

## B.A. Theology

This program is designed to prepare pastors who are able to integrate theological knowledge with pastoral training for excellence in ministry. Emphasis is placed on such areas as biblical understanding and personal application, church leadership and administration, evangelism, and pastoral service to the church.

The program in pastoral ministry is focused on facilitating the development of the student as a:

- Growing Christian
- Church Leader/Administrator
- Pastor-Teacher and Equipper
- Pastor-Servant
- Soul Winner

This program follows a special two-stage composite sequence, each stage approximately two years in length. During the first stage (freshman and sophomore years), attention is concentrated on fulfilling the requirements of the core curriculum of the University, together with introductory Religion classes. In this first stage, freshman and sophomore students will be invited to participate in a church service, starting in the spring of their freshman year. A ministry in a local church will be assigned to the student. The expected participation is of 2-3 Sabbaths and 3 prayer meetings per month in a respective ministry, depending on their agreement with the local pastor.

During the sophomore year, students begin the study of New Testament Greek, and apply for acceptance into the Pastoral Ministry Certification Program. Benefits of membership in the program include eligibility for higher departmental scholarships, an official departmental certificate and participation in the pastoral internship program, and increased likelihood of future employment by a conference. It also grants preferred opportunities for summer ministry opportunities.

The second stage (junior and senior years) provides for completion of requirements for the bachelor of arts degree, including specific professional studies. It is also the period when the student becomes more involved in practical aspects of ministerial training.

The department welcomes persons who sense a call to full-time ministry, and who are moved to offer their lives in this avenue to God and humanity. The faculty assists applicants who wish to evaluate and deepen their experience as well as to explore the expanding opportunities for service. The department will not recommend to the ministry any student who has not completed the course of study as outlined or who has a GPA that is less than 2.5, which is the minimum requirement for entrance to the SDA Theological Seminary. It is the student's personal responsibility to plan a course of study that includes all requirements for the degree sought.

One goal for the Department of Religion is to prepare students to commence service as pastors. Conference presidents seek graduates from Southwestern Adventist University who will be able to function as pastor-evangelists immediately upon graduation. For this reason, it is required that theology students complete Field Evangelism (RELP 425), preferably during the summer prior to taking Pastoral Ministry (RELP 415). The Field Evangelism course (RELP425) includes participation in a major evangelistic crusade under the mentorship of a seasoned evangelist. This is to be followed by a personal evangelistic effort in a church within the conference where the major crusade was held. Those who have completed both of these programs before graduation are likely to be considered for conference employment ahead of others. The course Field Evangelism (RELP 425) is an integral part of the theology degree. Theology graduates will subsequently seek employment as Pastors in local conferences, pursue careers in chaplaincy, or proceed to the Seminary for in-depth training after field experience (e.g., Associate Pastor with a conference).

Theology students are encouraged to become involved in witnessing and in other spiritual activities throughout their time in college. However, the last two years are particularly focused on ministry as they are required to participate in the Pastoral Internship Program. Those who are accepted in the Pastoral Ministry Certification Program will be assigned to churches mainly within the Dallas-Fort Worth area to gain practical pastoral experience. During this time, students will

need to make transportation arrangements to ensure complete participation. This program is coordinated by Southwestern Adventist University's Department of Religion in conjunction with the Texas Conference and the Southwest Region Conference.

Another goal of the Department of Religion is to prepare students to be efficient church administrators and strong supporters/promoters of Adventist Christian Education in their respective congregations. For this reason, they are strongly encouraged to consider taking some of the courses listed as Recommended Cognates in order to be better equipped to minister in these two areas of church life.

## Ministerial Profile and Progression

A call to pastoral ministry or any related form of ministry is very personal. The faculty of the Religion Department recognizes that students who come to the department will either have a sense of divine calling or will be currently wrestling with this issue. The choice of ministry implies a high level of spiritual commitment and an exemplary life style.

Continuation in the theology program is at all times contingent on the student maintaining satisfactory academic progress, exemplary social and cultural development, and dedication to the principles of the Christian faith and practice as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Graduates will demonstrate proficiency in the areas of biblical studies, theological studies, historical studies, and practical studies prior to graduation via a Senior Theology Major Exit Interview (administered by the department chair at the end of a student's final semester).

In fulfillment of the requirements for the classes **RELP 215** Introduction to Pastoral Ministry, **RELP 415** Pastoral Ministry, sophomore, junior, and senior theology students prepare a paper describing their personal call and philosophy of ministry. Each paper is reviewed by the members of the Religion faculty and followed by a personal exit interview with the Religion faculty. The composite results of this paper and interview constitute the basis for departmental recommendation for both ministerial work and the Theological Seminary. Subsequently, arrangements are made for senior theology majors to be interviewed by conference presidents.

A **Biblical Languages Minor** is required to complete the Theology Program and for Seminary entrance. The Biblical Languages Minor fulfills the General Education language requirement for a Bachelor of Arts.

Completion of the major in Theology meets the guidelines stipulated by the Adventist Church and the minimal requirements for admission to the Seminary and entrance into the ministry.

**General Education Requirements for all Bachelor's degrees**

**Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Requirement**

## Required Courses

The curriculum of the BA in Theology is devised to meet the prerequisites for admission to the M. Div. program at the SDA Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

Item #	Title	credits
RELB 211	Life and Teachings of Jesus	3
RELB 322	Daniel	3
RELB 323	Revelation	3
RELB 325	Pentateuch	3
RELB 328	Survey of the Old Testament	3
RELB 335	Introduction to the New Testament	3
RELH 230	History of the Seventh-day Adventist Church	3
RELH 320	Ellen White Writings	3
RELH 332	History of Christianity II	3
RELP 220	Personal Evangelistic Ministry	3
RELP 215	Introduction to Pastoral Ministry	3
RELP 323	Biblical Preaching I	3
RELP 324	Biblical Preaching II	3
RELP 415	Pastoral Ministry	3
RELP 425	Field Evangelism	3
RELP 428	Hospital Ministry	2
RELT 406	Christian Theology I	3
RELT 407	Christian Theology II	3
RELT 410	Biblical Conflict Resolution	3

## Required cognates

Item #	Title	credits
COMM 111	Speech	3
HIST 331	History of Christianity I	3
PSYC 212	General Psychology	3

## Recommended Cognates

Item #	Title	credits
ACCT 211	Accounting Principles I	3
BUAD 120	Personal Finance	3
BUAD 301	Principles of Management	3
EDUC 385	Philosophy of Christian Education	3
HIST 364	Ancient Cultures	3
	<b>Total credits:</b>	<b>65</b>