

JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

Administration

Troy Temple, B.S., M.A., Ph.D.

Dean, School of Divinity

Professor of Theology and Family Ministries

Gabriel Etzel, B.S., M.A.R., M.Div., D.Min., Ph.D.

Online Dean, School of Divinity

Professor of Theology and Christian Leadership

Adam McClendon, B.A., M.Div., Ph.D.

Associate Dean of Residential Programs

Associate Professor of Biblical Spirituality and New Testament

Mary Lowe, B.A., M.Ed., M.A.P.M., Ed.D.

Online Associate Dean, School of Divinity

Professor of Christian Education

Accreditation

Since June 2018, the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity has been an associate member of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Candidacy status with ATS was granted in February 2019. As of January 2020, the school is accredited by the Commission On Accrediting of the ATS.

Program Directors

A listing of program directors can be viewed on the Program Director webpage.

Research Intensive Courses

All research intensive courses are listed online on the Center for Research & Scholarship QEP Overview webpage.

History

The John W. School of Divinity is an outgrowth of the vision of Dr. Jerry Falwell, the founding pastor of the Thomas Road Baptist Church. Dr. Falwell believed in Christian education. He believed that one of the most effective means of winning millions to Christ is by training young men and women to serve the Lord in aggressive, evangelical, soul-winning Baptist churches as pastors, staff, and members. Liberty University (then Lynchburg Baptist College) was founded in 1971 to help achieve that goal. At the heart of the college's curriculum for all students were classes in Bible. As the college grew and reached University status, the Bible Department grew into the School of Religion, providing Bible classes for students in every major and offering majors designed to prepare men and women for vocational Christian service.

Another need, however, still existed. Professional, graduate level training was needed for graduates of Liberty University and other colleges desiring graduate theological education as preparation for ministries in churches similar to Thomas Road Baptist Church. In 1973, Lynchburg Baptist Theological Seminary was created to address that need. It began with an enrollment of 41 students with Dr. Jerry Falwell serving as President and Chancellor.

In 2015, approval was granted by Liberty University's Board of Trustees to combine the School of Religion with the Seminary into the School of

Divinity. The School of Divinity provides quality, well-rounded education, based on academic excellence, emanating from the belief that Christian education should be superior, not inferior, to that provided by other schools. The School of Divinity is committed to the principle that a person's most effective ministry will be in conjunction with a local church, and the vision of the School of Divinity is to equip Christians to reach the entire world through aggressive New Testament church evangelism.

Distinctives

The John W. Rawlings School of Divinity is characterized by commitment to the core doctrines of the faith and providing significant experiences to develop practical ministry skills.

The faculty of the School of Divinity are committed to model both scholarship and practice for students. Graduates are grounded in the knowledge of God's Word, a desire to impact the world for God's kingdom, and the skills to engage the culture with the gospel.

Evangelism is a core value throughout the curriculum. Every faculty member and student is expected to manifest a compassion for the lost and a desire to see their salvation.

The School of Divinity is committed to the local church, and prepares graduates to enter into leadership positions in the local church and para-church organizations; therefore, experiential learning is an essential component of the School of Divinity's programs of study.

The Mission of the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

The John W. Rawlings School of Divinity exists to come alongside the local church to help it fulfill the Great Commission. In accordance with the mission of Liberty University and within the historic Baptist tradition, the School of Divinity provides undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate programs that train students for traditional, Christian ministry positions. The School of Divinity offers programs designed to equip people for lay ministry, global leadership, church leadership, and advanced scholarly research.

As a Christian community, the School of Divinity seeks to cultivate spiritual growth and faithful service to Christ and His church. As an academic community, the School of Divinity seeks to impart knowledge and necessary skills to men and women for service and leadership in Christian ministry. As a service community, the School of Divinity seeks to respond to the needs of local churches and Christian ministries as they participate in worship, global evangelism, discipleship, and scholarship.

Program Goals and Objectives

In keeping with its stated mission, the School of Divinity strives to achieve the following institutional goals:

Personal Goals

- **Commitment**

We seek to provide an environment in which students are encouraged to strengthen their commitment to Christ, certify their call to service, and develop an abiding love for God and His Word.

- **Lifestyle**

We seek to develop a lifestyle of actively communicating the Christian faith through personal integrity, evangelistic witness, and responsible scholarship.

- **Social Responsibility**

We seek to foster an awareness of the Christian's responsibility to be a productive member of society and to be responsive to the needs and concerns of diverse cultures.

Academic Goals

- **Knowledge**
We seek to develop cognitive skills for ministry and scholarship through rigorous interaction with the biblical text and disciplines related to professional vocation.
- **Understanding**
We seek to provide theological, historical, and intellectual understandings necessary for a self-conscious, critical, and Christian response to the world.

Vocational Goals

- **Relationships**
We seek to develop communicative, administrative, and relational skills necessary for professional competence.
- **Ethics**
We seek to provide opportunities for students to explore the moral dimensions and ethical implications of their chosen vocation.
- **Evangelism**
We seek to cultivate sensitivity to others and a concern for world evangelization through local church ministries and vigorous defense of the gospel.
- **Church Growth**
We seek to develop biblical and scientific expertise in establishing, developing, and sustaining growing churches and ministries.

Programs

- Apologetics Major (A.A.)
- Applied Ministry Major (B.S.)
- Bible Major (B.S.)
- Biblical & Educational Studies Major (B.S.)
- Biblical Studies Major (A.A.)
- Biblical Studies Major (B.A.)
- Camp & Outdoor Adventure Leadership Major (B.S.)
- Christian Leadership & Church Ministries Major (B.S.)
- Christian Leadership & Management Major (B.S.)
- Christian Studies Major (B.S.)
- Cultural Engagement Major (B.S.)
- Global Studies Major (B.S.)
- John W. Rawlings School of Divinity Minors
- Pastoral Leadership Major (B.S.)
- Religion Major (A.A.)
- Religion Major (B.S.)
- Religious Studies Major (B.S.)
- Religious Studies: Bible & Theology Major (B.A.)
- Religious Studies: Bible & Theology Major (B.S.)
- Theology & Apologetics Major (B.A.)
- Undergraduate Certificates
- Youth Ministries Major (B.S.)

Centers Center for Apologetics & Cultural Engagement

The culture is changing and Christians need to be prepared to defend their faith both from internal and external challenges to Christianity. To this end, the Center for Apologetics and Cultural Engagement partners with departments across Liberty University and with other organizations to equip students, faculty, and the wider Christian community. The Center resources Liberty University and Christians worldwide by hosting various events and featuring a website with articles and video clips from our Fellows, Liberty lecturers, and scholars from around the world.

The Center's *Distinguished Senior Fellows* are Liberty faculty members from various University departments who are known as outstanding scholars in their field and have years of experience engaging the culture. These Senior Fellows take part in faculty/student engagement events, are featured in videos on our website, take part in our theological fellowships, and serve as advisors to the Center.

The Center also includes an interdisciplinary *Student Fellowship Program*. Student Fellows are Liberty students of various majors who have excelled academically and have the goal of leading in cultural engagement. Student Fellows have the opportunity to learn from our Senior Fellows, serve as ambassadors for the Center, and research and write in the area of apologetics and cultural engagement.

Purpose

The Center for Apologetics and Cultural Engagement is designed to inform and equip individuals to engage culture by addressing the biblical, theological, philosophical, and cultural questions of today's world from a distinctively Christian worldview.

Center for Chaplaincy

The culture in which chaplains serve is progressively becoming more secular and pluralistic. Chaplains are faced with ministry challenges not previously experienced. The Center for Chaplaincy prepares students to minister effectively in the changing environment by providing exceptional education, research, publications, outreach opportunities, and strategic partnerships. Educationally, the Center develops cutting-edge curriculum to best prepare students to be biblically sound spiritual leaders and soul care providers. Further, the Center designs and conducts research to advance understanding for chaplain-care and leadership. Additionally, the Center produces and encourages scholarly chaplain publications to advance effective evangelical chaplain ministry. Furthermore, the Center organizes and promotes chaplain outreach locally and globally. Finally, the Center forms strategic partnerships across Liberty University and with other like-minded Universities and organizations to synergize education and ministry efforts.

Purpose

The Center for Chaplaincy's purpose is to educate and equip chaplain students to bear the Presence and Message of Christ wherever God calls them.

Center for Pastoral Ministries

Purpose

The Center for Pastoral Ministries exists through the School of Divinity to recruit, train, place, and network those called to pastoral leadership both in the local and international church pastoral leadership; to carry out

the Great Commission to students and their families; to provide ministry opportunities, mentoring, and edifying fellowship for those called to the pastorate; including, but not limited to: senior pastors, executive pastors, associate pastors, and young adult pastors.

Center for Youth Ministries

The world's youth population ages 10-24 has grown to 1.8 billion and is at a historic high. There is some estimation that 40% of the world's population comprises all those under the age of 24. The growing trend of religious non-affiliation among young people continues to be a concern to pastors, youth pastors, parents, and churches. This demographic is one of the greatest mission fields in the world, not to mention that many countries' definition of "youth" is expanding upward to the age of 39.

The Center for Youth Ministries partners with departments across the university to assist local churches, pastors, youth pastors, and parents with resources to help understand the culture of youth in the world in which they live. The Center also seeks to help equip students who are training for youth ministry, as well as those who currently serve youth in ministry, by providing training in a co-curricular effort alongside the Department of Christian Leadership and Church Ministries.

Purpose

The Center for Youth Ministries exists to recruit, equip, and network those called to youth work, in both the local church and youth organizations, to carry out the Great Commission to students and their families.