

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (PH.D.)

Purpose

The **Doctor of Philosophy (Theological Studies)** degree will prepare professional scholars and Christian community leaders at the highest level of scholarship. Trained by a qualified academic faculty, graduates with the PhD (Theological Studies) will be prepared to serve as faculty in academic institutions and as scholars and theologically and biblically informed leaders for the church and community.

Program Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to:

- Design an original research project that adds to the knowledge base of the discipline.
- Construct a theological argument from an evangelical perspective informed by interactions with other theological traditions.
- Assess the historical development of Christian doctrine with attention to a particular doctrinal issue.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

In addition to general requirements for admission to the School of Divinity, applicants for admission to the **Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies** must submit the following for review:

1. An earned Master of Divinity or a Master of Theology with a thesis or a Master of Arts with a thesis in a related field.
2. An earned grade point average of 3.0 on a scale 4.00 in all previous graduate work.
3. A writing sample that must meet the following criteria: A 10-12 page paper (excluding cover page, table of contents and bibliography).
4. A Statement of Purpose and a Doctrinal Questionnaire following the provided template.
 - a. At least 300 words on why you are pursuing this degree
 - b. Completed Doctrinal Questionnaire
5. Pastoral Recommender Contact Information.
6. Contact Information from Two Academic Recommenders. All applicants must submit contact information from two professors with whom they studied at the graduate (master's degree) level.
7. Professional vita including degrees earned, ministry experience, and/or teaching experience and career goals.
8. Approval from the School of Divinity.

The applicant must understand that before that before registering for dissertation research, the end of the second year of admission, the student must pass a proficiency exam in German. Admissions for the Fall semester are due by May 1; for the Spring semester are due by October 1; for Summer semester are due by February 1.

Transfer Credit

Transfer hours may not exceed 27 credit hours for the Ph.D. program. Transfer credits are considered on a case-by-case basis and must have

been completed as Ph.D. course work within the previous seven (7) years from a regionally accredited program to be accepted. Courses must have a grade of B- or higher to be eligible for consideration for transfer credit. Correspondence studies or life experiences will not be accepted for transfer credit. Credits from a prior degree earned through Liberty University are considered transfer credits.

Admission into Doctoral Candidacy

Students who successfully complete the required 42 hours of doctoral course study with a grade point average of 3.25 or higher in the doctoral course studies will be eligible to take comprehensive examinations in the major field and chosen recommended cognate field. These exams may be written or oral, as determined by the student's mentor. Upon passing of the comprehensive examinations, the student is admitted to doctoral candidacy and may proceed toward developing a dissertation thesis and writing the dissertation under the supervision of a faculty supervisor and two faculty readers (the dissertation committee).

Students may graduate with the Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies upon the successful completion of their dissertation requirement and upon the recommendation of the faculty.

Program Requirements

Language Requirements. In addition to the other factors relating to participation in the Ph.D. in Theological Studies, a German language competency is required. Students must meet any language requirements prior to their second year in the program.

Active Enrollment. To maintain active enrollment, students must enroll in course work each semester. Students must enroll in at least one course during each academic year (from Fall to Summer) to maintain active enrollment status.

Residency Requirement. The School of Divinity does not have a residency requirement in the traditional sense of requiring students to uproot and move to the physical campus in Lynchburg. Using an intensive model, students may come to the Liberty University campus or another designated location for a time of group study with a professor. A cohort model will be encouraged by requiring students to register each semester for classes through aggressive advising so that students who begin together will be directed to continue through the program together, meeting regularly and by connecting via the online learning facilities of Liberty University.

Online Options. The School of Divinity proposes to offer Ph.D. courses using the modular format so that students who are living near the campus or who are living at a distance can meet the program requirements. Students will be required to be on campus to take campus-based modular courses.

Dissertation Enrollment Policy

Once students enter the dissertation phase of their degree, they are required to maintain continuous enrollment (Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters) until they complete all degree requirements. If they do not, they will break enrollment, and they will be required to apply for readmission if/when they wish to resume the pursuit of their degree. They will have to complete their degree under the Degree Completion Plan (DCP) in effect at the time of their readmission.

Program of Study

Delivery Format: Resident Only

- Theological Studies (Ph.D.)

Career Opportunities

- Senior Pastor
- Ministry Director
- University Professor
- Professional Christian Scholar
- University or K-12 School Administrator