



MA - MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

Overview

The Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies program focuses on the concept of a mutual learning exchange between cultures within and beyond North America. The program is multidisciplinary and strives to develop each co-learner's heart and mind through the disciplines of anthropology, missiology, theology, Bible, church history, ethics, and spiritual formation. The program is holistic in scope, seeking to create opportunities for co-learners to gain both knowledge and experience appropriate for the 21st century.

Faculty

North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAIITS), in conjunction with the George Fox Evangelical Seminary (GFES) faculty, is dedicated to equipping men and women for meaningful engagement within cultural diversity, including global and local cultural contexts. The majority of instructors for the MAIS are Indigenous North Americans. Our unique program provides teaching from alternative epistemologies and pedagogies (anthrogogies) that assist co-learners in the creation of informed paradigms beyond traditional western models.

Program Objectives

To enable students to:

- Mature into God's fullness
- Develop habits and authentic disciplines for thinking and living in Christ's presence
- Gain a critical and constructive understanding of the anthropological, missiological, spiritual, biblical and theological foundations of the Faith.
- Understand the mission of God in the world and their place in it
- Understand themselves and relate more effectively to others created in God's

image and called into diverse community and ministry

- Function as leaders who are themselves being transformed, and are therefore healthy and effective instruments of transformation

Accessibility

The degree is offered in an online cohort format or for certain courses, with permission from the Director of Intercultural Studies, in a local delivery format. The online cohort has hybrid courses that are a combination of face-to-face classroom experiences and online learning. Cohort students come to a George Fox approved site (held each year in conjunction with the NAIITS Symposium) for two to three weeks of face-to-face intensives in the summer.

The Curriculum Philosophy

NAIITS and GFES have pursued a relationship with one another as a means of supporting the education of Indigenous peoples in the area of theological education and development. After years of work and planning by Native leaders experienced in theology and mission, NAIITS has produced an anthropological (adult-focused) methodology that allows NAIITS, together with George Fox, to more effectively to serve Indigenous Americans and other Indigenous peoples admitted to the program.

Six non-Indigenous students may be admitted to the MAIS in any academic year. So, if you desire an education filled with non-western constructs and pedagogies (anthrogogies), this program may be right for you. Entrance of students to the program is determined on a case-by case basis.

Admission Requirements†

Applicants seeking admission to the MA in Intercultural Studies program must hold a three or four-year baccalaureate degree from an



accredited college or university, with a minimum GPA of 2.5. In addition, applicants must complete the following to be considered for admission to the program:

- George Fox Evangelical Seminary/NAIITS joint [application form](#) and application fee
- Submit one official transcript from each college/university attended
- Resumé
- Personal mission statement and statement of faith
- Three letters of reference (as specified in admissions materials)
- A group interview or phone interview (by invitation only)

† Applicants who do not hold a four-year baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university may apply but will be required to submit additional documentation to be considered for admission.

Transfer Credit

Transfer of up to 27 hours credit is allowed toward the MA in Intercultural Studies program from accredited graduate schools. Students must have earned a grade of B- or better for a course to be considered for transfer. In addition, only courses taken elsewhere within 10 years of the date of matriculation to the MA in Intercultural Studies program will be considered for transfer. Transferability of credits earned at this institution and transferred to another is at the discretion of the receiving institution. Consult the registrar's office for information on eligibility of transfer credit.

Residence Requirements

Formal campus residency is not required for this program. However, of the 54 hours required for the MA in Intercultural Studies program, a minimum of 27 hours must be taken while enrolled at George Fox University in the joint MAIS program. Reinstatement to the program after withdrawal requires Admissions Committee action and may subject the student to additional requirements for the degree.

Course Requirements

The MA in Intercultural Studies program is generally three years in length with 54 semester hours of course work required as the minimum for graduation. Courses are offered in a two to three week intensive at approved sites in the summer with other coursework undertaken in blended teaching/learning styles. This program is a flexible cohort group experience with a hybrid education format of online and face-to-face learning. Of the total hours required for the degree, 26 are in Intercultural Studies core courses, 24 in Biblical/Historical/Theological courses, and 4 in spiritual formation.

Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate with the MA in Intercultural Studies degree, students must:

- Satisfactorily complete a minimum of 54 semester hours with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.
- Be admitted to candidacy for the degree
- Be recommended by the NAIITS/GFES faculty for graduation from George Fox University.

COURSE FRAMEWORK – 54 TOTAL CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED

Biblical/Historical/Theological Foundations (8)

BIST 506 Old Testament

A general introduction to the historical, sociological and theological context in which the Hebrew Scriptures came into existence, this course will provide the student with an understanding of the major emphases of the texts. In addition, the student will be introduced to themes in the Hebrew Scriptures that find parallels in what has been coined by some as the “Old Testament of Native North America.”



BIST 508 New Testament

Constructed on the Hebraic narrative of the First testament, and focused on the restoration of creation to the plan and intent of our Creator's heart, this course studies the extension of God's work within creation through the person, work, life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus—examining the above through New Testament history and theology.

CHTH 511 Christian History and Theology

This course covers the development of Christianity and Christian Theology from the end of the apostolic period to the 16th century. Examines the expansion of the church, the evolution of Christian institutions and practice, the conflicts that confronted the church from within and without, and the theological development of doctrines such as the Trinity, Christology, the Holy Spirit grace and free will, soteriology, and the Church.

CHTH 513 North American Church History

Continuing on from Church History: Origins to Us, this course will examine ways in which the Indigenous church has been planted and has grown within North American and other Indigenous contexts. Special emphasis will be given to its growth and development through the various attempts in its history to contextualize or indigenize Christianity.

CHTH 514 Indigenous History and Mission

In the traditional consideration of mission, there is often a “West to the rest approach” capturing a very Euro-centric view of the nature of and outcomes of mission – particularly as they relate to what is known as the modern mission era. Missionary societies, key figures in mission and outcomes of mission are therefore described in light of this ethnocentric perspective. This course will examine both the nature of mission to Indigenous peoples as well as their own agency in effecting the mission.

CHTH 552 Essentials of Christian Theology

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the tasks and tools of Christian theology, including the development of a common theological vocabulary, so as to understand the nature of Christian faith and acquire the capacity to converse with others in shared terms. An introduction to Indigenous theological terminology will be introduced in the latter part of the course as a bridge to THEO II.

CHTH 556 Theology and Ethic of the Land

During this course students will be immersed in the wider creation in a retreat context with reading prior to and following the retreat. The experience of the beauty and hope of God as immanent within creation will be considered through Indigenous understandings of the land, and the relationship between science and faith. Students will engage current issues such as agriculture, conservation, land use and consumption of natural resources, gaining an understanding of the dual expressions of Indigenous and Hebrew constructs of shalom, through which God blesses creation.

CHTH 557 Theology and Praxis of Pedagogy

Whereas pedagogy invites the adult to enter the child's world for the child's learning, andragogy acknowledges that a student gains skill, knowledge, and wisdom in a trajectory that leads them from a less mature to a more mature understanding of a given subject. Andragogy therefore uses different methods and different focuses for learning. This course will introduce the student to andragogical method in theology.



Spiritual Formation Core (4)

SFAD 554/591/585/536 Indigenous Spirituality Indigenous understandings of the nature of the spiritual and of spirituality differ in many respects from those commonly held within the Western traditions of Christian faith. This course will seek to encourage spiritual growth and development from within an Indigenous framework of understanding of the nature of the spiritual and of spirituality.

Intercultural Studies Core (10)

MLDR 510 Missional Ecclesiology

How do we describe what church is? Are there forms and structures that are requisite for a “church” to be properly constituted? These and other questions related to church in a missional context will be explored from an Indigenous vantage point giving consideration to the nature of the church, the purpose of the church, and leadership forms and methods for ministry. Questions of praxis will frame our discussion of ecclesial forms, as they might be required in order for mission to be effective in intercultural contexts.

MLDR 520 Missional Leadership

This course will engage the student in a variety of discussions on leadership – in the family, community, Indigenous church, and wider society. Special emphasis will be on exploring the praxis of decolonization and growing edge of re-traditionalization as a means of understanding contemporary Indigenous leadership models used in each of these social contexts.

MLDR 540 Culture and Systems Change

No experience of Christianity has been more culturally damaging than that experienced by Indigenous peoples. Through process of decolonization and indigenization this course will examine how Indigenous people live a biblically informed Christian faith in the context of Indigenous cultures. Special attention will be paid to contemporary actions within the concept of re-traditionalization that can be taken as the means of engaging culture as followers of the Jesus Way.

MLDR 544 Cultural Anthropology

Cultural Anthropology is the study of the variety in human culture. In this class we will travel through some historical anthropological theory together. There are important trajectories that the discipline of Anthropology has taken that have been helpful and hurtful, particularly to indigenous people globally. In this class we will balance the many gifts that Anthropology has given us with the helpful critiques, particularly from indigenous scholars and anthropologists. We will listen to both the non-indigenous anthropologist and perspectives from the indigenous community, particularly the Native North American context, surrounding Anthropology. Finally, we will learn that Cultural Anthropology can be a tool that can help discover some of the “possibilities of life” that Octavio Paz mentions.

MLDR 548 Ethics in Intercultural Context

An intercultural, contextual introduction to central issues in Christian ethics, with attention to the way in which moral reflection interacts with philosophy and culture. The course explores biblical-theological foundations for ethics, the role of scripture and Jesus’ example in ethical formulation, and deals with major contemporary topics including gender, sexuality, marriage, euthanasia, war, bioethics, wealth and poverty.

CHTH 554 Colonialism and Neo-colonialism

What kind of change is possible? How does a culturally informed epistemology shape the way the bible is understood, Christian mission conceived and theological foundations expressed? What is expected of converts if persons in mission address only ideological change and excludes any concern with economic



and political hegemonies? This course will explore both historical and current manifestations of colonialism as a preparation for holistic Christian mission.

PSTD 550 World Religions

Jesus followers must be willing to interact and engage with an inquiring mind, in a knowledgeable way and in a Christ-like manner with peoples of other faiths. This course provides an overview of the major World Religions including the place of Christianity in the religious arena. It offers a foundation for understanding the classification of religions as well as the chronological development, adaptation, geographical distribution, worldviews and cultural impact of world faiths. A summary of major religious figures, central doctrines/teachings, sacred myths and texts – including potential emerging world religions – will lead into a discussion concerning appropriate Christian responses to the world's religions and their adherents. Indigenous values such as respecting others and story telling are central to the approach utilized in this course

MLDR 561/562 Indigenous Theology Symposium Seminar (x 2)

Annually, the NAIITS learning community comes together in its symposium to explore topics of interest to the wider Indigenous community. Each student will be expected to participate in at least two (2) symposiums and undertake collateral reading and assignments as directed by the faculty, in order to integrate the symposium topics into their program of study.

MLDR 575 Field Internship

Guided Field experience is crucial to the co-learner's success. Graduates will serve in a variety of ministry roles such as:

- Anthropologically informed community leaders
- Specialized leaders such as organizational cultural liaisons and inter-cultural specialists
- Pastors and church planters in the multi-ethnic/inter-cultural church
- Inter-cultural missionaries and ministry personnel
- Inter-cultural Para church leaders
- Overseas ministry personnel
- Camp or University campus spiritual directors