Master of Arts in Ministry Handbook

PROGRAM FOCUS

The Master of Arts in Ministry Program at Ursuline College is designed to prepare people for professional Ministry through an adult learning model. The Program provides a balance of academic preparation and related experiential education, including pastoral care skills, which enables the graduate to work in a variety of ministerial contexts.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. To provide theological and ministerial preparation for those individuals interested in professional ministry.
2. To provide opportunities for: (1) the development of personal ministerial goals; (2) the reflective assessment of those goals; and (3) practical skills to achieve the goals in a ministerial setting.
3. To provide an environment where participants can integrate academic preparation (content) with practical experiential application (praxis) through supervised ministry (context).

COMPETENCIES

Students will:

1. Develop a conceptual theological framework for understanding the history and role of theology in the Christian tradition.
2. Understand the formation of the Christian canon.
3. Develop beginning competency in biblical exegesis as a framework for interpreting scripture.
4. Master fundamental doctrinal positions in Christianity, including Christology, liturgy and sacraments, Christian anthropology, and ecclesiology, as well as critical challenges to these doctrines.
5. Master concepts and vocabulary necessary to participate in modern theological discourse, including issues of ecumenism, feminism, liberation theology and moral theology.
6. Develop a conceptual framework for understanding issues of management, leadership and finance at the personal, local parish and church levels.
7. Understand the role of Canon Law in the life of the Roman Catholic Church and the larger Christian community.
8. Develop interpersonal communication skills that foster open non-judgmental relationships.
9. Commit to spiritual growth through personal prayer, reflection, and faith witness.
10. Develop facility in the use of theological reflection to integrate academic competence with personal spiritual growth.
11. Integrate the individual call to a particular ecclesial ministry with pastoral skills necessary for the implementation of that ministry.
12. Develop a theology of lay ministry within the student’s particular ecclesial traditions.
13. Develop professional ethical standards and a personal code of behavior for pastoral ministry settings.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- The applicant must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
- There must be evidence of ability to do graduate work as indicated by a 3.0 average shown on the applicant's transcript.
- Three letters of recommendation from appropriate professionals are required. One of the three letters of recommendation should be from a professional with whom the applicant has worked in a service/ministerial setting.
- The satisfactory completion of an entrance interview is required.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The Ursuline Master of Arts in Ministry Program is based on an adult learning model. Classes are offered evenings, weekends and summers. It presumes a mature and self-directed learner. It seeks to build on the life and ministerial experiences of its students, to meet their learning needs and to help them to develop, implement and evaluate new skills and knowledge within their own social contexts and/or ministerial settings. Students are encouraged to work together in collaborative learning groups to develop and share skills and knowledge and to challenge each other to further growth.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Core Requirements (18 credits)

MM 610 Foundations for Theology (2 credits)
This course provides an introduction to theology and ministry. It acquaints the student with the program's theological content and methodology, its adult learning orientation and its academic resources. This course enables students to discern if this program will serve their goals and needs.

MM 610A Pastoral Leadership (1 credit)
Leadership in a ministry setting often involves administration, financial management, and leadership of prayer. This course addresses the larger context of mission and integrates the practice of several key leadership skills into the course work.

MM 641 The Christian Scriptures (3 credits)
This course introduces the student to the study of the Christian Scriptures. It addresses the nature of revelation, inspiration and hermeneutics. Students are given an overview of the Christian Scriptures and of the methodologies used to approach the scriptures.

MM 642 The Hebrew Scriptures (3 credits)
This course deals with the texts and contexts of the Hebrew Scriptures. It will employ methods of contemporary biblical scholarship to trace the origins and development of biblical writings from the historical events through the oral tradition to their final written form in the Bible.

MM 643 Pastoral Care & Counseling I (3 credits)
The course work enables students to identify, articulate and explore pastoral issues. Class sessions are devoted to identifying, developing and practicing pastoral counseling skills in a supervised setting.
MM 644  Liturgy and Sacraments (3 credits)
Students will study the liturgical act, ritual and symbol and their communal context. The theology of sacraments will include their historical understandings and development as well as current questions reflecting issues in various cultural contexts.

MM 660  Final Integration Project (3 credits)
This practicum involves the design and implementation of a project which meets a ministerial need in a particular setting. The project is to make a contribution to the community and reflect the integration of the knowledge and skills acquired in the course of the ministry program. Class meetings will address theology of ministry and the practice of theological reflection. When completed the project and its written report must give evidence of a level of proficiency that meets the requirement and competencies of the Master of Arts in Ministry Program.

Specialization Core Requirements (6 credits)

MM 654  Ministry and Spirituality (3 credits)
This course will explore how the primary responsibilities of the minister are inextricably tied to the minister’s spiritual life, namely her/his struggle to live in the light of the Gospel. It will trace the history of spirituality that underlies contemporary ministry in the church through a discussion of the following themes: scripture, journeying, contemplation and lectio divina, asceticism, mysticism, solitude and community, friendship and eucharist.

MM 655  Pastoral Care & Counseling II (3 credits)
The purpose of this course is the formation of ministerial identity, the practice of theological reflection and the acquisition of specific pastoral care and counseling skills. It involves a ministerial/learning contract, a mentor, supervision and regular seminars. It may be taken any time after the second summer session.

Dedicated Electives (9 credits)

Theology (3 credits)

MM 661  Christology (3 credits)
This theological study of the person, mission and ministry of Jesus will begin with testimony of the Christian scriptures and continue throughout the historical developments that shaped the classical formulations of Jesus’ identity and the Church’s faith. Contemporary thought from liberationist, feminist, and global perspectives will also be included. Throughout the course the implications for ministry will be sought.

MM 662  Christian Anthropology (3 credits)
This course is directed to a study of what it means to be human: the relationship of human beings to God, to the world, and to one another; the problems of evil and suffering and the foundations of hope offered by Christian faith in this context; and the fundamental issues of creation, sin, and grace.
MM 663  Ecclesiology (3 credits)
A study of the theology of church, or ecclesiology, will lay the foundation for a deeper understanding of the origins and nature of the church and its mission in today’s world.

History (3 credits)

MM 670  Church History (3 credits)
This is a graduate level survey course that will introduce students to the major religious, cultural, and political figures and events that have shaped the history of Christianity. The course will provide students with an overview of the history of Christianity from the origins of the church through the present day.

MM 671  History of the Ecumenical Movement (3 credits)
This course will provide students with an historical and theological foundation for understanding the ecumenical movement. Students will acquire knowledge of the major theological issues and concerns driving the movement. They will also acquire an appreciation for the implications of those concerns for ecumenical dialogue as a form of praxis, as well as for their own unique practice of ministry.

Ethics (3 credits)

MM 680  Social Justice (3 credits)
Social Justice will introduce students to the theology and practice of social justice, primarily through the lens of Catholic social teachings. Learning in the course will focus on foundational theological issues such as scriptural and natural law sources of authority, the contribution of the social sciences to social justice solutions, and the principles of Catholic social teaching.

MM 681  Moral Theology (3 credits)
This course examines the moral framework of Christian life, its constitutive elements and various approaches. Church teaching, norms and guidelines along with current issues and questions will be presented. Applications to the ministerial context will be emphasized.

MM 682  Canon Law (3 credits)
This course examines the legal system of the Roman Catholic Church. In addition to an historical overview of the science of canon law, lectures address selected canonical issues and their pastoral implications. Topical lectures identify and examine pertinent canons of the Code of Canon Law.

General Elective Courses (3 credits)

Three credits must be taken from the elective offerings. Electives are available on a rotating basis or from other Ursuline Graduate programs.

MM 600—609  Special Topics (1,2,3 credits)
Special topic workshops will be offered to non-matriculating students seeking enrichment and/or professional updating opportunities as well as graduate students who wish to focus on a special area.
TYPES OF ASSIGNMENTS

The Research Paper

The purpose of the research paper is to describe the past or present thinking on a particular topic. Students should begin a research paper by doing a library search of books and periodicals which deal with the topic being researched. Since the length of papers assigned to students in the program is usually short, students should be careful to limit their topics so that they can write a comprehensive paper which does justice to the topic. If the topic is not carefully limited, students run the risk of writing a paper which lacks focus and does not fully develop the topic of the paper.

Some time-honored techniques in writing a good research paper involve writing note cards while doing the reading, writing a clear and well-developed outline, writing a clear thesis statement on the topic, and remaining faithful to the outline while writing the paper.

Since a research paper is a description of the state of thinking on a particular topic, students should be careful to reference all the sources of information in the text of the paper. A research paper in itself does not require that the writer offer his/her own opinions on the topic, but instructors might ask the students to do so. The directions given the students by the instructor should be the guide in this area.

The Reflection Paper

A reflection paper differs from a research paper in that in the reflection paper the students are asked to give their own evaluations, opinions and reflections on a particular topic. As in the research paper, students should begin a reflection paper by doing some research on the topic. This would involve a library search or the students might simply read the book(s) or article(s) assigned to them by the instructor.

As the students are reading, they should again take notes, write a clearly developed outline and a strong thesis statement. In a reflection paper the students should use “I” statements as they, the students, are the ones reflecting on the topic. They should mention authors and books in the text of the paper if these sources helped to shape their reflections but they need not be footnoted unless they are direct quotes. While footnotes are not required in a reflection paper, a bibliography of the sources used ought to be part of the paper. In writing a reflection paper students should include their own personal experiences and personal reflections along with references to their readings. As in other assignments, students should be careful to follow the specific directions given by the instructor when they are completing the assignment.

Reaction Paper

The reaction paper is not a research paper. It is a student’s personal thoughts on a particular topic. When writing a reaction paper, students should follow certain steps. First, there is the reflection phase. During this phase students are encouraged to brainstorm and write down all the ideas that come to their minds. The second phase involves focus and organization. Students analyze the ideas raised during the reflection phase and select a focus for their paper. This focus should lead to an organization of ideas and concepts. Once the students have organized their ideas in line with their particular focus, they begin the writing phase.

When writing a reaction paper, students should be careful to maintain their focus and to present their ideas clearly in an organized, well developed manner.

Annotated Bibliography

The number of books and articles to be included in an annotated bibliography is determined by the course instructor. In writing the bibliography, the students give the com-
plete bibliographical citation and then four or five statements about the book or article. These statements usually describe the content of the book or article, offer an evaluation of it and suggest possible uses for the work.

**Book Review**

The length of a book review and its specific content is determined by the course instructor. Normally, a book review includes a somewhat detailed description of the content of the book, an evaluation of it with its strengths and weaknesses as well as its possible uses in ministry.

**Case Study**

In the case study students are asked to analyze a particular problem, propose and evaluate solutions and recommendations and select what the student believes to be the best solution. The steps in a case study are as follows:

1. Identify all the key information: the who, what, when, why, how and where.
2. Identify the key problems. Describe the stated problem as well as all underlying problems. The student might also be asked to describe the theological perspectives of all involved in the case study.
3. Identify possible solutions to the problem. Each solution is then analyzed in terms of its advantages, liabilities and further consequences.
4. Make a statement as to which solution would be, in one’s opinion, the best solution and then explain why.

**SUBMITTING PAPERS**

**Deadlines for Papers**

Papers and assignments are due according to a schedule determined by the faculty, but usually before the end of the semester. In order to successfully complete the assignments on time, students are encouraged to develop a realistic time line and establish completion dates for each of the assignments, conscious of their family, job and ministerial responsibilities. They need to be aware that the reading and writing of these papers involve a great commitment of time and energy. They may find that their graduate study takes priority over many other activities they usually engage in.

**Submitting Papers**

Students should send their completed papers to the specific instructor for that course in the manner and format specified by the instructor. For an efficient return of the paper, enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

If serious circumstances warrant an extension of a deadline, the student is to request the extension from the individual faculty member, in writing.

**Return of Papers**

The directors of the Ministry Program, after receiving grades from the individual instructors, will submit grades to the Registrar. Students can pick up their corrected papers from the Ministry Office any time after the end of the semester in which they were submitted if they were not returned by mail.

**Late Papers**

If a student realizes that he/she will not have the papers done on time, he/she should make contact with the instructor and the faculty advisor as soon as possible to inform
them and to make arrangements to complete the assignments at a later date.

CONTACT WITH INSTRUCTORS

Students are encouraged to contact their instructors if they do not feel that they fully understand their assignments or if they are having difficulty with them and are in need of assistance. Instructors provide their addresses and phone numbers so that students can maintain this direct contact.

Some instructors invite students to submit rough drafts of their papers for a preliminary reading. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity, but they must do so within the time frame described by the individual instructor.

INCOMPLETE POLICIES

The faculty and administration of Ursuline College and the Graduate Program in Ministry recognize that in rare circumstances, it is necessary for students to take a grade of “Incomplete” in their coursework. A grade of Incomplete should not be granted lightly, and should be approved only in rare circumstances, when severe illness or personal circumstances make it impossible for a student to complete the necessary coursework in the course of the semester. Should a student determine that she or he is unable to complete his or her coursework due to these types of circumstances, the course of action to be followed is:

1. The student must first discuss with the professor the need for an Incomplete. The professor will determine whether or not the circumstances warrant granting an Incomplete.

2. If the professor determines that the granting of an Incomplete is appropriate, the student must obtain an Incomplete form from the Graduate Ministry Office.

3. The student must then return to the professor with the Incomplete form, negotiate a deadline for completion of the necessary work and record that date in the appropriate space on the form.

   a. For incompletes granted for fall courses, work must be completed no later than the end of the next semester (the following spring.) For example, if an incomplete is taken in Christology in the fall 2006, the deadline established by the professor and student must fall on or before the last day of classes of the spring, 2007 semester.

   b. For incompletes granted for spring and summer courses, work must be completed no later than the end of the following (fall) semester. For example, if an incomplete is taken in Christian Anthropology in the spring of 2007, the deadline established by the professor and student must fall on or before the last day of classes of the fall, 2007 semester.

If an incomplete is taken in Pastoral Care and Counseling in the summer of 2006, the deadline for completion of the work in question must fall on or before the last day of classes of the fall, 2006 semester as well.
c. If the work for the incomplete is NOT completed by the deadline which was established by the professor and student and recorded on the incomplete form, the Registrar will convert the Incomplete to an “F”.

4. The form should then be signed by both the student and the professor, and submitted by the student to his or her academic advisor. The work must be completed by the deadline negotiated or the grade for the course will revert to a grade of “F.”

In very rare circumstances, when for personal or health reasons a student is unable to complete the work for an incomplete by the negotiated deadline, an extension may be requested and granted. The extension is to be granted at the discretion of the faculty member in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies. The student must appeal to the faculty member for an extension, and if the extension is granted, obtain the necessary paperwork from the Graduate Ministry office. In those circumstances where the student is physically unable to obtain the form, the faculty member, one of the program directors, or the Graduate Ministry office staff may initiate the paperwork for the student.

CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF PAPERS

Superior (93-100, i.e. A/A-)

Thesis: Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.

Structure: Evident, understandable, and appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

Use of texts: The passages from cited texts are clearly understood, well expressed or explained, and used appropriately for the development of the thesis of the paper.

Logic and argumentation: All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or other classes), which illuminate the thesis.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.

Good (88-92, i.e. B+/B)

Thesis: Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.

Structure: Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. The paper may have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

Use of texts: Passages from cited texts are understood, but may not be clearly expressed or explained throughout. They support the thesis of the paper, but all the nuances may not be seen.
Logic and argumentation: Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Counter-arguments are acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed fully. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.

Mechanics: Sentence structure, grammar strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence or comma splice.

Borderline (82-87, i.e. B-/C+)

Thesis: May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.

Structure: Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. The paper may have a few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.

Use of evidence: The passages from cited texts are not clearly understood, expressed or explained. The relationship between the text and the thesis of the paper is not always clear.

Logic and argumentation: Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections.

Mechanics: Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). The paper contains errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. The paper may have several run-on sentences or comma splices.

"Needs Help" (76-82, i.e. C/C-)

Thesis: Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.

Structure: Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Its transitions are confusing and unclear. The paper contains few topic sentences.

Use of text: Cited texts not understood, explained or expressed. Not related well to the thesis

Logic and argumentation: Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. The paper presents a simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views.

Mechanics: Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. The paper may have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

Poor or Failing (below 76, i.e. D+/D/F)

The paper clearly shows lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. It is difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. It has no identifiable thesis, or an incompetent thesis.

PAPER FORMAT

All papers should be typed and doubled-spaced. Papers should be presented with a 12 point font. The pages should be numbered beginning with the page following the title page.
REMINDER ON SIMPLE RULES OF GRAMMAR AND WRITING STYLE

While the focus of the students in writing their assignments should be on the content of the papers, they should be attentive also to style and accepted rules of grammar and spelling. Since students are writing on a graduate level, it is expected their writing should reflect that level. Poor grammar, incorrectly spelled words and poor referencing of sources will affect students' grades. The following are offered as reminders to students as they write their papers:

1. Be attentive to agreement of subject and verb.
2. Employ the active voice wherever possible.
3. Avoid incomplete and run-on sentences.
4. Pay attention to paragraphing. Each paragraph should have a thesis statement and the statement should be developed in that paragraph.
5. Use commas and semi-colons properly.
6. Make sure all words are spelled correctly.
7. Be sensitive to inclusive language. Use the plural whenever possible to avoid the cumbersome "he/she/they".
8. Use concrete language to express yourself and avoid cumbersome sentences which are unclear.

REFERENCING AND FOOTNOTING

Students should use MLA format for documenting resources. That format may be found in: Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 5th ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1999

THE GRADING SYSTEM

Grades are valued in quality points on a 4.0 scale.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-95</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-92</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>88-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>86-87</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>82-85</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79-81</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>76-78</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>73-75</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete (See Incomplete Policies above.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Passing, not counted in grade point average.</td>
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<tr>
<td>“P”</td>
<td>represents a grade of “C” or above.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>No credit</td>
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10
W = Withdrawal with permission until the date set each semester by the Registrar.
AD = Audit

OTHER STUDENT CONCERNS

Registration
All students are to register each semester for on-going courses and any new courses. There is no automatic registration of on-going courses. Completed registration forms are to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, before the deadline for registration. A late registration fee will be charged for registrations received after that date.

Transfer of Credits
A maximum of six semester credits of graduate course credit with a grade of B or better may be transferred from another graduate institution in partial satisfaction of the requirements for Master of Arts degree in Ministry. No course will be transferred unless it is applicable to the Master of Arts in Ministry Program and to the student’s course of study. The Director of the Ministry Program and the Dean of Graduate Studies will rule on the transfer of credit. The Office of the Graduate Studies will notify the applicant of the decision.

Limit for the Completion of Work
A candidate must complete all requirements for the Master of Arts in Ministry degree within the seven years of the first registration into the graduate program. A student may petition an exception to this policy.

Withdrawal and Dismissal From College
When a student withdraws from the College, an official withdrawal form must be obtained from the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the grade of "F" being given for all courses being pursued.

The College reserves the right to dismiss a student whose academic standing, conduct, or health gives evidence that continued attendance would be detrimental to the student or to other members of the school community.

The official date of withdrawal is the date on which the written notification is received by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Grievance Procedure
A student wishing to dispute an academic matter must first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the matter is not resolved, the student must write the program director stating the nature of the dispute and its justification. The program director will meet with the student and instructor to try to resolve the dispute. A student not satisfied with the outcome may petition the Dean of Graduate Studies. Forms for a formal grievance procedure are available in the Office of Graduate Studies.
4. Multiple Submissions occur when students submit the same work to more than one course without the prior approval of all instructors involved.

5. Other violations of Academic Integrity
   - Forging documents, records or signatures.
   - Falsifying grades.
   - Destroying, hiding, and improperly removing library materials for the purpose of denying others access to them.
   - Misrepresentation of academic information to college officials.

C. Sanctions
   The determination of whether or not a violation of the academic integrity policy has occurred rests with the instructor. At her/his discretion, the instructor may assess one of the following penalties:
   1. Required re-test, re-draft or additional paper or project. Credit to be determined by the instructor.
   2. A score of 0% on the test, paper or project that is the subject of the violation.
   3. Failure in the course.

Ursuline College reserves the right to assess additional penalties, over and above any assessed by the instructor, up to and including dismissal from the College, on any student who has been found in violation of the academic integrity policy on more than one occasion. Procedures for addressing violations of the Academic Integrity Policy may be found in the Ursuline College Student Handbook and Planner.

APPLICATION FOR A DEGREE
   To become a candidate for the graduate degree, the student must file an application for graduation with the Director of the Ministry Program by November 1st of the Fall semester preceding his/her graduation.

   A student may apply for graduation when:
   1. MM 660 has been completed or is in process of completion during the semester of graduation.
   2. A "B" average in all graduate work is achieved.

CONFERRING OF DEGREES
   Degrees are formally conferred only at the Commencement exercises in May of each academic year, but for all practical purposes the student has the degree as of the date that the requirements are completed. A statement to that effect may be requested from the Dean of Graduate Studies.

   All graduating students will receive full information about Commencement early in the Spring semester. Attendance is not required, but all are strongly encouraged to publicly celebrate this milestone of achievement.
STOP-OUT POLICY

Because of the intensive format, occasionally some adult students need to "stop-out" of the program for a brief period of time due to added work and/or family responsibilities. Students are to discuss this with their advisor and determine a possible time line for their return. Students should keep their advisor informed of their status through contact by phone at least once a semester.

- Fall 2006