



Policy on Regulations for Courses in Theology

<i>Approved by Academic Ctee: August 20, 2018</i>	<i>Approved by MST Board: February 21, 2019</i>
<i>Added to MST website: June 2019</i>	<i>See also: Master of Divinity Regulations</i>
<i>Applies to: M.Div 3, Diploma in Ministry students, faculty and administrators</i>	<i>Effective: June 1, 2019</i>
<i>Summary: Outlines policy on application, admission, tuition, grading, preparation of courses, reading courses</i>	

Overview

As part of its academic programs, the Montreal School of Theology (MST) offers graduate-level courses in theology. These courses are offered online and in-person, in semester-length and intensive formats. A 3-credit course is based on 36 contact hours between instructor and student. It is expected that students will spend 3 hours outside of class in reading, class preparation, and assignments for every hour spent in class. Each 3-credit course thus totals 144 hours of learning activities. For courses worth less or more than 3 credits, the basic rule is that 1 credit-hour is equivalent to 12 hours of contact time between instructor and student.

Application and Admission

Students apply for the courses in theology and register for them through one of MST's partner colleges (Presbyterian College, The United Theological College, and Montreal Diocesan Theological College). The partner colleges award credit, keep student records, and issue transcripts.

MST courses in theology are open to all students enrolled in a MST program. Students enrolled in a master's program at an ATS-accredited institution or at a university can enroll in MST courses after filling out an application form and providing proof that they are in good standing in their current program. Such proof includes either a transcript or a letter from their institution stating they are in good standing. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the course will gain them requisite transfer credit at their home institution.

Students who are not already enrolled in a MST program or in another master's program may apply to MST courses in theology as non-degree students, known as special students. This status permits them to enroll in a course in theology and earn credit without deciding at that point if they will enroll in a degree or certificate program. For courses in the In Ministry Year, the instructor of the course must be consulted before the special student is admitted. The basic admission requirement for special students is an application form and a previous undergraduate degree with not less than a 2.7CGPA or equivalent experience. Colleges may ask such applicants for further documentation, such as letters of reference or a personal statement explaining their interest in such work. Special students may apply up to 15 credits earned as independent students towards a degree, diploma, certificate, or other award at a member college.

On the basis of these admission requirements, colleges make admission decisions and communicate them to students, as well as to the Academic Committee.

Students are permitted to audit (take without credit) courses in theology. No more than 33% of students in any given class will be accepted as auditors. With the assistance of the administrative assistant, MST colleges will coordinate to ensure that this number is not exceeded. After six hours of a course, students cannot switch their registration status. Auditors are expected to do all the reading and preparation as credit students and participate fully in class but do not submit written assignments or earn a grade in the course.

Registration closes after the sixth hour of class time. For students who register after the course has begun but before the close of registration, a late registration fee of \$50 will apply.

Tuition

Each of the MST colleges agrees to charge the same fees and follow the same registration policies for courses in theology. Each college is responsible for billing students and collecting tuition. The principals of the colleges of MST shall set fees for courses in a separate fee schedule. Refund policies for students who withdraw will be set by the individual colleges.

Grading

The grading scale for courses shall mirror that used in McGill's School of Religious Studies. Rules regarding incomplete work, extensions, and withdrawals shall similarly mirror that used in McGill's SRS. With the permission of the instructor, students may choose to take the course on pass/fail basis.

Preparation

In the winter semester of each year, the MST Academic Committee will consider the subject matter, content, and potential instructors for courses in theology in the subsequent academic year. After due consideration, the Director of MST will make arrangements with individuals who have been identified as instructors to teach courses in theology. The stipend for teaching a course in theology is determined by the principals of MST and set out in a separate schedule. MST provides no compensation for courses taught in the area of denominational studies. No compensation is provided to MST faculty members who teach courses in the In Ministry Year.

A course will be considered confirmed for the following year when the instructor has signed a contract with MST and provided a course title and description that can be used for publicity. This should be complete by May of the previous year.

For courses taught by instructors who are not already part of the MST Faculty, the Academic Committee must approve the syllabus. In general, this should be done no later than two months prior to the start date of the course.

MST will prepare advertising material for each course in the summer prior to the academic year in which it is taught. Colleges are also free to prepare their own advertising material.

Launching a class

One week before the first class, each college forwards to the MST Administrator a list of admitted students. The Administrator compiles a class list and forwards it to the instructor.

Online courses in theology require a minimum of 8 students to run.

Reading Courses

In addition to taught courses, the Montreal School of Theology also offers independent study or reading courses as part of its courses in theology. The purpose of these courses is to respond to the needs and interests of specific students and allow for scheduling anomalies.

Each independent study course offered must include instruction in general material appropriate to the subject area as well as instruction that is relevant to the learning goals and academic interests of students taking the course. The latter shall be developed through conversation between the instructor and individual students before or at the outset of any such course.

Each Independent Study course must include reading, assignments, individual tutorials, and other instructional activities and events that are equivalent to the 144 hours of learning activity required for each course in theology. In general, it is expected that these hours will take place during the course of a regular academic semester or over the summer months so that a student finishes a course within four months of beginning it. As a baseline for expectations, instructors should assume that students can read approximately 20 pages per hour. Time requirements assumed for other student assignments will depend on the format and detail of, and intellectual rigor required by, the assignment and so should be calculated accordingly. The syllabus approval process will particularly attend to the workload expectations of a given course.

Each Independent Study course should include meetings between student and instructor at least three times per course: (i) at the outset to determine educational goals; (ii) in the middle to provide for content discussion and critical feedback; and (iii) at the conclusion to provide an opportunity for further discussion and preliminary evaluation.

Grading for Independent Study courses will be on the scale used in McGill's SRS.

Any assignments of any given Independent Study course become artifacts for the LEAP student portfolio if that course/assignment fits within the present list of required artifacts.

The MST Academic Committee must authorize each independent study course in advance of the semester in which it will run. The Academic Committee generally grants such authorization on the basis of the syllabus and reading list for the proposed course. The Academic Committee may authorize Independent Study courses that are available to all MST students and may also authorize courses that are particular to one of three colleges. The syllabuses of such courses not taught by MST faculty must be approved by the Academic Committee.

No compensation is paid by MST to the instructor of a reading course. No member of the MST faculty shall be compelled to offer a reading course.