and Young Adult Ministry by completing the general MA(R) requirements and including the following courses within the 52 total credits required (Note: These courses may be used to fulfill the distributions and credits required):

- **EM100** Introduction to Educational Ministries 3 credits
- **EM120** Digital Literacy for the Contemporary Church 2 credits
- **EM243** Youth and Young Adult Ministries 3 credits
- **EM250** Ministry with Young Adults: Constructing a Theology for Vocation 1.5 credits
- **EM251** Ministry with Young Adults: Community & Solitude 1.5 credits
- **EM310** Teaching Religion in America 4 credits
- **OT112** or **NT111** Intro to Hebrew Bible/OTI OR Jesus and the Gospels 3 credits
- **TH100** or **TH200** Introduction to Theology OR Christian Doctrine 3 credits

**Master of Arts (Religion) with Specialization in Spiritual Direction** combined program with Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation (52 credits required for graduation): The Combined MA(R) and Spiritual Direction program offers students the ability to earn the MA(R) degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary and complete the certificate program in spiritual direction at Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation within two years. Students in this program will be required to complete the final spiritual direction intensive and project in the summer following their graduation. Successful applicants must apply to both programs and be accepted by both programs in order to be eligible. Because the intent of this program is to get graduates into pastoral positions more efficiently, it is intended for full-time students. However, if space is available and acceptance into the specialization is acceptable to both institutions, part-time students may become eligible. MA(R) students pursuing the Specialization in Spiritual Direction combined program with Shalem Institute must:

- Apply to and be accepted by both Lancaster Theological Seminary and Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation.
- Complete the requirements for graduation in the MA(R) program, including MA100, MA300 and submission of a portfolio.
- Complete 12 credits of specialized electives in the student’s chosen concentration from the list below.
- Complete 16 credits from Spiritual Guidance Program with Shalem Institute requirements.
- Complete additional general electives to reach the 52 credits required for the degree

**Specialized Electives for MA(R) with Specialization in Spiritual Direction** (Note: These courses may be used to fulfill the credits required in Section 15.1.1.2):

- **BI 131** Sacred Stories 3 credits
- **CH245** Lives of Faith 3 credits
- **CH320** History of Christian Spirituality 3 credits
- **CH321** Exploring Christian Mysticism 3 credits
- **EM250** Ministry w/Young Adults: Constructing a Theology for Vocation 1.5 credits
- **EM251** Ministry w/Young Adults: Community & Solitude 1.5 credits
- **EM305** Faith and Human Development 3 credits
- **PL230** Ministering in Matters of Sexuality 3 credits
- **PT218** Ministry with the Bereaved, Dying, and Their Families 3 credits
- **PT222** Addiction and Recovery 1.5 credits
- **RS240** Roots of Wisdom II: Exploring Religious Phenomena 3 credits
- **SD125** Practice of Prayer 1.5 credits
- **TH230** Christology: Who is Jesus? 3 credits
- **TH240** Knowing God 3 credits

Additional specialized electives may be offered as announced.
Spiritual Guidance Program with Shalem Institute (16 credits) [Note: adjustments will be made in tuition to offset the cost of the Shalem program fees.]

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<th>Course Code</th>
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<td>Integrative Formation IV: Offering Spiritual Guidance II</td>
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<td>Integrative Formation V: Offering Spiritual Guidance III</td>
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<td>SD 210</td>
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