

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Graduate Programs

General Requirements

The Graduate School will consider applicants who:

- Submit a completed application.
- Submit an official transcript (U.S. schools) or NACES, AICE, or CGFNS evaluation (international schools) showing an earned baccalaureate degree and official transcripts or NACES, AICE, or CGFNS evaluations from all graduate schools attended. Applicants must also submit an official transcript or NACES, AICE, or CGFNS evaluation from any school that shows completion of required program prerequisites and content area coursework.
- Request a transcript evaluation for transfer of credit, if applicable.
- Have earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale on the highest degree completed.
- Submit a current resumé or curriculum vitae.
- Indicate acceptance of Bethel Community Expectations by signing the application form.

Applicants who have not achieved the minimum GPA, grade standards, or other assessment criteria may still apply to be considered for provisional acceptance. See *Admission Categories*

General Application for Admission

Bethel Seminary invites applications from persons who are deeply committed to Christ and His kingdom, and whose gifts and call to ministry have been affirmed by a local body of Christian believers. Students applying to all master's programs must hold a bachelor's degree and/or demonstrate that they are capable of graduate-level work. Since the Admissions Committee is interested in all information that will assist in the evaluation of an applicant's ability, achievement, commitment to Christ, and promise, the Seminary requires that each applicant supply the following materials:

1. A formal application for admission, which should be on file by the stated application deadline for the desired enrollment term.
2. Official transcripts of college work:
 - a. For master's degrees - submit an official transcript (U.S. schools) or NACES or AICE evaluation (international schools) showing an earned baccalaureate or higher degree and official transcripts or NACES or AICE evaluations from all graduate schools attended.
 - b. For doctoral degrees - submit an official transcript (U.S. schools) or NACES or AICE evaluation (international schools) showing an earned baccalaureate and master's degree and official transcripts or NACES or AICE evaluations from all undergraduate and graduate coursework.
 - c. An official transcript from any other seminary attended.
3. All required recommendations as delineated on the application for an applicant's particular degree program.
4. A record of satisfactory Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores for students from colleges not institutionally accredited.
5. A group interview or additional materials may be required upon the request of the Admissions Committee.

Applicants will be notified in writing of acceptance to the Seminary.

Prospective students are encouraged to visit the Seminary in St. Paul, MN or connect with us virtually. Set up (<https://www.bethel.edu/seminary/admissions/visit/>) an appointment by filling out

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our online form (<https://www.bethel.edu/seminary/admissions/visit/schedule-visit>) or call our office at 651.635.8000. Any questions can be directed to seminary-admissions@bethel.edu.

Former students must contact the Office of Student Success & Retention to request readmission to the Seminary and must abide by the catalog requirements at the time of their readmission, unless written permission was obtained from the Office of the Registrar prior to the extended leave (for example, in cases of military deployment). If prior permission was obtained, the student may follow the catalog requirements under which they last enrolled and must contact the Office of Student Success & Retention to request readmission to the Seminary.

Applying Online

Prospective students may apply online (<https://www.bethel.edu/seminary/admissions/apply>).

Special Students and Auditors

In addition to the other admission requirements stated previously in this section, a limited number of qualified students may enroll in classes as a special (non-degree) student or auditor. Such students normally would enroll for no more than two courses per term. No more than 25% of the courses required for a degree may be taken while enrolled under special student status.

Non-Bachelors Applicants

In addition to the other admission requirements stated previously in this section, students who have not obtained a bachelor's degree must also meet the following requirements:

- 35 years of age or older.
- Have significant prior ministry experience.
- Have earned an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Science degree or have earned 60 undergraduate credits.
- Provide a writing sample as directed by the Enrollment Counselor.

College Degree

For admission, the seminary requires a four-year degree from an institutionally accredited college or university. Applicants holding professional baccalaureate degrees from these schools must have at least 75 semester hours of credit in liberal arts. Prospective students with such degrees are advised to have their college transcripts evaluated by the Office of Admissions to determine whether deficiencies in liberal arts work are significant enough to require further study in these areas.

Prospective students with baccalaureate degrees from colleges not institutionally accredited, including Bible colleges, may be admitted upon evidence of ability to pursue graduate studies. In such cases, the applicant's scholastic record in college and his or her score on the Graduate Record Examination may be considered. The transcripts of such graduates will be evaluated, and if needed, further work will be required.

Ability-to-benefit Students

Because Bethel Seminary requires a baccalaureate degree from a college or university, the Seminary does not accept ability-to-benefit students.

Bethel does not discriminate against any worthy student on grounds of age, gender, race, color, ethnic or national origin, or on the basis of physical disability. Bethel values diversity in its student body.

Seminary Programs

Pre-Seminary Studies

A seminary education provides excellent training for the ministry, regardless of a student's prior undergraduate or graduate experience. Students who have not yet completed their undergraduate degree should pursue theological studies with a strong emphasis in liberal arts. A broad, comprehensive college education will provide an edge during seminary years and also with the responsibilities associated with a ministry calling.

Function of Pre-Seminary Studies

College courses prior to theological seminary should provide the cultural and intellectual foundations essential to an effective theological education.

1. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in the ability to use certain tools of an educated person:
 - a. The ability to write and speak English clearly and correctly. English composition should have this as a specific purpose, but this purpose should also be cultivated in all written work. Coursework in speech will aid significantly.
 - b. The ability to think clearly. In some persons this ability is cultivated through courses in philosophy or logic. In others, it is cultivated by the use of scientific methods or by dealing with critical problems in connection with literary and historical documents.
 - c. The ability to read at least one foreign language and, in some circumstances, more than one.
2. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in increased understanding of the world in three areas:
 - a. The world of ideas includes knowledge of English literature, philosophy, and psychology.
 - b. The world of nature is provided by knowledge of the natural sciences, including laboratory work.
 - c. The world of human affairs is aided by knowledge of history and the social sciences.
3. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in a sense of achievement:
 - a. The degree of mastery of a field of study is more important than the credits and grades received.
 - b. The sense of achievement may be encouraged through academic concentration, honors work, or other plans for increasingly independent study, with as much initiative from the student as is helpful and productive.

Subjects in Pre-Seminary Study

The student's work should be evaluated on the basis of mastery of the fields rather than in terms of semester hours or credits. Students are encouraged to take three-fourths of their college work in the following specific areas, depending on their interests and abilities:

- **English** – language, composition, and literature
- **Speech** – fundamentals, argumentation, group communication, persuasion, oral interpretation, and drama
- **History** – ancient, modern European, American, and non-Western cultures
- **Philosophy** – orientation in history, content, and method
- **Natural Sciences** – the physical and life sciences
- **Foreign Language** – one or more of the following linguistic avenues to human thought and tools of scholarly research: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German, and French, with Greek especially recommended. Students who anticipate postgraduate studies are urged to undertake these disciplines early in their training.
- **Religion or Christianity** – biblical studies, together with an introduction to the major religious traditions and theological problems

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It is possible to include many other elements in one's college studies while building an adequate foundation for seminary studies. The aim is to prepare persons who understand the world and have developed the ability to communicate the Word of God effectively to that world. Students who have completed college work and have not followed these suggestions are still urged to apply to seminary if God is prompting such action.

If there is reason to doubt the validity of the high school diploma, transcript, or recognized equivalent, Bethel University will follow its procedures to verify completion of high school, recognized equivalent of a high school diploma, or college coursework.

Christian Experience

Bethel Seminary attempts to reflect from its heritage the distinctive spirit of nonconformity that emphasizes simple and direct involvement in worship and devotion, concern over secular standards in pleasure and materialism, and vigorous participation in the witness and mission of the church.

Bethel Seminary invites applications from persons who are deeply committed to Christ and His kingdom. Such commitment should be joined with acceptance of the Bible as God's uniquely inspired revelation, an evangelical position on doctrine, a life of purity and righteousness, and a desire to communicate the Gospel in creative ways whenever and wherever the opportunity arises. Students should attend church regularly and voluntarily participate in church life and functions. Each prospective student is expected to be a member in good standing of a local congregation of believers. Students are also expected to lead lives that are distinctly Christian in personal habits and in social relationships. While legalism is disdained, the seminary stresses conservative conduct in matters of personal behavior and expects students to exhibit discretion and responsibility in their conduct.

Bethel does not discriminate against any worthy student on grounds of age, gender, race, color, ethnic or national origin, or on the basis of physical disability. Bethel values diversity in its student body.

Doctor of Ministry Admission

- A minimum of three years post-master's degree in some form of professional ministry
- An ATS-accredited Master of Divinity degree from an institutionally accredited school, with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a four-point scale.

Applicants who have not completed a Master of Divinity degree may be accepted if they have completed a master's degree in theology or a ministry-related field; in that case admitted applicants will need to complete, with a grade of B or higher, a 4-unit integrative seminar (e.g. GS 780 (<https://catalog.bethel.edu/search/?P=GS%20780>)) at the start of the Doctor of Ministry program. All other applicants who have completed a master's degree in some other field of study, may be admitted into the Master of Christian Thought program as a pathway into the Doctor of Ministry program.

Additional materials required with the application include:

- Undergraduate and graduate transcripts.
- A personal statement detailing the applicant's ministry experience (three to four pages).
- A statement of personal objectives for the Doctor of Ministry program (three to four pages).
- Specified recommendations.
- A recommendation of support for involvement in the program from the congregation and/or board of the institution in which the student ministers.
- A professional writing sample from previous master-level work.
- An admission interview may be required.

Complete information regarding application and admission requirements may be obtained through the Office of Admissions.

Persons interested in completing the program in less than the normal time may do so by transferring up to 12 semester credits into the program. These credits may be for doctoral-level work not applied to a completed degree program at other accredited seminaries or for special pastoral or congregational development programs offered by agencies that have cooperative educational arrangements with Bethel.

Part-time visiting students from other ATS-accredited Doctor of Ministry programs may take up to 12 credits that may be transferred into their current programs.