

Policy on Biblical and Theological Studies

(Applicable to Undergraduate Only)

Definitions:

Biblical Studies Course

A biblical studies course is one that incorporates major engagement with the biblical text. For such a course, the syllabus will clearly indicate that the major thrust of the course is direct study of the Bible. The Bible will be identified as the main text; reading assignments will be heavily and primarily focused on the Bible; assigned papers will require significant biblical study, interpretation, and/or application; tests will be designed primarily to determine a student's facility for interpreting and applying biblical principles; and the final grade awarded will reflect the degree to which a student demonstrates mastery in interpreting and applying Scripture. Hence, course work such as archaeology, ethics, geography, and hermeneutics would be classified as Bible only if it satisfies the above requirements.

Theological Course

The syllabus for such a course will clearly indicate that the major thrust of the course is theological. Course work may include theological studies emanating from an historical, systematic, or biblical perspective. Hence, courses such as ethics, contemporary theology, denominational theology, pastoral theology, and philosophy would be classified as theological. Courses that summarize Christian doctrine with a view to relating it convincingly to the present, or historical theology, i.e., an examination of the historical development of various doctrines, would also be classified as theological.

Interdisciplinary Bible Course

An interdisciplinary Bible-related course applies the Bible's teaching to various practical areas of study. The syllabus for a given course will clearly indicate that the course content is built on related biblical and theological truth which is then applied to the subject matter, skill, principles, or practice of a professional discipline. Hence, courses such as Business Principles and Practices, Ethics, Teaching Bible, Educational Philosophy, Communications Theory, The Bible as Literature, Principles of Leadership, Human Resource Management, and Economic Theory may be counted as Interdisciplinary Bible-related courses if a major focus of the course is clearly the integration of the Bible with the discipline.

Requirements

For one- and two-year traditional programs: Twelve semester credit hours (18 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies courses are required.

For three-year Canadian pre-seminary baccalaureate degree programs: Twenty-four semester credit hours (36 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies are required.

For four- or five-year traditional baccalaureate programs: Thirty semester credit hours (45 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies are required.

For programs leading to church vocational ministries: Thirty semester credit hours (45 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies are required.

For non-church related vocational programs: Thirty semester credit hours (45 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies are required, but nine of these may be interdisciplinary Bible-related courses.

For nontraditional degree completion programs culminating in a baccalaureate degree that lead to a church vocational ministry: Thirty semester credit hours (45 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies are required.

For nontraditional degree completion programs culminating in a baccalaureate degree that lead to non-career specific majors: Eighteen semester credit hours (27 quarter hours) of biblical/theological studies are required.

Programs that do not meet these minimal requirements must file a substantive change request with the Commission on Accreditation using the guidelines on the following page to demonstrate a satisfactory alternative.

Policy	Question
Any proposed alternative must include direct study of the Bible.	Does the proposed alternative include direct study of the Bible? If so, how is this quantified?
Any proposed alternative must contain courses and/or assignments that require significant biblical study by students.	Does the proposed alternative require courses or assignments that require significant biblical study by students?
Any proposed alternative must provide the student with skills in biblical interpretation and application.	Does the proposed alternative provide the student with skills in Biblical interpretation and application?
Any proposed alternative must include ways for the student to demonstrate skills in Biblical interpretation and application.	How does the student demonstrate mastery in interpreting and applying Scripture in the proposed alternative?

Policy	Question
Any proposed alternative must fulfill the student learning outcome goals related to Biblical and theological studies.	How does the student satisfy the institution's stated outcome goals related to its Biblical and theological studies curricular component in the proposed alternative?
Any proposed alternative must result in the achievement of equivalent outcomes over time.	Can the institution demonstrate that student achievement of outcomes in the alternative program is equivalent to achievement of outcomes in the regular program?
Institutions must be clear about how the proposed alternative compares to their regular program or to a standard 30 credit program.	How do the course requirements in the proposed alternative compare to the course requirements in the regular program or to the 30 semester credit ABHE standard?
Proposed alternatives should only be used in special cases.	Approximately what proportion of students at the institution will be taking the proposed alternative program?

[Applicable Standards: 11a] [Applicable Policy: Policy on Substantive Change]
 Adopted October 1990; Revised February 1994, 2004, 2009