

The Doctor of Theology (ThD) Program at Cuttington University

The Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) is a terminal research degree in the academic discipline of theology. Cuttington University's ThD program will offer students analytically rigorous training, which will inform their understanding of theology as critical reflection on praxis.

Entering students work within theological fields such as Biblical Theology, Church History, Systematic Theology, and Applied Theology. Their studies will be pursued drawing on the insights and perspectives of psychology, sociology, philosophy, and political science. The program intentionally encourages interdisciplinary scholarship to prepare students for effective leadership and service within the Church and society.

Program Overview

The Doctor of Theology is an advanced degree program that is driven by one's research interest. It is designed to deepen and broaden one's mastery of the theological issues in a chosen field, and enhance one's analytical, research, writing, communication, problem-solving, and professional skills. It provides them with superior ability for leadership in the academy, church ministry, and the world. Through the completion of required coursework, thorough analyses of relevant literature along with current issues and trends, students discern how to engage in a sustained, coherent, and cogent way with contemporary theories and practices in church and political life.

In addition to coursework, a Research Project is required in the focus area of study, becoming a demonstration of the candidate's independent and scholarly research that adds significantly to the existing corpus of knowledge in the subject area.

Curriculum

The curriculum for the ThD degree includes two academic years of full-time residency and completion of a dissertation that represents significant scholarly research that adds to the body of knowledge in the discipline of theology. The primary goal of this degree program is to prepare students for academic leadership in the field, and for professional careers as teacher-scholars in colleges, universities, and schools of theology.

We designed the ThD program to deepen the ways in which we cultivate scholars, teachers, pastors, and leaders who embody the integrative theological task, to encourage and support theological reflection on matters of faith and practice in the Church, in Christian institutions and communities, and in the world.

For admission, applicants must have earned or be a candidate for a graduate degree in Theology, or Religious Studies or in a related field from an accredited school prior to the intended date of enrollment.

All courses are 3 semester credit hours unless noted otherwise. Courses may be taken in any order unless otherwise specified. Transfer credit is on a case-by-case basis at the doctoral level. The transfer must be relevant to the student's program of study and equivalent in both content and degree level of doctoral courses. Transfer (grades of 'B' or above) must satisfy the requirements of the program. Degree credits are not awarded for experiential learning in this program.

The Doctor of Theology (ThD) program prepares students for high level ministry in the academy, the church, and the world.

For admission, applicants must have earned or be a candidate for earning a Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Master of Theological Studies (M.T.S.), or comparable master's degree from an accredited school prior to the intended date of enrollment.

The ThD program offers the following fields of study:

- A. Biblical Studies**
- B. Historical Studies**
- C. Systematic Theology**
- D. Applied Theology**

Biblical Studies

The Biblical Studies concentration focuses on the prime motifs of the Old Testament and the New Testament, and includes various interests that range from Hebrew and Greek languages, Hermeneutics, The Pentateuch, The Prophets, Hebrew Symbolism, the Gospels, Pauline theology, & the Social World of the NT. The goal is to give one the practical skills and hermeneutical tools needed for a multi-situational exegesis and multi-dimensional application.

Historical Studies

The focus area will cover the patristic era (up to the fifth century AD) the Medieval period (6th to 15th C) the Reformation (16th C), and Modern Church history (17thC – Present); the history of the Church in West Africa, and Liberia. The doctrinal development of the Nicene faith, the heretical distractions, and the theological issues affecting ecclesial unity among denominations will also be explored. The goal is to clearly understand the hand of God through the ages, and the valuable heritage of Christians who have grown well in the faith, but 'separated' from others of the faith, and why.

Systematic Theology

The focus area will explore all that is stated, presupposed, and entailed by the Christian Revelation. It will cover the connections of themes and insights from Scriptures, and in the light of the Christian experience attempt to outline some working principles that have emerged over the two thousand years of Christian scholarship (e.g. covenant, election, human nature, Christology, ecclesiology, eschatology, Trinity), using the full testimony of the scriptures. It will explore the philosophical foundations of the faith; and seek coherence between the Testaments. It will explore African Traditional Theology and philosophy.

Applied Theology

The Th.D. in Applied Theology offers expertise in theological praxis for the pastor-theologians, teachers, and others who will serve in various leadership contexts across the globe. Living in the tension between theology and application, students in the Th.D. in Applied Theology program will explore topics that helps one apply religious beliefs in practical ways. The intent is to expose the student to the application of Christian theological beliefs lived out in the normal daily experiences of their lives.

Combining theological knowledge with practical ability, the Th.D. in Applied Theology enables theological reflection upon experience. With an emphasis on doctrine, context and practice, this degree is more than just preparation for ministry; it is affirmation of the relevance of theology as a practical matter in significant areas of everyday living. The Th.D. in Applied Theology degree keeps theology and practice together.

Course Categories for the Th.D. Program

Course descriptions vary depending on the context, contents, objectives, and preferred methodology of the faculty who lead the courses. Syllabi will contain detailed course contents, requirements, and expectations.

Course Number	Category	Comments
DT 701 – 703	Research Methods Courses	Required
DT 722 – 736	Biblical Studies Courses	
DT 741 – 745	Historical Studies Courses	
DT 740 – 755	Systematic Theology Courses	
DT 721 – 735	Applied Theology Courses	
DT 798	Directed Study (with Assigned Supervisor)	Required
DT 799	Dissertation Project Seminar	Required

Our ThD program is flexible, achievable, and affordable.

The hybrid learning system allows for the combination of in-person and online instruction; guided, but solitary library and online research, and opportunities for personal interaction with visiting scholars and peers. This flexibility accommodates diversity in the learning styles and circumstances of professional students. The collegiality, mutual accountability and support provided within the Cohorts will enhance the students' ability to succeed.

Graduation Requirements

- ✓ At least two academic years of full-time residency.
- ✓ During the second academic year the student is expected to conduct literature review; at the end of which, he submits his dissertation proposal for approval.
- ✓ Twelve courses: At least at least eight courses related to your Focus Area of Study or Concentration; and at most three courses related to another field. This arrangement encourages the interdisciplinary approach which is an integral part of our ThD program.
- ✓ One year (12 credits) of research, dissertation development, and academic presentation.
- ✓ Completion and defense of an academic dissertation within four years of beginning the ThD program.
- ✓ Total required credits for the ThD degree—including Dissertation—is 48 hours.