



thirdmill
SEMINARY

GLOBAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

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Thirdmill Seminary

Course Catalog 2020-2021

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Part One - Academics

Reimagining Seminary:

A Theological Curriculum and Training Network for the Church in the Third Millennium

If the Holy Spirit continues to bless the global Church, such that its current growth rates continue, *The Atlas of Global Christianity* estimates that the church will grow on the African, Asian, and Latin American continents by 505 million, 243 million and 145 million, respectively, between now and 2050.¹ With a conservative ratio of 1 pastor for every 100 Christians, Latin America will need 1.5 million pastors and Asia will need 2.5 million pastors by 2050. Where the numbers are twice as high, Africa will need a minimum of 5 million pastors. In North America and Western Europe, where theological education resources are concentrated, a new kind of pastor is needed—missionary pastors who can lead their congregations and their neighborhoods into a missionary encounter with the gospel and the world of the Bible.

Almost two decades ago, Ralph Winter called for “a revolution in pastoral training” by pointing to the obvious—current business models and delivery systems of theological education cannot scale to meet the global church’s need for trained pastors.² The answer is not fewer Bible colleges and seminaries, but a different configuration of networked ministry training programs, that can equip leaders with exponentially greater capacity. Can theological educators deliver a deep engagement with the Bible on the field? The apostle Paul not only thought so, he did so. His correspondence models the importance of both depth and scale, both quality and quantity, both theological reflection on Scripture and its embodied practice in congregations of witness.

The greatest obstacles, which restrict the flow of the Spirit’s ample provisions for training, are financial, linguistic and geographic. The Holy Spirit is raising up leaders *where* the church is growing rapidly. *We believe that most of these leaders are called to study Scripture deeply, where they have been deeply planted, nurtured, and continue to bear much fruit.*

¹ Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 9.

² Ralph Winter, “The Largest Stumbling Block to Leadership Development in the Global Church: Needed: A Revolution in Pastoral Training,” *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 20.3 (2003): 86-94.

A Seminary for the Third Millennium
DBA Thirdmill Seminary



Our Mission

Thirdmill Seminary provides affordable access to a multi-lingual and globally resourced theological education, so Christian leaders can study Scripture deeply and communicate its teachings clearly where they serve Christ and His Church.

Our Vision

Thirdmill Seminary is developing a global network of Christian leaders who interpret and apply the scriptures in their local churches and disciple the nations in their local communities.

Our Goals

To provide affordable access to a high-value, biblically-faithful and contextually-fitting theological education to students of culturally diverse backgrounds by:

- utilizing digital technologies to provide distance education in multiple languages.
- offering accredited certificates and degrees to students at minimal financial cost.
Thirdmill Seminary does not charge for access to Thirdmill curriculum or e-learning platforms, but charges students assessment fees to cover the cost of supervising and evaluating their course work for academic credit (see the cost of your education below).
- regular learning outcome assessments, self-study and external reviews by accreditors that enhance curricular and co-curricular development.

To cultivate a global network of scholars, pastors, deacons, evangelists, and other Christian leaders by:

- recruiting core faculty, adjunct faculty, and visiting fellows from diverse disciplines and cultural backgrounds who share our doctrinal commitments and philosophy of education.
- establishing partnerships with Bible colleges, seminaries, missionary training institutes, equipping church networks, and regionally influential churches.

To build and support a strong connection with local churches, where our students serve, by

- providing guidance, educational resources, and an evaluative framework to supervising pastors and mentors for their work with our students.
- maintaining balanced emphases on communicating biblical and theological content, practicing spiritual disciplines, and developing the interpersonal and intercultural skills needed both for their personal discipleship and ministry to others.
- providing practicums and a means of evaluating ministry activities in those practicums that fit with the primary functions and purpose of the local church, namely worshipping God, spiritually nurturing its members, and loving its neighbors.

To ensure institutional financial stability and growth by:

- nurturing a community of committed prayer and financial supporters.
- maintaining highly efficient, fiscally responsible and accountable processes.
- Prayerfully and skillfully planning our growth.
- utilizing volunteers for administrative, academic, and advancement work, when possible.

Our Philosophy of Theological Education and Unique Approach

While print remains necessary, oral and visual cultural contexts in the global church call for elegant video graphics and sound adult learning activities in a gospel-centered theological curriculum where teachers facilitate more than the transfer of content to learners.³ We believe the church's transgenerational, cross-cultural mission of disciple-making requires **three fundamental equipping tasks** from the church's teachers and pastors:

- ***The interpretive task***: the constant re-reading and clear, robust interpretation of the Bible's Story both in summary and in its constitutive, covenantal episodes in relation to every arena of human endeavor under the reign of God. This is the practice of *Sola Scriptura* and the task of *orthodoxy*.
- ***The relating task***: the cultivation of 'habits of heart' necessary to form and strengthen Christian character that binds together love of God, love of neighbor and self, and love of place. These are the established *practices of spiritual formation* and the task of *orthopathos*.

³ Richard L. Pratt, Jr., "Opportunities and Challenges for Theological Education at the Beginning of the Third Christian Millennium," *RPM* Vol. 15, No. 8 (http://thirdmill.org/magazine/article.asp/link/http://thirdmill.org/articles/ric_pratt/ric_pratt.ATA.html/at/Opportunities%20and%20Challenges%20for%20Theological%20Education). Viewed October 14, 2017.

- **The implementing task:** the regular practice of relational and organizational skills that are necessary to cultivate a worshipping and witnessing community; and to identify, equip and support Christian leaders who foster the values and practices of God’s kingdom. These are the *practices of pastoral or congregational leadership* and the task of *orthopraxis*.⁴ These practices are established in supervised practicums and assessed in a summative Capstone portfolio and project.

Reframing the structures of theological education for the global church requires its leaders to re-imagine how those structures will support learning communities where students are formed spiritually as ministers with kingdom values and practical wisdom. Our curriculum integrates spiritual disciplines taught by the church across generations and cultures, with new technological tools to share those traditional resources more widely. This offers more students opportunities to learn from leaders in other parts of Christ’s global church.

This partnership between the online classroom and the lab of local ministry is the heartbeat of Thirdmill Seminary. If faculty, mentors or students are full of their own cultural knowledge, but lack love for brothers, sisters, and neighbors from other cultures, then we are like noisy gongs and clanging cymbals. We may have a lot to say about Jesus, but we will not know Him as the Head of his global church, a body in which Jews and Gentiles are being reconciled.

Of course, it is important for any seminary or Christian school to realize that the family and church are vital contexts for spiritual formation. How can a seminary “teach everything Christ commanded” while fostering love for God, neighbor and the world? How does an online seminary equip students to know and walk in Jesus’s ways?

Thirdmill Seminary students engage spiritual formation activities in each course of study, whether taking time to journal, pray, sing, confess, fast, meditate on Scripture, participate in the sacraments, or practicing hospitality and visiting the weak.⁵ Practice makes perfect. It makes us skillful and mature in activities that sustain life. The spiritual practices are means of grace the Holy Spirit uses to fashion disciples in the image of Christ.

Students are called upon to identify and recruit a mentor who will walk with them in all or part of their seminary education. Faculty, local pastors and mentors will evaluate the student’s progress through the spiritual formation portion of the curriculum.

Lastly, the communal nature of theological education must be planned intentionally if we are to read together and learn from one another across cultural distances. To that end, **Thirdmill Seminary facilitates ministry workshops** that are open to members of partnering churches. These workshops keep our academic work grounded in the ministry activities of the local church.

⁴ The language of orthodoxy, orthopathos and orthopraxis is from Richard Pratt, see *Ibid*. The language of the interpretive, relating and implementing tasks is from Mark Lou Bransen and Juan F. Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011).

⁵ See Richard Pratt, “TGC Asks: What is One Thing You Would Change About Seminary?,” <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/tgc-asks-what-one-thing-you-would-change-about-seminary-education>. Viewed October 20, 2017, and John Frame, “Pratt’s Boot Camp,” in *For the World: Essays in Honor of Richard L. Pratt, Jr.*, ed. Justin Holcomb and Glenn Lucke (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2011), 145-157.

Therefore, they often take the form of a “hybrid class” that connects local members with our students and leaders from other parts of the global church. Using “breakout rooms,” students collaborate with church members to apply what they are learning to the challenges and opportunities of local ministry. By offering this shorter, intensive workshop format within the framework of an 8-week course, new people are introduced to the seminary and offered an opportunity to gain academic credit.

Regular **Mentor Meetings** and our **Discipleship Practicums** form two strong rails that connect our online classroom with supervision under local pastors and mentors. During the first six or seven weeks of each course, students alternate weekly meetings between “live” online **faculty tutorials** and **mentor meetings**. The faculty tutorials present some new material and introduce a rubric for the next assessment, and allow plenty of time for questions and answers. Six questions guide mentor discussions with their students. The mentor selects at least three of the six questions, which are taken from viewings, readings, and the spiritual formation activities. These conversations are designed to open a window for mentors to see how students are applying their learning to their own life and ministry.

Discipleship Practicums, which explore three areas of local church ministry, are required of students in our Master of Christian Studies program. In his important book on *The Church*, Ed Clowney identified worship, nurture, and outreach as the three primary activities of congregational life. Each receives focused attention in its own practicum.⁶ These practicums interface with the activities of worship, nurture, and outreach the student’s local congregation already has planned. Readings and instruction in these areas provide a framework for theological reflection on these ministry practices.

Having completed these three practicums, each student in our Master’s program is required to compile a **Capstone portfolio** and present their **Capstone project**. In their portfolio, students revisit assessments from past courses, that were designed to demonstrate mastery of each program learning outcome. Each of the five learning outcomes is focused on one of five primary resources for sustainable, Christian ministry: 1) Scripture, 2) Theology, 3) Christian Practices as a Member of the Church, 4) Local Ministry Context, and 5) the Minister’s Identity, Calling, Gifts, and Weaknesses. By revisiting their assessments, students reconsider them in the light of what they have learned throughout the curriculum. Would they do anything differently now with this assessment? More importantly, how do they now summarize what they have learned in relation to this vital resource for ministry? Having summarized their learning outcomes from these revisits, students must incorporate these findings into their Capstone project. This final project both celebrates the student’s learning and casts vision for their future ministry. Each student writes and presents their final project to faculty and peers as a philosophy of ministry and strategic plan for their current ministry role or one they have committed to in the immediate future. This philosophy of ministry and strategic plan must identify and apply key themes and learning outcomes from the Master’s program.

⁶ Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church*, Contours of Christian Theology (IVP, 1995), 209.

The Role of Faculty in Thirdmill Seminary

By cultivating a global network of trained scholars, pastors, deacons, evangelists, and Christian leaders from all corners of the global church, Thirdmill brings together knowledge of the interpretive, relating and implementing tasks of ministry from a variety of cultural contexts. The faculty of Thirdmill Seminary serves two constituencies: the students and other faculty members; and the pastors and mentors of our students.

Our primary focus is to equip those who are in a position to equip others as disciple-makers for Jesus Christ. This means we are not so much training *for ministry* as we are training *in ministry*.⁷ Therefore, **our core and adjunct faculty, as well as our visiting fellows must not only possess academic credentials in an area of biblical studies and/or theological reflection, they must also have significant experience in Christian ministry and remain active in its practices.** These reflective-practitioners not only communicate content, but use contact hours to pray with and for students, discuss their questions, and evaluate case studies and ministry projects to appropriate the themes of the curriculum in the present tasks of ministry.

Student contact hours with our faculty are provided in synchronous **online tutorials**, as well as, asynchronous **discussion forums, email exchanges and graded assignments**. These contact hours are supported by pastors and other mentors in the student's context.

By providing a mediated curriculum, Thirdmill enables its seminary faculty to use techniques of adult teaching and learning like the 'flipped-classroom,' seminar style discussions, spiritual formation activities, ministry workshops, and integrative practicums to equip students in the interpretive, relating and implementing tasks of ministry.⁸

Each faculty member is expected to instruct, advise, serve, and grow pursuant to the educational goals of Thirdmill Seminary.

Instruct

Facilitating learning at Thirdmill Seminary requires effective adult-centered approaches particular to Christian education, implementing the best practices of online learning, and our partnership with local pastors and mentors who are supervising our students in the field. The Online Faculty Orientation and Development course is designed to support faculty educational endeavors and to encourage success in three distinct areas:

1. *Content expertise*: Create a bridge from their own enthusiasm of acquired knowledge to the transference of that knowledge.

⁷ See Gregory R. Perry, "New Wineskins: Relocating and Restructuring Theological Education," in *For the World: Essays in Honor of Richard L. Pratt, Jr.*, ed. Justin Holcomb and Glenn Lucke (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2011), 170-184, and Robert Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 108-109, 111.

⁸ See the discussion of multi-dimensional learning and its relation to curricular and course design in Perry Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education: A Practical Handbook for Integrative Learning* (Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library, 2014).

2. *Instructional delivery skills*: Invite student participation through the provision of a hospitable learning environment, allowing educational inquiry and vulnerability.
3. *Instructional design skills*: utilizing techniques, methods, and organizational tasks that encourage learning through effective course management. That is,
 - Teaching by creating conditions that facilitate learning
 - Informing the program dean when course content needs updating or editing
 - Communicating needs for maintaining/updating website
 - Developing instructional materials to enhance learning
 - Assessing students through use of rubrics and testing for measuring learning outcomes at the course and program level
 - Selecting materials in consultation with the Director of Instructional Design
 - Effectively using technology such as discussion boards and tutorials to enhance the learning process by responding to students in a timely manner
 - Keeping accurate and timely grade records
 - Arranging for guest speakers and other supplemental course resources
 - Encouraging and disciplining students according to Student Handbook policies
 - Preparing students for their assessments and for their mentoring meetings
 - Informing students of trends in their field of study

Advise

Refer students to the Advising Module. The module provides students with information, suggestions, and advice for their academic, professional, and personal growth.

- Students may have questions about working in ministry. Faculty members are encouraged to share personal experience and knowledge but are not expected to direct a student's career path. Faculty will encourage students to visit the Advising Module and utilize the self-discovery assessments.
- If a student exhibits undue anxiety or other mental health issues, faculty can pray with them, refer them to the Work Life Balance Module, and encourage them to seek pastoral support within their community.

Serve

Faculty Services that enhance the seminary's educational mission will include:

- Serving on committees and attending departmental meetings
- Working collaboratively with colleagues
- Sending and/or answering email and voice messages in a timely manner
- Recommending faculty or potential students
- Maintaining program accreditation

Grow

- Developing and/or improving skills, knowledge, and/or technology
- Participating in staff development activities
- Taking the opportunity to write for the Seminary blog and/or other publications

Our Faculty

Biao Chen, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies

D. Min. candidate - Reformed Theological Seminary, Oviedo FL

M.Div. - Reformed Theological Seminary, Oviedo FL

Ph.D. Atmospheric Sciences - Texas A&M, College Station TX

Not
Pictured

Dr. Ben Chen has been the Director of Chinese Language at Third Millennium Ministries since 2002. He was a founding Pastor of Orlando Chinese Evangelical Christian Church from 2004 to 2015. Rev. Chen is an ordained minister of the PCA, and has extensive ministries in the US and East Asia Pacific by preaching in Chinese church gatherings and by training generation church leaders in various seminaries. Dr. Chen received a B.S. and a M.S. in China and holds his Ph.D. in Atmospheric Sciences from Texas A&M University. He obtained his M.Div. from Reformed Theological Seminary and is presently enrolled in the RTS Doctor of Ministry program. Prior to his ministry, he worked as a university teacher in China, a research fellow at Ohio State, and a telecommunication engineer at Lucent Technologies.

Jeff David, D. Min

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and Spiritual Formation

Dean of the Spanish Program

D.Min., M.Div. – Regent College, Vancouver B.C.

B.A. Religion & Philosophy – Northwest College, Kirkland WA



Jeff David and his wife Barbi have been missionaries to Latin America for more than 27 years. Dr. David worked with a church planting team in Mexico City and Tapachula, Chiapas. From 1992 to 1995 he was the director of the Centro de Estudios Bíblicos de Monterrey, in Monterrey, Mexico. From 1996 to 2010, he served as professor of New Testament at Seminario ESEPA in San Jose, Costa Rica. From 2011 to 2013 he was a course writer for an online M.A. program called ProMETA (Programa de Maestría de Educación Teológica Accesible). In 2013, Dr. David help develop a theological extension program in Cuba using Third Millennium materials. Jeff is an ordained minister and has served various congregations in the state of Washington. He earned his M.Div. from Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia and his D.Min. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. His interests include Christian leadership, mentoring and discipleship.

Ra McLaughlin, M. Div.

Associate Professor of Theology

M.Div. - Reformed Theological Seminary, Oviedo FL

B.A. English – University of California, Los Angeles

Ra began serving with Third Millennium Ministries in 1998. He currently oversees the technical aspects of Third Millennium's content delivery systems. Ra's publications include the NLT Discover God Study Bible (Tyndale, 2007; ECPA



Christian Book Award winner), for which he was both a contributor and an editor; and the NIV Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible (Zondervan, 2003; ECPA Gold Medallion nominee), for which he served as Associate General Editor. Ra is currently completing a series of three books with P&R Publishing which he is co-authoring with Dr. Richard Pratt.

Andrew Parlee, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Theology

Ph.D. Systematic Theology – Westminster Theological Seminary,
Philadelphia PA

M.Div. – Reformed Theological Seminary, Oviedo FL

B.S. Architecture – University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL



Before Drew joined Third Millennium’s Faculty Board of Approval in 2014, he spent 3 years with Greater Europe Mission training Europeans to evangelize, make disciples, and plant churches. From 2006-2011, he served with Greater Europe Mission teaching Systematic Theology and New Testament Greek at the Protestant Theological Seminary in Novi Sad, Serbia. Prior to that, he taught short intensive courses in the Ukraine and Czech Republic. From 1986-1992, he was a campus pastor with the Navigators at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois. There he disciplined American students and evangelized atheists from the US and Asia. In 1990, Dr. David was a missionary in Asia. He earned his M.Div. from Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando, Florida, where he completed a pastoral internship. He earned a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. His research interests include Eastern Orthodox theology, Roman Catholic theology, epistemology, apologetics, evangelism, disciple-making, church-planting, and theological education.

Gregory R. Perry, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of New Testament and
President of Thirdmill Seminary

Ph.D. New Testament - Union Seminary, Richmond VA

Th.M. - Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur GA

M.Div. - Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson MS

B.S. Finance - Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge LA



Prior to becoming a full-time member of the Third Millennium family, Greg was on the Third Millennium Board of Directors for 20 years. He also served as a faculty advisor and has been a featured professor on multiple video series. Greg taught at Christ College Sydney before teaching New Testament and missions at Covenant Theological Seminary from 2003 to 2017. He continues to serve on the adjunct faculty of the Missional Training Center in Phoenix, Arizona. Greg is an ordained minister and earned his M.Div. from Reformed Theological Seminary, his Th.M. from Columbia Seminary, and his Ph.D. in New Testament from Union Seminary in Virginia. He has published several journal articles and reviews. His first book, *Mission Improv: The Drama of Discipleship* is due out in 2021.

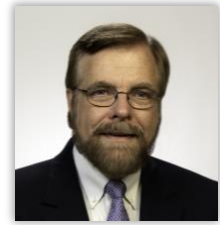
Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr., Th.D.

Professor of Old Testament, President and
Co-Founder of Third Millennium Ministries

Th.D. Old Testament- Harvard University, Boston MA

M.Div. - Union Theological Seminary, Richmond VA

B.A. Philosophy and Religion – Roanoke College, Roanoke VA



Dr. Pratt taught at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS, and Orlando, FL, for 21 years. He also chaired the Old Testament Department in Orlando. He received a BA from Roanoke College, his M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary, and his Th.D. from Harvard University. Dr. Pratt has traveled extensively throughout the world to evangelize and lecture, including Australia, China, Czech Republic, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Mongolia, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and throughout the United States.

Dr. Pratt served as the General Editor for the NIV Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible. Dr. Pratt's books include *Every Thought Captive*, *Pray With Your Eyes Open*, *Designed for Dignity*, and *He Gave Us Stories*, as well as two commentaries: one on *I and II Chronicles* and the other on *I and II Corinthians*. His books have been translated into several languages including Chinese (Mandarin), Russian and Spanish. Dr. Pratt is also a contributor to the Complete Literary Guide to the Bible and has authored numerous journal articles.

Richard Ramsay, M. Div., D. Min.

Director of Instructional Design

D.Min. – Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia PA

M.Div. – Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia PA

M.Th. – Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis MO

B.A. German – University of Kansas, Topeka KS



Richard and his wife Angélica are missionaries with Mission to the World.

Richard served as associate pastor for two years in Maryland, and served as a missionary in Chile for 21 years, where he met Angélica. He taught seminary, served as the director for two years, and planted three churches. In 1999, the Ramsays relocated to Miami, where he has been working internationally in distance theological education. First, 10 years with FLET (overlapping for two years working also with MINTS), and now with Thirdmill for the last 10 years. Richard has developed numerous online and offline courses for these organizations. Richard received his M.Div. and D.Min. from Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia, PA, and his Th.M. from Covenant Seminary in St. Louis. He has published 10 books in Spanish: *¿Cuán Bueno Debo Ser?*, *A Su Imagen*, *Católicos y Protestantes*, *Exploremos Génesis*, *Certeza de la Fe*, *Griego y Exégesis*, *Integridad Intelectual*, *Fortalece Tu Fe*, *Sinopsis de la Biblia* and *Orientación para Líderes*. Three have also been published in English as: *Am I Good Enough?*, *Basic Greek and Exegesis*, and *The Certainty of the Faith*.

Scott Simmons, M.Div.

Director of Instructional Design

M.Div. – Reformed Theological Seminary, Oviedo FL

B.S. Geology – James Madison University, Harrisonburg VA



Scott serves as Director of Instructional Design for Thirdmill Seminary and Third Millennium Ministries overseeing the development of online courses for our Learning Management System (LMS) from the video lesson series covering biblical and theological studies. Scott has been an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church in America since 2001. Before coming to Thirdmill, Scott was the Pastor of Missions and Spiritual Formation at Chapelgate Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, MD from 2001 to 2009. While serving in Maryland, Scott also taught several courses at Chesapeake Reformed Theological Seminary – Old Testament Foundations, New Testament Foundations, Systematic Theology, and Biblical Ethics. Scott earned a M.Div. from Reformed Theological Seminary and a B.S. from James Madison University in Geology. Scott’s theological interests include hermeneutics, literary approaches to Scripture, and Biblical perspectives on creational stewardship.

Adjunct Faculty and Thirdmill Fellows

Thirdmill Seminary develops professional relationships with adjunct faculty to serve our students in both English and Spanish. This affords us the opportunity to engage the expertise and experience of scholars and other ministry leaders in the wider global church. Moreover, Thirdmill Fellows donate their time on sabbatical from their primary callings as pastors, faculty or administration of partnering colleges and seminaries or are seconded to us from partnering missions agencies. Adjunct Faculty and Thirdmill Fellows plan and administrate courses, teach, conduct online tutorials, and engage students on our e-learning platforms through forums, email, video-conferencing tools and grading. They do not vote as faculty members or serve ongoing administrative, planning or evaluation functions of the faculty, except by invitation where opportunity and expertise converge. They are required to sign our basic statement of faith.

The Role of Assessments in a Seminary for the Third Millennium

Content acquisition and retention is tested objectively with automated, online quizzes that are associated with each part of each lesson. The student’s synthetic integration and critical appropriation of course content is developed through note-taking in study guides, peer interaction in discussion forums, and final papers. Ministry skills and increased competency is honed with case studies, collaborative projects and supervised ministry activities.

Spiritual formation practices of prayer, daily scripture readings, fasting, diaconal service, pastoral visitation and hospitality, regular corporate worship and evangelism are woven into the course activities.

Rather than preparing for ministry, our approach is **training-in-ministry**. We believe that biblical and theological education occurs most effectively in the midst of, not separate from, the call to worship and to witness as members of Christ’s social body.

Therefore, there is an immediacy to our learning. We aim to form interpretive, relational and implementing skills in ourselves and our students that mimic those same skills in biblical authors who were re-appropriating past promises, covenantal stories, laws, letters and poetry into new generational and cultural contexts.

Indeed, as the gospel broke new cultural ground throughout the history of God's Mission it raised new questions about how to bear God's image, that is, to learn Christ, on that soil, and in that moment. In addition to ongoing peer and faculty evaluation of ministry activities, each student will design, implement, reflect and report on a final, integrative capstone ministry project. The student's final evaluation will reflect on ways the ministry activities and capstone project form Christ personally and socially in ways that are faithful to Scripture and fitting to the challenges and opportunities for gospel ministry on the student's local stage.

Academic Integrity

As part of our mission to equip Christian leaders, we expect godly integrity in the academic work you do at Thirdmill Seminary. At the heart of this integrity is a commitment to accurately represent yourself and your work to others. First, we expect members of our learning community to follow the rules under which quizzes, exams, papers, and projects are to be completed and submitted for academic credit. This includes a commitment to do your own work. Second, we expect students to give credit to others for their ideas by documenting them appropriately in written and oral presentations. Both of these activities—cheating and plagiarism—are violations of the ninth commandment, which forbids bearing false witness.

According to Miriam-Webster's dictionary, plagiarism is, "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source [... or] to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source." The first violation of this academic honesty standard may result in failure of the assignment or test question and could, depending on the assignment, result in failure of the class. A second violation of this standard will result in a review by the Curriculum Committee of the faculty and possible dismissal from the institution. The student has the right to appeal the Committee's decision via a letter submitted to the Academic Dean of their program. The Dean will bring the appeal to the Executive Committee of the faculty for consideration and action.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students must maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 to maintain their good standing and eligibility for graduation. Should students fall below a 2.5 GPA, the faculty will review the student's academic performance and the circumstances of their learning. This may result in a change of the student's status to "academic probation," which must be remediated before a student can graduate. This faculty review may also result in recommendations to the student and to faculty. A student's failure to restore their good standing by remaining on academic probation for two 8-week terms or more may result in their dismissal from their program by the faculty.

Grading Policy

Thirdmill Seminary grades on a 4.0 grading scale and is designated with a plus/minus system:

A	95 - 100
A-	90 - 94.99
B+	87 - 89.99
B	84 - 86.99
B-	80 - 83.99
C+	77 - 79.99
C	74 - 76.99
C-	70 - 73.99
D+	67 - 69.99
D	64 - 66.99
D-	60 - 63.99
F	below 60
I	Incomplete
WP	Withdrawal Passing
WF	Withdrawal Failing

As we discussed above in Part One about the role of assessments, this grading scale is applied to objective quizzes, mid-term and final exams. Discussion forum posts are graded on the basis of a weighted scale that is posted in the online classroom and here.

- Content Knowledge (35%)
- Critical Engagement (25%). Note that critical thinking is different from criticism.
- Communicating Clearly and Effectively (25%)
- Approach to Application (15%)

While we value content and want to validate its transfer, we are just as interested in assessing how students use knowledge in their personal lives and ministry.

Assessments which require students to analyze, synthesize, and prioritize the material such as research papers, exegetical papers, or ministry projects are graded with the use of rubrics. These rubrics are introduced and explained in faculty tutorials and posted in the online classroom.

All quizzes, tests, discussion forum posts, and other assessments have clear due dates that are printed in the class syllabus and posted in the online classroom. Students are expected to meet those deadlines. If unforeseen circumstances occur, students may submit a **request for an extension** to their professor, who will evaluate their request and respond with a decision.

If such circumstances are disruptive to the point of impacting a student's ability to continue in the class, they may submit a request to withdraw from the course or they may submit a request for a grade of "incomplete." Because the professor has been in regular communication with the student throughout the course, he or she is in the best position to decide and answer the student's request. Please note, however, that granting a request for a grade of "incomplete" is rare. Because our Seminary operates on 8-week academic terms with one-two weeks between terms, the maximum time frame for completing and grading "incomplete" course work is four

weeks. This is in the interest of both the student and our faculty, who must manage work from prior and current terms simultaneously in rare cases where an “incomplete” is granted.

Programs of Study

Graduate Certificate in Christian Studies

This 12-hour certificate requires admission into and completion of the program under the supervision of faculty and with the encouragement of fellow students and mentors. The graduate certificate is designed to provide a substantial introduction to Christian Scripture (the Old and New Testaments), the most important resource for sustainable ministry.

Course Requirements for Graduate Certificate

BIB501 Kingdom, Covenants and Canon of the Old Testament (2 Credits)

BIB502 Kingdom and Covenant in the New Testament (2 Credits)

Electives (8 Credits chosen by the student)

Master of Arts in Christian Studies

After completing the courses for the Graduate Certificate in Christian Studies, students may continue their studies towards the completion of a 50-credit Master of Arts in Christian Studies. The Master’s program is designed to provide foundational resources for a sustainable Christian ministry by engaging the biblical story, building a theological framework for ministry, and forming disciples in ministry.

Engaging the Biblical Story as a Subject of God’s Reign

BIB501 Kingdom, Covenants and Canon of the OT (2 Credits)

BIB502 Kingdom and Covenant in the NT (2 Credits)

BIB503 The Pentateuch 1 (3 Credits)

BIB517 The Pentateuch 2 (3 Credits)

BIB513 He Gave Us Prophets (3 Credits)

BIB505 The Gospels (3 Credits)

BIB504 The Book of Acts (2 Credits)

BIB514 The Heart of Paul’s Theology (2 Credits)

Total Credits – 20

Building a Theological Framework For Ministry

THE501 Building Your Theology (2 Credits)

THE502 The Apostle’s Creed (3 Credits)

THE508 We Believe in God (2 Credits)

THE509 We Believe in Jesus (3 Credits)

THE505 We Believe in the Holy Spirit (2 Credits)

THE510 What is Man? (3 credits)

THE511 Your Kingdom Come: Eschatology (2 Credits)

Total Credits -17

Forming Disciples of Christ in Ministry

BIB515 He Gave Us Scripture 1 (3 Credits)

BIB516 He Gave Us Scripture 2 (3 Credits)

THE513 Making Biblical Decisions (3 Credits)

MIS501 Discipleship in Worship (1 credit)

MIS502 Discipleship in Nurture (1 credit)

MIS503 Discipleship in Outreach (1 credit)

MIS600 Capstone Portfolio and Project (1 Credit)

Total Credits 13

50 Total Credits

Course Descriptions

Christian Theology

The Apostles' Creed (THE502) – There are many denominations, divisions and theological disputes in the modern church. Despite these types of disunity, there is a common core of belief that all faithful Christians have affirmed throughout history. For almost two millennia, this doctrinal core has been summarized in the Apostles' Creed. This course explains the history and use of the Apostles' Creed, as well as the details and significance of each of its twelve articles of faith. Utilizing the lecture series, [*The Apostles' Creed*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries, this course integrates graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to explore the connection between the Bible and theology, and the usefulness of doctrinal summaries for discipleship today.

Building Your Theology (THE501) – For many, theology seems complicated, dry, abstract, and disconnected from the practices of everyday life. This spiritual dryness indicates a lack of spiritual health, and a way of practicing theology that misses the mark of its true aim—applying Scripture to all of life. As an introduction to theological method, this course will help you build your theology on the sure foundation of Scripture for the purpose of forming the mind, affections, and practices of a follower of Jesus Christ. Based on the lecture series, [*Building Your Theology*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and presented by Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr, this course employs graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials and engagement with a local mentor to explore resources for doing theology from general and special revelation with the aim of equipping local churches for its mission of discipling the nations.

We Believe in God (THE508) – This course briefly surveys what theologians call theology proper or the doctrine of God. It deals with questions such as: Who is God? What are his attributes? What is his eternal plan? What are God's works in history? At the most fundamental level, the Scriptures were given to teach us about who God is and what he has done for us. In fact, knowing God is essential for us to understand ourselves and our world. Based on the lecture series, [*We Believe in God*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Rev. Dr. Thurman Williams, this course employs graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to explore the being, attributes, and actions of the Triune God.

We Believe in Jesus (THE509) – This course investigates the biblical accounts about Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah of Israel and Lord of all. The canonical witness of the prophets and apostles provides the core content translated, interpreted, summarized, and developed in the doctrine of Christology. In this course, students will see how the teachings of Scripture about Christ have been applied as the gospel has entered new cultures and as its peoples have raised new questions about Christ and his kingdom. Employing the lecture series, [We Believe in Jesus](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Dan Doriani, this course requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to understand and apply the three offices of Christ in local ministry. How does Christ continue to reign as King, intercede as Priest, and speak as Prophet?

We Believe in the Holy Spirit (THE505) – Practically speaking, the Holy Spirit is the person of the Trinity who is most involved in the daily lives of Christians, and the practical ministry of congregations. But, many Christians know far more about the Father and the Son than they do about the Holy Spirit. In this course, students will discover how different traditions in the Church emphasize various dimensions of the Spirit’s work in creation and redemption. Utilizing the lecture series, [We Believe in the Holy Spirit](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Ramesh Richard, this course requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to explore the Spirit’s dynamic work in the world, in the church, and in the lives of individual believers.

What is Man? (THE510) – This course is an introduction to theological anthropology - the doctrine of humanity. In every culture throughout history, people have asked fundamental questions of human identity and vocation: “Who are we? Why are we here? What went wrong? How can we heal and flourish?” The Bible tells us that human beings, both male and female, are God’s images, created to rule over and care for creation on God’s behalf. Though sin has defaced and deformed humankind, diminishing our identity and compromising our vocation, God sent Christ, his Son and True Image to restore us to our true selves and work. This course combines the lecture series, [What is Man?](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Gregory R. Perry, with graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to explore these fundamental questions of human identity and vocation.

Your Kingdom Come: The Doctrine of Eschatology (THE511) – The topic of eschatology, or the end of history, has fascinated people for centuries. What does the Bible say about the goal of history? How have various branches of the global church described the Day of the Lord and the Millennium? In this course, students examine what the Scriptures teach about the last days, including a variety of challenging topics, such as the general resurrection, the final judgment, and the consummation of Christ’s messianic kingdom in the new heavens and new earth. Incorporating the lecture series, [Your Kingdom Come: The Doctrine of Eschatology](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Matt Friedman, this course requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to understand and apply eschatology to Christian missions and ethics.

Old Testament

Kingdom, Covenants & Canon of the Old Testament (BIB501) – This course gives a brief survey of the Old Testament, examining the themes of kingdom, covenants and canon. Students learn that the Old Testament is not a random amalgam of episodes, genealogies and prophetic tidbits. Instead, it is unified around the central theme of the kingdom of God which was administered through covenants and applied to life through the Old Testament as a “canon,” or rule of life in covenant with Israel’s God. This course, based on the lecture series, [*Kingdom, Covenant, & Canon of the Old Testament*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and presented by Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr., requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to understand and apply the covenantal structure and patterns of the Old Testament canon to life and ministry in the new covenant.

The Pentateuch 1 (BIB503) – The first five books of the Old Testament are commonly called the Pentateuch or Torah. They tell the story of the nation of Israel from creation to their preparation to enter the land of Canaan. But, the Pentateuch is much more than a historical account of Israel’s origins. It is the collection of covenant documents that defines the character and vocation of God’s covenant people. This first half of our study focuses on the Book of Genesis and situates its original significance in relation to its first hearers, the Exodus community. Based on the lecture series [*The Pentateuch*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Scott Redd, this course engages critical and evangelical scholars about the origin of the Pentateuch. It requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to understand and communicate the aims of the Book of Genesis to shape the identity and vocation of ancient Israel.

The Pentateuch 2 (BIB517) – The first five books of the Old Testament are commonly called the Pentateuch or Torah. They tell the story of the nation of Israel from creation to their preparation to enter the land of Canaan. This second half of our study examines the formative redemptive event of the Exodus and the giving of the covenant at Sinai to constitute Israel as a nation under Yahweh. This course, based on the lecture series [*The Pentateuch*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Scott Redd, requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to understand how God’s covenant with Israel at Sinai echoes ancient near eastern covenants to form a nation with a peculiar vocation to reveal the wisdom, justice, and mercy of her God to the surrounding nations.

He Gave Us Prophets (BIB513) – Many Christians are intrigued by biblical predictions but at a loss when it comes to understanding them. Feeling overwhelmed by their complicated history and literature, we often disregard them altogether. When we understand the prophets’ motivations and methods, we are better equipped to discover the significance of their words for today. Integrating the lecture series, [*He Gave Us Prophets*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and presented by Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr., this course requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to dispel common misunderstandings about the prophets; provide guidelines for interpreting biblical

prophecy; and, cultivates confidence in students for their ongoing study and appropriation of the prophetic literature in their Christian life and ministry.

New Testament

Kingdom & Covenant in the New Testament (BIB502) – Have you ever wondered why the New Testament gives so much attention to the Kingdom of God, its threefold framework of inauguration, continuation, and consummation or how this framework relates to the New Covenant in Christ? This course explores these fundamental features of the New Testament by examining where they originated and what they mean for us today. Integrating the lecture series, [*Kingdom & Covenant in the New Testament*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Simon Vibert, this course requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to examine continuities and discontinuities between the older and new covenants, and to build a strong foundation for understanding the goal of the biblical story and how it provides the framework for ministry.

The Gospels (BIB505) – The four gospels are key books of the Bible, since they narrate the life, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Indeed, Jonathan Pennington has described the Gospels as ‘a canon within the canon,’ the climax of the Bible’s redemptive drama. Each evangelist offers a unique perspective with some shared and some unique communicative aims for describing the life of Christ to their original audience(s). This course examines those aims and explains the historical background, literary structure, main contents, and major themes of each gospel. Integrating the lecture series, [*The Gospels*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Pete Alwinson, this course requires graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to study the life of Jesus, his proclamation and practices of the reign of God, from four unique perspectives. Students will consider how Jesus himself used parables and symbolic actions not only to reveal his identity as Christ, the Son of God, but also to train his followers how to participate as citizens in the kingdom of God.

The Book of Acts (BIB504) – The Acts of the Apostles is the second volume in Luke’s two-volume account of the arrival of the reign of Israel’s God in Jesus, the Son of David, and its extension through Jesus’ witnesses to the ends of the earth. This study of Acts focuses on how Luke’s narrative shaped early Christian identity and mission in the wake of “the Way’s” rupture with the synagogue and its relationship to the rival claims of other gods and lords in the Mediterranean culture(s) of the first century. How, then, does the Book of Acts continue to shape the Church’s worship and witness to Christ and His Kingdom among the nations? Utilizing the lecture series, [*The Book of Acts*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and presented by Dr. Hans F. Bayer, this course employs graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to understand and apply the Book of Acts in the worship and witness of local congregations.

The Heart of Paul’s Theology (BIB514) – Paul passionately proclaimed the good news of individual salvation in Jesus Christ, but this wasn’t the heart or scope of his gospel. According to Paul, salvation is not primarily about individuals being saved; rather, it is the triumph of God over evil and the reality of Christ’s kingdom taking root in communities of renewed image-

bearers amidst all nations. This course unpacks Paul's missional hermeneutic and missionary method. By studying Paul's letters to the Galatian, Thessalonian, and Corinthian churches, you will gain a deeper understanding of the kingdom of God and rejoice in Christ's plans for his people and his world. Based on the lecture series, [*The Heart of Paul's Theology*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and presented by Dr. Reggie M. Kidd, this course employs graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty input and oversight with local mentor engagement to explore the message, missionary methods and church-forming mission of the Apostle Paul.

Pastoral Theology

He Gave Us Scripture: Foundations of Interpretation 1 (BIB515) - Evangelical Christians affirm the Scriptures as God's infallible and authoritative Word, but many still disagree over the meaning of particular passages. One reason for these disagreements is the different approaches to interpreting the Bible. But how do we know which approach is the most responsible, respecting the nature of the text and its communicative aims? Incorporating the lecture series, [*He Gave Us Scripture: Foundations of Interpretation*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr, Part One of Foundations of Interpretation employs graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to cultivate an approach to Scripture and practices of investigation which respect its divine origin, yet human authorship, by exploring the historical background, literary shape, and theological themes of the text.

He Gave Us Scripture: Foundations of Interpretation 2 (BIB516) - Incorporating the lecture series, [*He Gave Us Scripture: Foundations of Interpretation*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr, Part Two of Foundations of Interpretation employs graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to build on the student's approach to and investigation of the text's historical background, literary shape, and theological themes by practicing how to summarize the concepts, behaviors, and affections that are featured or implied in the text, and how to discern whether they were intended to be mimicked or avoided by readers. Students will then practice how to responsibly apply these concepts, behaviors, and affections to themselves and those they are discipling.

Making Biblical Decisions (THE513) – Christian morality has always been challenged and rejected by unbelievers, but today even many believers have lost their moral footing. Moreover, believers who want to live ethically are frequently confused by the complexities of ethical decisions. Based on the lecture series, [*Making Biblical Decisions*](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and presented by Dr. John M. Frame, this course incorporates graduate level readings, spiritual formation activities, faculty tutorials, and engagement with a local mentor to build on both parts of the Foundations of Interpretation series. We cultivate biblical wisdom by studying the Bible's own system of covenantal ethics, and learning to apply its evaluative framework and practices to approach present challenges, temptations, and problems in ways that lead to biblical solutions.

The Discipleship Practicum is divided into the three primary aspects of congregational life in the Christian church—worship, nurture and outreach. These are integrated both theologically and practically and flow into each student’s final Capstone Project. Moreover, each practicum interfaces with the student’s ministry in their local congregation and requires field supervision by their local pastors and mentors in ministry. Put simply, each of our practicums have three interdependent elements—ministry practice, theological reflection on practice, and ministry supervision—with one aim: the formation of pastoral identity and ministry skills.

Worship Practicum (MIS501) – This practicum explores the scriptural elements of Christian worship, the history of its theological development, and its practice in a variety of cultural contexts. While the ministry of Word and Sacrament lies at its core, corporate worship reenacts the Gospel in other ways as well, including confession of sin and assurance of pardon, and our offer of ourselves, our gifts, both spiritual and material, and our praises and prayers back to the God who gave them. This course uses graduate level readings, discussion forums, faculty tutorials, mentor meetings, and ministry activities to provide you with opportunities to worship God in different contexts and to reflect on practices of worship through the lens of Scripture, theology, and the history of the Christian mission where you serve.

Nurture Practicum (MIS502) -- This practicum develops your ministry practices of spiritual care, taking into account the emotional dimension of ministry, which is often omitted in traditional discipleship programs. The gospel changes our whole being, including our emotions. This course uses graduate level readings, discussion forums, faculty tutorials, mentor meetings, and ministry activities to cultivate an emotionally healthy spirituality that is consistent with the teachings and practices of Jesus. This course is not intended to treat issues of pastoral care exhaustively, but aims at an understanding of how transformation occurs through the Spirit’s work in each of us through the means of grace.

Outreach Practicum (MIS503) – This practicum is divided into two parts: 1) congregational practices of outreach, and 2) congregational structures of outreach. The structures of outreach, support and extend the practices of outreach to a congregation’s neighbors locally and to the nations globally. These practices and structures are the focus of the Church’s mission to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt 28:19). Through graduate level readings, discussion forums, outreach activities, faculty tutorials, and mentor meetings, students are provided an evaluative framework for congregational outreach, and opportunities for direct participation.

The Capstone Portfolio and Project (MIS600) – This cumulative assessment is designed in two parts: the Portfolio and the Project. **The Portfolio** requires you to revisit earlier assessments that were designed to demonstrate mastery of one of five program learning outcomes, each of which is tied to a key resource for sustainable ministry. **The Project** celebrates your learning by applying your findings to your current or future ministry in the form of a philosophy of ministry and strategic plan. The fifth resource for sustainable ministry is your own sense of your pastoral identity, ministry calling, spiritual gifts, personal wounds and weaknesses. Your Capstone Project appropriates the other four resources—Scripture, Theology, Discipleship Practices in the Church, and the cultural resources of your local context—through your own awareness of your pastoral identity, calling, gifts, and weaknesses. This depth of self-awareness only comes through

consistent appropriation of the other resources in ongoing relation to a mentor, spiritual director, or other ministry colleagues, who will encourage you, pray for you, and tell you the truth in love.

Learning Outcomes

As outlined above in our description of **The Capstone Portfolio and Project**, each student in the Master's program will revisit the mastery assessments from prior courses, which are associated with each of five learning outcomes:

Outcome 1: Remember and outline the covenantal structure of Christian Scripture and explain its primary purposes to reveal the Triune God's redemptive aims for the world, in order to equip the covenant people of God as representative agents of Christ's Kingdom.

Mastery Assessment: BIB501 Kingdom, Covenants, and Canon of the Old Testament, Final Paper
Key Ministry Resource: Scripture

Outcome 2: Demonstrate skillful biblical exegesis and communication skills by selecting appropriate texts to summarize and apply the Gospel to more than one audience, calling them to follow Jesus Christ in a variety of social and cultural contexts.

Mastery Assessment: BIB516 He Gave Us Scripture 2, Exegetical Paper
Key Ministry Resource: Scripture

Outcome 3: Describe the life of Christians in relation to the Holy Spirit's work and create a personal and ministry formation plan (which includes prayer as an integral element) that identifies areas for growth in demonstrating the Spirit's fruit as well as areas of service in which to deploy the Spirit's gifts for equipping the church.

Mastery Assessment: THE505 We Believe in the Holy Spirit, Personal and Ministry Formation Plan
Key Ministry Resource: The Practices of Christian Discipleship in the Context of the Local Church

Outcome 4: Demonstrate sound theological method by analyzing and evaluating how existing summaries of scriptural teaching form the worship and witness of the Church, and by creating new summaries of scriptural teaching for liturgical and field-based ministries.

Mastery Assessment: THE513 Making Biblical Decisions, Final Paper
Key Ministry Resource: The History and Development of Christian Theology or Doctrine

Outcome 5: Demonstrate interpersonal skills and cultural intelligence by designing ministry activities that are faithful to God's Word and fitting for their local context in God's World in order to cultivate the Church's mission to love and worship the Triune God and to love and serve their neighbors in ministries of word and deed.

Mastery Assessment: BIB514 Heart of Paul's Theology, Contextualization Assignment
Key Ministry Resource: Local Ministry Context

As listed above, each of the program learning outcomes are linked with a key resource for sustainable ministry: Scripture, Theology, Christian Discipleship Practices in the Church, the

Local Ministry Context, and, finally, the Pastoral Identity, Ministry Calling, Spiritual Gifts, Personal Wounds and Weaknesses of the Student. This final resource is, of course, rooted in a depth of self-awareness that only comes through consistent appropriation of the other resources, including mentoring and/or spiritual care and counseling.

Graduation Requirements

Students who are enrolled in the **Graduate Certificate Program** are required to complete a total of **12 credits**, including BIB501 *Kingdom, Covenants and Canon of the Old Testament* (2 Credits); BIB502 *Kingdom and Covenant in the New Testament* (2 Credits); and, 8 credit hours of electives, chosen by the student. In order to complete these credits satisfactorily and graduate, the student must **maintain an overall grade point average of 2.5 or better**, and be in good academic standing during the term in which they graduate. The Graduate Certificate Program focuses on the first and most important resource for sustainable ministry—Scripture. The Certificate is designed to address only the first and second learning outcomes articulated above. It does not require the completion of any of the practicums (though they can be taken for elective credit) or the Capstone Portfolio and Project. Students in the Certificate Program may not enroll in the Capstone course.

In order to graduate, all students in every program must complete an application for graduation during the pre-registration process for the term in which they intend to graduate. The student will submit their application for graduation to the Director of Administration along with their enrollment agreement. The Director of Administration will work with the Registrar and Dean of the Language Program to complete the student's graduation checklist before granting the student permission to graduate. The graduation checklist is as follows:

- Student has completed all course credit requirements or is enrolled in courses that will complete their degree requirements in the term in which they intend to graduate

- If a student in the Master's program, he or she is enrolled in the Capstone Portfolio and Project course, which must be taken in their final term.

- Student has an overall GPA of 2.5 or better.

- Student is not on academic probation and in good standing.

- The student's financial account is current. All prior assessment fees have been paid in full, and student has signed enrollment agreement promising to pay assessment fees for courses in final term.

The Director of Administration will inform the student no later than 10 business days after receiving the student's application for graduation whether or not permission has been granted. If permission has not been granted, the Director of Administration will inform the student what items remain to be completed on their graduation checklist.

Part Two - Operational Policies

Our Administrative Staff and Hours of Operation

Dr. Jeff David, Dean of Spanish Program
Dr. Greg Perry, President and Dean of English Program
Darlene Perry, Registrar and Communications Director
Dr. Richard Ramsey, Director of Instructional Design (Spanish)
Mauricio Sanchez, Director of Administration (English, Spanish)
Scott Simmons, Director of Instructional Design (English)

Hours of Operation

Monday–Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday–Sunday: Closed

Eastern Standard Time

Our Board of Directors

Rev. J. Edward Norton
Chairperson, Associate Pastor at Independent Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN

The Rev. Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr.
Co-Founder and President of Third Millennium Ministries, Orlando, FL

Judge C. Ashley Royal, Sr.
Senior United States District Judge (Retired), Macon, GA

Legal Authorization and Accreditation

Under Florida Statute 1005.06 (1)(f), Seminary for the Third Millennium doing business as Thirdmill Seminary is authorized by the Florida Department of Education to operate as an institution of higher learning. Seminary for the Third Millennium is a 501c3 non-profit corporation under Federal law and a registered non-profit with the Florida Department of State's Division of Corporations.

Thirdmill Seminary is not accredited, but is seeking accreditation with an agency that measures learning outcomes in accord with the best practices of distance education, and is recognized by the U. S. Department of Education. We offer a curriculum that is already being used by accredited partners in the United States, United Kingdom, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

Student Fees

Because access to a deep engagement with the Bible and sound theology is one of the greatest needs for church leaders, and cost is one of the most prohibitive barriers to access, Thirdmill Seminary is committed to keeping costs affordable for its students. Since our curriculum is powered, in part, by Thirdmill's video lesson series, we do not charge students for access to content. Instead, we charge students **assessment fees** for the services of our credentialed faculty, who provide expertise, supervision and evaluation for each major assessment related to each hour of academic credit. In the United States, our assessment fee is \$125 USD per credit hour. The total cost of our graduate certificate program is \$1,500 USD, plus the cost of our application fee and books. The total cost of our Master of Arts in Christian Studies degree is \$6,250 USD, plus the cost of our application fee and the books for your courses.

Admissions Policy

Thirdmill Seminary accepts academically qualified applicants, who are recommended by their pastor or other spiritual mentor as possessing a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ, gifts from the Holy Spirit, and mature Christian character for servant-leadership in Christ's church. Because our mission is to provide affordable access to sound theological and biblical training, we admit all qualified applicants. Admission is based on demonstrated academic ability, demonstrated ministry skills and mentor support in a local ministry context for the challenges of graduate level learning.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Thirdmill Seminary does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnic origin or sexual orientation in the administration of its admissions and educational policies, its scholarships, and its programs.

Applications are due no later than 4 weeks prior to the beginning of each 8-week term. All relevant dates for the application and enrollment process are announced below (see academic calendar) and on our website. The required elements of a complete application folder in order for an application to be considered by our admissions committee are as follows:

Graduate Certificate in Bible and Theology – Application Requirements

- Completed application form and \$10 application fee
- Completed Writing Samples
- Pastoral Recommendation Form
- Government issued ID
- Official Transcript(s) from undergraduate programs

Master of Arts in Christian Studies – Application Requirements

- Completed application form and \$10 application fee
- Completed Writing Samples
- Pastoral Recommendation Form
- Government issued ID
- Official Transcript(s) from undergraduate programs

Identity Verification

Each student submits a government ID with the application form. We do not consider the application until the ID is received. Our Director of Administration or Registrar reviews the ID and ensures that the ID matches the student's name on the application and other supporting documents. Their correct email address is matched to their application and these must be verified in order to be issued credentials for their online accounts.

Each new student has a profile created in Moodle. The profile includes name, personal email, city and country. Moodle automatically creates a student's ID number that is added to the student's profile. The student can personalize the secure password but must use the sign-in credentials for access to the classroom.

The only way the classroom and exam can be accessed is with the correct online credentials, the same email and credentials that match the student's application information. Faculty tutorials and activities are convened with cameras on. Assessment activities are varied. Professors also learn the students' appearance, voice and writing style.

Once all application materials have been received, applicant files will be reviewed and processed within two weeks. Thirdmill Seminary may request additional information as part of the application process. Applicants will be notified in writing immediately following their file review. In the event that admission is not granted, the admissions committee reserves the right to withhold specific reasons from applicants. For answers to your questions, contact our student services department by emailing admissions@thirdmillseminary.org or by calling our Director of Administration at 407-755-4970.

Language Proficiency

Each applicant must demonstrate proficiency in the language of the program to which they are applying. If the applicant is not a native speaker, their writing samples on the application do not exhibit proficiency, and/or their undergraduate degree is not in the language of the program to which they are applying, the Director of Student Services may request that the applicant take a language proficiency test. If requested, the applicant must take the proficiency test and score in the B1 range (European standard) in order to have their application considered further.

Academic Calendar 2020-21

Term 1

Application Deadline for Term 1	August 10
Term 1 (Fall 1)	August 17-October 11, 2020
Payment of assessment fees due	August 21
The Pentateuch 1 (PEN1) 3 credit hours	
Building Your Theology (BYT) 2 Credit hours	

Term 2

Deadline for Admission Application for Term 2	September 28
Term 2 (Fall 2)	October 19-December 13, 2020
Deadline for Scholarship Application	October 12
Payment of assessment fees due	October 23
The Apostles' Creed (APC) 3 Credit hours	
The Pentateuch 2 (PEN2) 3 Credit hours	
We Believe in Jesus (JES) 3 Credit hours	

Term 3

Deadline for Admission Application for Term 3	December 21
Term 3 (Spring 1)	January 11-March 7, 2021
Deadline for Scholarship Application	January 4
Payment of assessment fees due	January 15
The Book of Acts (ACT) 2 Credit hours	
Making Biblical Decisions (MBD) 3 Credit hours	
Practicum: Discipleship in Worship (MIS501) 1 Credit hour	

Term 4

Deadline for Admission Application for Term 4	February 22
Term 4 (Spring 2)	March 15 – May 9, 2021
Deadline for Scholarship Application	March 8
Payment of assessment fees due	March 19
The Heart of Paul's Theology (HPT) 2 Credit hours	
What is Man? (MAN) 3 Credit hours	

Term 5

Deadline for Admission Application for Term 5	May 10
Term 5 (Summer)	May 31-July 25, 2021
Deadline for Scholarship Application	May 24
Payment of assessment fees due	June 4
Your Kingdom Come: The Doctrine of Eschatology (ESC) 2 Credit hours	
Practicum: Discipleship in Nurture (MIS502) 1 Credit hour	

Acceptance of Transfer Credit Disclosure Statement

We cannot guarantee transfer of credit hours from institutions of prior learning. Ultimately, the acceptance of any degree or transfer credit is up to the receiving institution. For more information on the process for applying for course upgrade or credit transfer see below.

Cancellation Policy

Students who cancel their enrollment within 5 days of signing the enrollment agreement will receive a full refund of any assessment fees paid to the Seminary. In order to communicate the cancellation, a student will notify the Registrar and/or their professor in writing by email.

Code of Conduct

Academic Integrity

As part of our mission to equip Christian leaders, we expect godly integrity in the academic work you do at Thirdmill Seminary. At the heart of this integrity is a commitment to accurately represent yourself and your work to others.

First, we expect members of our learning community to follow the rules under which quizzes, exams, papers, and projects are to be completed and submitted for academic credit. This includes a commitment to do your own work.

Second, we expect students to give credit to others for their ideas by documenting them appropriately in written and oral presentations. Both cheating and plagiarism are violations of the ninth commandment, which forbids bearing false witness. According to Miriam-Webster's dictionary, plagiarism is, "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source [... or] to commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source."

The first violation of this academic honesty standard may result in failure of the assignment or test question and could, depending on the assignment, result in failure of the class. A second violation of this standard will result in a review by the Curriculum Committee of the faculty and possible dismissal from the institution. The student has the right to appeal the Committee's decision via a letter submitted to the Academic Dean of their program. The Dean will bring the appeal to the Executive Committee of the faculty for consideration and action.

Christian Sexual Ethics

Thirdmill Seminary does not discriminate in its admission of students on the basis of race, ethnic heritage, gender or sexual orientation. In keeping with Scripture's description of human beings, created in the image of God as male and female, we hold to a biblical description of marriage between one man and one woman. Husband and wife become one flesh in their joint commission to multiply God's image and to steward God's gifts in

covenant faithfulness to God and each other. Therefore, we believe the gift of human sexuality is for expression in the bond of marriage only, and is stewarded faithfully in chastity outside of marriage. Students of Thirdmill Seminary are expected to exhibit these character qualities and relational practices as important aspects of Christian behavior and servant-leadership.

Policy on Discipline and Non-Academic Dismissal

Thirdmill Seminary is proud of the culturally diverse population it serves. Any form of discrimination or harassment has no place in our classrooms, on our discussion boards, or in any other part of our learning community. With regards to relationships between the sexes, proper Christian conduct is to be maintained. If student behavior leads to disciplinary action, the student will first be informed by the Director of Administration in writing. A plan of resolution will be presented, requiring the student's signature on a copy returned to the Director of Administration. This agreed upon plan will be monitored by the Academic Dean of the program in which the student is enrolled. If the student fails to follow through with the plan, the Dean may recommend dismissal to the Executive Committee of the faculty, which will act on the recommendation. Their action will be communicated to the student by the Academic Dean or the President within two weeks.

Complaint and Grievance Policy

Students, staff and faculty have the right to express any concerns they might have with any aspect of their educational experience. Adhere to the following steps when addressing these concerns:

- If anyone in the Seminary community has a misunderstanding or dispute with another person in our learning community, they first must address their concern directly with that person as misunderstandings can often be cleared up best at their source.
- Faculty members should encourage students to ask them any questions about a course syllabus, grade, assignments in the course or any communications which remain unclear.
- Likewise, staff or faculty should address their concerns to their direct supervisor for clarification.
- If a matter remains unresolved, community members should address academic matters to the Dean of their program and administrative matters to the Director of Student Services.
- The Academic Dean or Director of Student Services will confirm receipt of the appeal to the community member who submitted the complaint and copy the President of the Seminary within two business days. They will inform the community member that their appeal will be brought to the next scheduled meeting of the faculty committee which deals with their appeal (see Organization of the Faculty above).
- Once the Committee of the faculty meets and acts, the community member will be informed of their decision by the person who received their initial appeal within two business days.
- If the matter remains unresolved, the community member may appeal in writing to the President of the Seminary by email to gperry@thirdmillseminary.org. The President will confirm receipt of the appeal within two business days and inform the community member that their appeal will be considered at the next meeting of the Executive Committee of the

faculty. Once a final decision is reached, the President will inform the community member within two business days.

- If a student or other community member remains unsatisfied with the response of Seminary to the matter, they may file a complaint with the [Florida Department of Education's](#) Commission for Independent Education.

Confidentiality and Privacy

According to the Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) students have the right to review their educational records. They have the right to request changes to those records if they can prove they are currently in error. Information about a student's records will not be released to third parties without the expressed, written consent of the student (including transcripts and financial records). However, Thirdmill Seminary reserves the right to release such records to its contractors and government agencies as necessary to conduct the ordinary operations of Thirdmill Seminary, including tax reporting, compliance with federal and state laws and court orders, and financial complications or audits. We will request such third parties maintain the confidentiality of student records.

Privacy Policy

Protecting your privacy is important to us. We value the trust you have placed in us, and your continued confidence is important to us. We make safeguarding personal information gathered in electronic transactions a priority (i.e. IP addresses, cookies, etc.) We maintain security practices to keep all information safe and secure. We do not sell customer information.

Security of Online Sessions Policy

We are committed to protecting the confidentiality of your information and online transactions. Our Services use the industry standard for online security -- Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption -- to secure your online sessions and any financial transactions.

Information Collected

If you submit a request for information via the "contact us," online "chat" option, or "request more information" forms on our website, we may save your e-mail address as well as any other information you may provide. This information may be used to contact you in the future by mail, e-mail, or phone to convey information about Thirdmill Seminary that we consider beneficial to you. Thirdmill Seminary collects various types of information from our site's visitors to help us better plan our website to meet your needs. Some of this information is collected automatically through cookies and other information is collected when you register for any of our online services.

Your e-mail and other information you provide will not be sold, exchanged, or given to any other company for any reason whatsoever, without your consent, other than for the express purpose of delivering the service requested.

Information Processing

Thirdmill Seminary is based in the United States. Regardless of where you are located, you consent to the processing and transferring of information in and to the U.S. and other countries.

The laws of the U.S. and other countries governing data collection and use may not be as comprehensive or protective as the laws of the country where you live.

Data Rights and Choices

You can unsubscribe from our communications by following the “opt-out” guidance within those communications. You are also able to “opt-out” from cookie-related processing by following the instructions on the Privacy page. Individuals in the European Economic Area, Canada, Costa Rica, and some other jurisdictions outside of the United States have certain legal rights to obtain confirmation of whether we hold personal data about them, to access personal data we hold about them (in some cases in portable form), and to obtain its correction, update, amendment, or deletion in appropriate circumstances. They may also object to our uses or disclosures of personal data, to request a restriction on its processing, or withdraw any consent. These requests will not affect our ability to continue processing data in lawful ways.

If you inform us that you wish your data erased, or that you no longer wish for us to communicate with you for marketing purposes, or to otherwise restrict processing of your personal data, we may retain some basic information in order to avoid sending you unwanted materials in the future, and to keep a record of your request and our response.

Financial Assistance and Payments Policy

We offer a payment plan option. Payment of 50% of a student’s total fees for classes no later than 5pm Eastern Time on the Friday after the first day of class, and payment of the remaining balance of their fees no later than 5pm Eastern Time on the 4th Friday of the academic period.

Thirdmill Seminary does not charge interest on student balances, but students who maintain an outstanding balance will not be able to enroll in any additional classes until their account is current.

Financial assistance may be available in terms of a scholarship. A student must first apply and be accepted and may then complete a Scholarship Application that will be reviewed by a committee. If awarded a scholarship, whether partial or complete, this would cover one selected course. Book purchases and any additional course(s) are the responsibility of the student.

Job Placement and Career Counseling

Because Thirdmill Seminary offers on-the-job training for those already serving in Christian ministry, we do not offer job placement services. As stated above in our Faculty section, we do expect students to seek advice from their instructors and mentors regarding their work in ministry. Also, our Student Orientation course (see below) offers an Advising Module.

Leave of Absence and Program Time Limits

If an admitted and enrolled student encounters unforeseen circumstances which interfere with their ability to complete their program, they may apply for a leave of absence from the program for up to one full academic year. Using the Leave of Absence Application Form, which is available upon request from the Director of Administration, students must formally request a leave of absence from the Academic Dean of their language program. Regular updates are expected and will be coordinated between the student and their Dean. If leave is granted, students may enroll in courses five terms after their leave is granted without reapplying. However, the faculty have established a time limit of nine (9) academic years to complete the Master of Arts program, and four (4) academic years to complete the Graduate Certificate. In order to graduate beyond those time limits, students must request and receive an extension from their Academic Dean, who will bring their request to the Executive Committee of the faculty for consideration and a decision. Students who request an extension will be notified within two weeks of their request.

Ordination

Thirdmill Seminary does not ordain anyone to the ministry but can provide students with general information regarding typical processes, not pertaining to any specific church. We regularly field questions from ordaining bodies about the content and assessments of our courses, and accept invitations to explain our programs before presbyteries and other ordaining bodies. All inquiries should be directed to the Rev. Scott Simmons, our Church Liaison, at ssimmons@thirdmill.org

Refunds

If a student must withdraw for any reason up to but not including the midterm exam, the student will receive 100% of the assessment fee returned, minus any application fee and book cost incurred by the student. If the student has completed the mid-term but not the final exam, the student will receive 50% of the assessment fee returned, minus any application fee and book cost incurred by the student. If the student does not complete the final exam or final paper, no percentage of assessment fee, application fee or book cost will be reimbursed to the student.

Completed by Student	Percentage Assessment Fee Returned to the Student Minus the Application Fee/Book Cost	Percentage Assessment Fee Retained by the Institution
First day of class up to one week after first class meeting	100%	0%
After the first week of class up to and including the Midterm Exam but not Final Exam	50%	50%
Immediately following the midterm exam to the Final Exam and/or Final Paper	0%	100%

Scholarships

Thirdmill Seminary has received its 501(c)(3) status as a non-profit organization which permits us to raise and award funds for student scholarships. All funds are distributed through the scholarship committee in a regular scholarship application and award process. In order to apply, students must complete a scholarship application and submit it to the Director of Administration each academic year. Scholarship applications are considered by the scholarship committee and awards are granted only for the year in which the application is submitted. In order to qualify for an award,

- Students must be enrolled in one of the M. A. degree programs
- Students must remain in good academic standing
- Students complete the Scholarship Application Form
- Students must remain a member in good standing of a local church, and be serving the church in some form of Christian ministry, whether on a volunteer or paid basis.
- Students must request support from their local church before applying for this scholarship.
- Students must resubmit a new application each academic year.

Student Orientation and Services

Upon admission, students receive an acceptance letter directing them to take the Student Orientation course online. Students are oriented to all aspects of the program and all policies. All students must attend and demonstrate their attendance by reading and signing the signature page of the Student Handbook. Students should send any change of address or other contact information to the Director of Administration at info@thirdmillseminary.org

Technology Requirements

To complete courses at Thirdmill Seminary, you will need to have consistent access to a computer with a reliable internet connection. Most of the learning materials that you will be using in our courses are compatible with Adobe PDF, Microsoft Office, and QuickTime Player. Our learning platform, Moodle, can be accessed by the latest versions of IE, Safari, Opera and Chrome, but we recommend you use the latest version of Mozilla Firefox. Although working through a mobile device is not recommended, it is an option. There is no need to purchase software to study at Thirdmill Seminary.

Transcript Requests

The first transcript requested by the student is free. Transcripts after the initial request are \$15 each, including postage. The student must email the Director of Administration with details of where to send the transcript.

Transfer Credit, Course Upgrade Credit, and Prior Learning Assessment

Thirdmill participates with partnership institutions to offer unique educational experiences. A maximum of twelve credit hours may be transferred into the Master's program, and a maximum of four credit hours may be transferred into the certificate program.

For those who have completed a Thirdmill course on *myThirdmill.org* or with another academic partner that uses Thirdmill curriculum, transfer credit may be available. It is important that students realize that Thirdmill courses are used in different degree programs that have different requirements and levels of assessment.

A student who completes a course on *myThirdmill.org*, including the study guides, quizzes and/or exams, may be eligible for graduate level credit through Thirdmill Seminary. First, they must apply and be admitted to a graduate program at the Seminary. No advance credit will be awarded. Once admitted, credit may be awarded if students complete this step-by-step process to the satisfaction of the faculty member who is assigned to supervise the course for which they are seeking upgrade credit.

The Step-by-Step Process

1. Once admitted to Thirdmill Seminary, students must write an email or letter to the Dean of their Degree Program requesting permission to initiate a course upgrade process for a particular course.
2. Students must request their school or the administrator of *MyThirdmill.org* to send a transcript of their grade(s) in support of their request for upgrade credit. The student is responsible to pay any fees associated with their request.
3. Once the Dean has received the student's request and supporting transcript, he or she will review them and decide whether or not to approve the request for a course upgrade based on the criteria of this policy, and satisfactory completion of upgrade assessment(s).
4. The Dean will notify the student, the registrar and the faculty member assigned to the course within 48 hours of receiving the request about his or her decision. If the Dean approves the request, he or she will forward the student transcript, used in support of the request, to the Registrar for placement in the student's academic file.
5. Once approved by the Dean, the student may enroll in the course for which they submitted the request with an upgrade status. An upgrade status qualifies the student to use the quiz and/or exam grades they submitted with their request, instead of repeating them. This upgrade status also means that the student will only be charged an assessment fee equal to one credit hour (with applicable discounts).
6. Drawing on the lessons and assigned reading, students must participate in all discussion forums, spiritual formation exercises, mentor meetings, and papers, as assigned. The quiz and/or exam grades that were submitted with their initial request will be entered in and weighted with their other grades as listed in the course syllabus.
7. The awarding of upgraded or transfer course credit is limited to a maximum of 12 credits in the Master of Arts in Christian Studies degree program, and to 4 credits in the Graduate Certificate program. These limits are in keeping with that allowed by most accreditors.

Transcripts are reviewed by the Admissions Committee. When a student inquires about the seminary's acceptance of **prior learning** in a particular content area, the Admissions Committee will review that content and determine if the student may be exempted from that content in the Thirdmill Seminary curriculum. The Committee will notify the student within two weeks after it has reached its decision.

Works Cited in the Thirdmill Seminary Catalog, 2020-2021

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Perry Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education: A Practical Handbook for Integrative Learning* (Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library, 2014).

Ralph Winter, "The Largest Stumbling Block to Leadership Development in the Global Church: Needed: A Revolution in Pastoral Training," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 20.3 (2003): 86-94.