

MDiv Expectations/Competencies by ATS Standards

ATS Standard	Competencies/Expectations of a Graduate
<p>A.3.1.1 Religious Heritage: to develop a comprehensive and discriminating understanding of the religious heritage</p> <p>A.3.1.1.1 Instruction shall be provided in Scripture, in the historical development and contemporary articulation of the doctrinal and theological tradition of the community of faith, and in the social and institutional history of that community</p> <p>A.3.1.1.2 Attention should be given both to the broader heritage of the Christian tradition as such and to the more specific character of particular Christian traditions and communities, to the ways the traditions transcend particular social and cultural settings, and to the ways they come to unique expression in them</p> <p>A.3.1.1.3 Instruction in these areas shall be conducted so as to indicate their interdependence with each other and with other areas of the curriculum, and their significance for the exercise of pastoral leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate hermeneutical methods to interpret a biblical text both in its ancient context and in contemporary contexts and prepare an exegesis on a given passage of Scripture, using the appropriate tools and methods of biblical scholarship, including exegetical tools in the original language of the text • Demonstrate knowledge of biblical texts and their contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discuss the narrative/poetic artistry, content, key critical exegetical issues, and theological/ideological issues of the text ○ Describe the social, cultural and historical forces that contributed to the formation of the texts and assess how those interacted with its message and theology • Demonstrate a willingness and ability to relate biblical texts to contemporary life and issues in church and public contexts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe the interpretive principles upon which biblical texts can be used and applied in contemporary situations ○ Evaluate and describe interpretive insights from a variety of hermeneutical approaches and compare these to one's own interpretation ○ Engage the complexities of using biblical texts in relation to contemporary societal challenges and political ideologies in case studies/applications in public and pastoral contexts • Articulate some of the complications of applying contemporary categories and concepts to pre-modern religious text traditions and be able to explain how contemporary discussions might be productively complicated by how ideas are represented in scriptural and historical texts • Demonstrate critical historical skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ use of primary and secondary source materials effectively ○ formulate effective research questions applicable to historical and contemporary public and ecclesial situations and contexts ○ demonstrate analytical skills applied to historical data and pertinent historiographical approaches • Recognizing history as interpretation, demonstrate general knowledge of the major historical themes, significant historical events, persons and controversies in major eras of western church history and describe the social, historical, political and theological factors in those eras • Relate and assess the continuing influence of significant historical events, themes, persons and controversies in the life of the denominations/traditions to which they gave rise • Within the student's own tradition, demonstrate knowledge of theologies and confessions and apply historical-theological meanings to contemporary life of the tradition; drawing on the broad instantiations the student's tradition for thoughtful application to analogous situations and challenges in our own time

A.3.1.1 Religious Heritage: to develop a comprehensive and discriminating understanding of the religious heritage, continued

- Articulate implications of historical knowledge for the future of Christian practice particularly within the context of rapid global urbanization
- Analyze the central topics in Christian faith and engage in theological reflection in light of particular issues and topics in terms of both Christian contributions and Christian reconstructions
- Seriously and critically engage theological and philosophical figures with focused attention to our contemporary context / location, coming to an overall understanding of the shape of theology at the end of modernity, including an analytically informed understanding of how Christian thought shapes western modernity, secularism, and science; distinguishing between theological value and ideological commitment
- Demonstrate knowledge of the sociological, economic and political bearings of theological discourse as well as the philosophical, cosmological and cultural assumptions informing theological proposals in order to accomplish theological / theoretical analysis (social, economic, socio-psychological, postcolonial, ecological) of concerns arising for human persons and human communities, including the history, practice and value of interpreting, cultivating and renewing symbols, stories and practices of communal religious and public life
- Articulate one's own lived christological commitments and praxis, reflecting upon the benefits and limitations of one's own formulation in and for the contemporary context, its biblical "roots," its liturgical implications, and its relation to one's own denominational traditions, demonstrating an open stance toward "truth" and tradition
- Demonstrate knowledge of the various components of thorough ethical analysis and the specifically Christian approaches to, biblical bases for, and theological components of ethical analysis
- Identify cultural, social, historical and theological factors that have influenced the development of liturgical structures and rites; and compare and contrast the cultural, social, historical and theological factors that have influenced the development of liturgical structures and rites in her/his own tradition as well as traditions other than her/his own
- Describe the primary theories and methodologies of education with emphasis on praxis (action-reflection) approaches to religious education in diverse pastoral and public leadership contexts and how current theories of education and intercultural studies are grounded in biblical witness and theologies of leadership and education

A.3.1.2 Cultural Context: The program shall provide opportunity to develop an understanding of the cultural realities and structures within which the church lives and carries out its mission.

A.3.1.2.1 The program shall provide for instruction in contemporary cultural and social issues and their significance for ministry. Such instruction should draw on the insights of the arts and humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.

A.3.1.2.2 MDiv education shall address the global character of the church as well as the multicultural and cross-cultural nature of ministry in North American society and in other contemporary settings. Attention should also be given to the wide diversity of religious traditions present in the social context.

- Discuss interpretive issues of engagement with biblical texts in cultures and contexts other than the student's own, including a discussion of interpretive insights from a variety of global hermeneutical approaches and compare these to one's own interpretation; engage the complexities of using biblical texts in relation to contemporary societal challenges and political ideologies in global cultural contexts
- Develop awareness of key critical exegetical issues and evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of various Christologies from differing contemporary perspectives, so as to explore Christology as a means of engaging contemporary issues of domination and oppression, and consider the call of the Church to be embodied communities of religious resistance to forces of economic and political exploitation
- Assess critically currents of alleged anti-Judaism in the New Testament, the challenges of the uses of New Testament texts to promote anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, and to consider ways to pay attention to Jewish-Christian conversation in our contemporary context
- Analyze the central topics in Christian faith in light of contemporary issues and cultural intersections, reconsidering the doctrines of Christian faith: revelation and creation, human nature, God, Jesus Christ, sin and salvation, the holy Spirit, discipleship, sacraments and church, and hope
- Engage and analyze the intersection of religious faiths and contemporary culture, especially a critically reflective articulation of how the student holds Christianity and culture in conversation as well as analysis of the impact of contemporary issues like globalization upon religions and religious practice, and awareness of the arts as mediums of theological engagement
- Demonstrate theoretical analysis (social, economic, socio-psychological, postcolonial, ecological) of concerns arising for human persons and human communities as well as ecological zones and indeed the planetary commons given contemporary political, social and economic realities.
- Articulate the key beliefs and practices of at least one of the world's religious traditions other than one's own, including First Nations; articulate watershed events in the relationship between the churches and the that tradition including in recent times in Canada
- Incorporate into one's theological articulations awareness of the intersection of world religions, considering religious convictions in ways that are open, non-absolutist, attentive to religious pluralism and secularity
- Demonstrate important components of customary etiquette (including some major variations) for interacting socially and publicly with the religious traditions in one's own context
- Demonstrate the use of an ethnographic (or other discipline based)

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case study dealing with the case of one community's engagement with a social issue and its impact on the congregation/community

- Demonstrate understanding of diversity of culture-specific characteristics, such as, the spiritual dynamics valued and principles of spiritual wholeness in each culture studied, ethnic variations in dying, death, and grieving, etc
- Identify the principles of religious education and intercultural communication in social locations other than one's own; identify the complexities involved in teaching and learning in ethnically diverse religious education settings and discuss how these complexities shape and reshape one's own knowledge, skills, attitudes and theology of education.
- Articulate the ethical dimensions and protocols of cross cultural "borrowing," for example, is it appropriate to adopt spiritual practices and intellectual traditions not originally our own, especially when they derive from a land not originally ours?
- Identify, analyze and respond to the pastoral and public realities of inner cities across the globe including the range of contemporary world views, the moral issues of the 21st century, the challenges facing faith communities, the impact of globalization upon religions and religious practice, and the alienation that so many experience personally and collectively
- Demonstrate a commitment to an ecumenical vision of Christian worship, rooted in tradition and open to new insights

A.3.1.3 Personal and Spiritual Formation:
The program shall provide opportunities through which the student may grow in personal faith, emotional maturity, moral integrity, and public witness. Ministerial preparation includes concern with the development of capacities—intellectual and affective, individual and corporate, ecclesial and public—that are requisite to a life of pastoral leadership.

A.3.1.3.1 The program shall provide for spiritual, academic, and vocational counseling, and careful reflection on the role of the minister as leader, guide, and servant of the faith community.

A.3.1.3.2 The program shall provide opportunities to assist students in developing commitment to Christian faith and life (e.g., expressions of justice, leadership development, the devotional life, evangelistic witness) in ways consistent with the overall goal and purpose of the school's MDiv program.

- Demonstrate understanding and appreciation for Christian theology and faith as “praxistic,” for the diversity and breadth of Christian spirituality, including diverse wisdoms and practices of the Christian tradition and analyze and reflect upon the relations between the contemplative and the active modes of Christian living
- Demonstrate a willingness to explore a disciplined practice of prayer in the service of a mature spiritual life, and be able to articulate insight and self-knowledge on spiritual practice
- Express sensitivity and thoughtful receptivity to diverse religious and cultural sources which inform the student's own public and pastoral theology
- Articulate the student's own “mandate,” purpose, call, or mission within their community of faith (within and beyond current congregational models) in this time and place; teach, model and inspire a life of faith that nourishes a posture of reverence, gratitude and desire for truth
- Demonstrate the integration of critical biblical knowledge and theological insights with the contemporary practice of ministry in the student's own articulation of their vocation and in relation to their denomination
- Demonstrate knowledge of the spiritual and psychological foundations for leadership theory
- Demonstrate participation and appropriate leadership in the student's own denominational activities and formation
- Discuss and evaluate spiritual, personal and professional responses to issues of concern to faith communities--wholeness, addictions, health, end of life issues, family systems, youth, aging, etc.
- Show willingness to participate in spiritual direction, counseling, or related activities appropriate to student's own denomination
- Describe student's own insights of personal ethical formation and their relationship to the Christian tradition and ministry to the community
- Demonstrate critical self-knowledge, (one's self and one's social, economic, sexual, racial, ethnic, spiritual and theological location), emotional and spiritual maturity necessary for effective leadership, including reflection upon the student's own exhibition of key character attributes such as authenticity, integrity, courage and service, and upon the student's gifts, needs, limitations, learning style and communication preferences
- Demonstrate attitudes appropriate for being a self-directed learner, committed to life-long learning
- Integrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes for teaching in diverse and intercultural faith communities into one's spiritual vocation, in order to be a leader whose commitment to the art and skill of teaching in religious settings is grounded in his/her spirituality, vocation, theology and commitment to serve God's people

A.3.1.4 Capacity for Ministerial and Public Leadership: The program shall provide theological reflection on and education for the practice of ministry. These activities should cultivate the capacity for leadership in both ecclesial and public contexts.

A.3.1.4.1 The program shall provide for courses in the areas of ministry practice and for educational experiences within supervised ministry settings.

A.3.1.4.2 The program shall ensure a constructive relationship among courses dealing primarily with the practice of ministry and courses dealing primarily with other subjects.

A.3.1.4.3 The program shall provide opportunities for education through supervised experiences in ministry. These experiences should be of sufficient duration and intensity to provide opportunity to gain expertise in the tasks of ministerial leadership within both the congregation and the broader public context, and to reflect on interrelated theological, cultural, and experiential learning.

- Articulate “the mandate,” purpose, call, or vision for mission of communities of faith within and beyond current congregational models and in the public forum both in this time and place and in the long-range
- Describe the role and contribution religious communities (communities which cultivate the symbols, stories and rituals that orient people in the direction of life) have in shaping the public discourse in response to the longing for abundant life at the heart of human experience, and in response to justice, compassion and healing
- Integrate knowledge and resources drawn from biblical, historical and theological foundations to develop critical insights for contemporary issues of theology and practice, including issues facing the student’s own denomination
- Express sensitivity and thoughtful receptivity to diverse religious and cultural sources which inform public and pastoral theology and practice
- Describe resources, theories and practices of leadership and institutional change, both ecclesial and non-ecclesial, and discern and develop strategic leadership capabilities within a particular community and/or congregation based in inter-disciplinary collaboration
- Accomplish critical, contextual and cultural analysis of congregational and public sites where ministry is practiced, recognizing where the pastoral sphere meets and intersects with the public sphere in significant ways and knowing the broad spectrum of ministry possibilities
- Formulate questions of texts and practitioners which lead to deeper learning (hermeneutic circle) and widen the parameters of collective inquiry
- Demonstrate fundamental leadership skills such as listening, storytelling, negotiation and assessment of context and people, and essential leadership functions including recruitment, development and leadership of a team, the ability to make tough choices, to assess the relationship of student’s own ambition to a particular project, to assess accurately personal effectiveness, and to maintain commitments and accept responsibility for mistakes
- Initiate and maintain pastoral relationships effectively and appropriately, and integrate theology, psychology and behavioural science into effective pastoral identity and practice; demonstrate an empathetic pastoral presence
- Demonstrate ability to work collaboratively and exercise conflict-management effectively and ability to work in a team to plan, problem-solve, implement and evaluate progress toward a particular goal or project
- Demonstrate an ability to engage in Christian ethical analysis of issues that arise within pastoral and public settings and that involve both local and global issues, and articulate and practice an

ethical and theological framework for decision-making and action

- Demonstrate effective, rhetorical and engaged oral communication in pastoral and public settings, including the ability to develop and deliver effective presentations, the ability to preach effectively in pastoral contexts, and sensitivity in employing theology as a rhetorical art within a religiously diverse public
- Demonstrate knowledge of the expectations of ministerial leadership including issues such as ethical stances, duty of care, authority and power of ministry personnel, oversight and discipline, sexual identity and sexual conduct
- Interact in social and public settings with leaders and members of other major religious communities and traditions, being conscious of a call to share and seek out how one's own and others' gifts can contribute to the healing of a broken world

DENOMINATIONAL CONTEXTS

- Articulate a liturgical theology appropriate to the student's own tradition and propose approaches to liturgical and sacramental praxis that embody a response to contemporary ecclesial, cultural and social contexts that are faithful to her/his own understanding of the good news of God in Jesus of Nazareth
- Plan and lead worship and pastoral services that are faithful to student's own tradition, make use of appropriate liturgical resources, and reflect thoughtful pastoral responses to the needs of the community
- In educational and learning initiatives, demonstrate ability to conduct a needs assessment and preliminary contextual analysis of the learning community in which the educator/leader serves and apply teaching methods and tools for intercultural teaching and learning in formal and informal settings.
- Demonstrate critical learning and reflection on the ethos and mission emphases of the student's own denomination and his/her experience of ministerial practice in congregational settings
- Demonstrate an ability to describe, interpret and analyze, both orally and in writing, current issues facing the student's own denomination, including the challenges to institutions and their leaders in offering ministry in today's context
- Describe and analyze the authority and function of the judicatories of the student's own denomination and describe and apply knowledge of the denomination's policy and governance
- Demonstrate abilities to plan, carry out, and evaluate worship, educational, organizational and leadership activities within the student's own denomination and reflecting that denomination's historical and contemporary resources