



**2025-2026**

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# I. INVITATION

## Presidential Welcome

Dear Prospective Student,

Greetings in Jesus' Name. It's wonderful to know that you desire to serve Jesus Christ and his people. Our purpose is, with God's blessing, to help you achieve that goal. Everyone at IRBS is ready to serve you in your quest.

Why should you consider IRBS? Here are five reasons:

1. We are serious about the Bible. Without reservation or hesitation, we affirm that it is God's inerrant, infallible, inspired word. The study of Holy Scripture receives the largest place in our curriculum. You will learn how to study it in its original languages, to proclaim its truths and to apply them in your own life and those you serve. What can be better than that?
2. We are serious about classical theism. Alongside our commitment to Holy Scripture, we are committed to the doctrine of God as taught in Scripture and believed for thousands of years. While twenty-first century culture may say differently, we believe that we must maintain a clear and straightforward theology (proper).
3. We are serious about the church. A seminary is not a church and must not act as one. We are servants to the congregations that send their students to us. You will have great opportunities to serve local churches by means of internships. These will contribute to your preparation for ministry.
4. We are serious about the Reformed faith. We are unashamedly committed to the doctrines taught in the great seventeenth century Baptist Confessions, the First London Confession of 1644/46/51, the Second London Confession of Faith (often called the 1689 Confession) and the Baptist Catechism of 1695. These documents share a common theology and reflect our commitment to Reformed theology as understood for nearly 400 years by many Baptists. All your classes will reflect this excellent Biblical system of theology.
5. We are serious about keeping your costs low! From our beginning, we have been committed to the principle that men training for ministry should not have to accumulate debt. Our goal is to help you in every way possible, including by charging minimal tuition and fees for your coursework.

There are many more reasons I might list. I hope that these help you to give serious thought to joining us for your studies.

May God bless you,

James M. Renihan, Ph.D.  
President

## II. FACULTY

# Core Faculty



**James Renihan, PhD**

*President & Professor of  
Historical Theology*

James Renihan has served as a pastor of churches in three states. He is a graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (PhD), Seminary of the East (MDiv), Trinity Ministerial Academy, and Liberty Baptist College (BS). He served as Dean of the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies in Escondido, CA, for 20 years, and when it became IRBS Theological Seminary in 2018 was appointed the first president. He continues as president now that it is International Reformed Baptist Seminary. His academic work has focused on the Second London Baptist Confession and the broader Puritan theological context from which it arose.



**Richard Barcellos, PhD**

*Associate Professor of  
Exegetical Theology and  
Director of Publications*

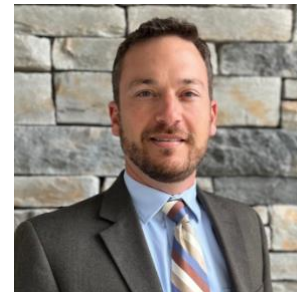
Richard C. Barcellos is pastor of Grace Reformed Baptist Church, Palmdale, CA, and Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology at IRBS. He is author of *Trinity & Creation: A Scriptural and Confessional Account* and *Getting the Garden Right: Adam's Work and God's Rest in Light of Christ*. He's also the Managing Editor and Book Review Editor for the *Journal of IRBS (JIRBS)*.



**Charles Rennie, Drs.**

*Assistant Professor of  
Systematic Theology and  
Academic Dean*

Charles Rennie has been in the pastoral ministry since 2008, after graduating from Westminster Seminary California and IRBS. He earned a second master's degree from the University of St Andrews. He is presently a doctoral candidate at University of Durham, researching the contemplative theology of St. Bonaventure. With a certain focus upon the medieval tradition, he is especially interested in how a critical and yet charitable understanding of the theological discussions of the past may be able to contribute to the theological discussions taking place within the church today.



**J. Ryan Davidson, PhD**

*Associate Professor of  
Pastoral Theology and  
Dean of Students*

J. Ryan Davidson has been serving as Pastor of Grace Baptist Chapel (Hampton, VA) since August of 2008. Ryan is a graduate of Samford University (BA), The College of William & Mary (MEd) in Counseling, and Southern Seminary (ThM) in Louisville, KY, and received his PhD in Early Church History/Pastoral Theology from The Free University of Amsterdam, Netherlands. He has contributed to various academic journals and has had the opportunity to teach pastoral theology around the world.

## Full-Time Professor



### **Daniel Scheiderer, PhD**

*Assistant Professor of  
Christian Theology*

Daniel has been in Reformed Baptist ministry since 2016 and currently serves among the pastors at Providence Reformed Baptist Church in Martinsburg, West Virginia. He received his BA from Boyce College and his MDiv, ThM (Historical Theology), and PhD (Systematic Theology) from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has written *Still Confessing* as well as various journal articles and is a member of the Evangelical Theological Society.

## Visiting Professors



### **James Dolezal, PhD**

*Visiting Professor of Theology*

James Dolezal has been a visiting professor at IRBS since the spring of 2019. Dr. Dolezal is associate professor of theology in the School of Divinity at Cairn University in Langhorne, PA. He is a graduate of The Master's College, (BA, MA), The Master's Seminary (MDiv), and Westminster Theological Seminary (ThM, PhD). Prior to undertaking PhD studies at Westminster Seminary, he pastored in Lethbridge, Alberta. He is the author of *God without Parts: Divine Simplicity and the Metaphysics of God's Absoluteness* (Pickwick, 2011), *All That Is in God: Evangelical Theology and the Challenge of Classical Christian Theism* (Reformation Heritage, 2017).



### **Ian Fuller, PhD**

*Visiting Professor of  
Apologetics*

Dr. Ian Fuller is full Professor in Physical Geography at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. He graduated with 1st class BSc Honors in Geography from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1992, followed by a PhD addressing river response to climate change from the same institution, completed in 1995. He went on to lecture in Physical Geography at the University of Northumbria, Newcastle upon Tyne, before emigrating from the UK to NZ to take up a position at Massey University in 2003.

# Adjunct Professors



**Timothy Decker, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
New Testament*

Dr. Timothy Decker is currently one of the pastors of Trinity Reformed Baptist Church of Roanoke, VA. He holds a BA & MA in Biblical Studies from Piedmont International University as well as a ThM from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a focus on New Testament and Greek. He earned a PhD in Biblical Studies from Capital Seminary & Graduate School. He has also published articles in various scholarly journals. He is author of *A Revolutionary Reading of Romans 13: A Biblical Case for Lawful Subjection to the Civil Magistrate and Dutiful Resistance to Tyrants*.



**Joshua Henson PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Biblical Languages*

Joshua Henson has served as senior pastor of Grace Covenant Church in Virginia Beach, VA. since 2016. Josh is a firm believer in an "ordinary means-of-grace ministry." He has studied in Israel and was a missionary-teacher in Mexico for three years. Josh holds a BA in Biblical Exposition from The Master's University, an MDiv from Westminster Seminary California, a certificate from the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies, and a ThM and PhD in Old Testament Studies from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS).



**Tom Hicks, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Systematic Theology*

Dr. Tom Hicks serves as the Senior Pastor at First Baptist of Clinton, Louisiana. He is married to Joy, and they have four children: Sophie, Karlie, Rebekah and David. He received his MDiv and PhD degrees from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, with a major in Church History, emphasis on Baptists, and with a minor in Systematic Theology. He is the author of *The Doctrine of Justification in the Theologies of Richard Baxter and Benjamin Keach* (PhD diss, SBTS).





**Jason Montgomery, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Historical Theology*

Jason Montgomery did his graduate work at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, TX, receiving his Master of Divinity in 1997. Later, in 2018, Jason received his PhD in Historical Theology/ Church History with a focus in Baptist studies, doing his dissertation on eighteenth-century Particular Baptist pastor Benjamin Beddome. Jason has served as pastor of the Faith Community Baptist Church in Fort Worth since 1998 and has been married to his wife, Janice, since 1990. They have been blessed with seven children.



**Michael Prodigalidad, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Pastoral Theology*

Dr. Michael Prodigalidad currently serves as a pastor of Stanmore Baptist Church in Sydney, Australia. Prior to his call to the gospel ministry, Mike spent a decade in medical research, investment and the corporate sector.

Dr. Prodigalidad is a graduate of the University of Sydney (BSc), the University of Cambridge (PhD), the University of Sydney/ University of New South Wales (MBA) and Reformed Theological Seminary (MAR).



**Kenneth Puls, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Pastoral Theology*

Dr. Ken Puls is originally from Omaha, NE, where he studied classical guitar and music theory at the Omaha Conservatory of Music. In 1980 he continued his study of music at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, receiving a BM in Music Theory and Composition. He is also a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary where he received the MM and PhD in Church Music Ministry. He has served three churches, leading music in worship and has composed over 70 hymns and songs, including hymns in *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs (Founders Press, 2004)*. He currently teaches music theory and classical guitar at Florida Southwestern State College (in Fort Myers).





**Jeffrey Riddle, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
New Testament*

Jeffrey T. Riddle has served as pastor of Christ Reformed Baptist Church in Louisa, Virginia, since 2010. He is a graduate of Wake Forest University (BA), Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (MDiv), and Union Presbyterian Theological Seminary (PhD in New Testament). He blogs at [jeffriddle.net](http://jeffriddle.net) and hosts the Word Magazine podcast. He has written or contributed to several books, including *John Owen on Scripture: Authority, Inspiration, Preservation* (2019). He has also written scholarly articles and book reviews for various publications.



**Andrew Sparks, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Systematic Theology*

Drew Sparks lives in Terre Haute, Indiana, where he is Pastor at Trinity Reformed Baptist Church and Adjunct Professor of Philosophy at Ivy Tech Community College. He received a BA from Lancaster Bible College, an MA (Christian Apologetics) from Veritas International University, and a ThM (Philosophy) and PhD (Systematic Theology) from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has authored several articles and contributed chapters to various books. He is also a member of the Evangelical Theological Society.



**Joshua Wilson, PhD**

*Adjunct Professor of  
Biblical Studies*

Josh has been serving as the senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Park Hills, MO, since 2012 and has been teaching Bible for Missouri Baptist University since 2008. He holds a BA in Religious Education and Biblical Languages from Missouri Baptist University as well as an MDiv in Biblical and Theological Studies from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Through Southern Seminary, he also earned a PhD in Old Testament with an emphasis in Greek, Hebrew, and Hebrew Literature. Josh has spoken at several regional conferences and has written articles for both *Answers in Genesis* and the *Answers Research Journal*.

# Lecturers



**Matthew Grinder, PhD**

*Lecturer in Research Writing*

Matt Grinder holds a PhD in Interdisciplinary Humanities with focuses on literature, cultural studies, and rhetoric. Currently, Matt lives in Maine, where he attends Grace Reformed Baptist Church and teaches academic writing at the University of Southern Maine. He has had a number of publications in the areas of literature and cultural studies, focusing on Native American novels and short stories. When he's not teaching and writing, Matt spends most of his free time hiking, traveling, and generally having fun with his wife, Sarah, and their two dogs.



**Chad Vegas, MA**

*Lecturer in  
Missions & Evangelism*

After completing his MA in Theology at Talbot Seminary, Chad Vegas was called to plant Sovereign Grace Church in his hometown of Bakersfield, CA. He is also the founding board chairman of Radius International and Radius Theological Institute. He is the founding board Vice-Chairman of Providence Classical Academy. He is co-author of *Missions by The Book* and an author of *By What Standard?* (both from Founders Press). His passion is to know Christ and to make him known.

# III. GENERAL INFORMATION

## **Founding**

In 1997, some Reformed Baptist pastors were approached by officials from Westminster Seminary California (WSC) with an interesting proposition: to formulate a plan to cooperate with Westminster Seminary in order to train men for ministry in Reformed Baptist churches. After careful deliberations, and with the approval of several different governing bodies, the Institute of Reformed Baptist Studies (IRBS) was formed and began holding classes in September 1998. For twenty years the relationship between WSC and IRBS prospered, graduating about forty men to serve Christ. By 2014, new opportunities presented themselves, and so with great appreciation and affection but also sorrow, it was decided that the time had come to leave WSC and develop IRBS into its own full seminary program. Several site proposals were received, and after careful consideration, Mansfield, Texas was chosen to be the location for the new seminary. First-year classes began in the summer of 2018. In 2022 we adopted a new name that better reflects who we are now: International Reformed Baptist Seminary. At the end of the 2023/2024 academic year we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## **Identity and Governance**

The seminary shall be managed by a board of directors (hereinafter, the “Board”). According to the seminary’s customary usage and the common practice of religious nonprofit corporations, the use of the term “trustee” in these Bylaws shall be synonymous with “director.” However, the Trustees shall not be considered to have the duties of a “Trustee of a trust” with respect to the seminary or the property held or administered by the seminary.

IRBS is an independent theological school, operating under the authority of a self-perpetuating Board, members of which are appointed from confessional Reformed Baptist churches.

## **Purpose**

The seminary will exist for exclusively religious purposes, principally and specifically, though not exclusively, for the purpose of educating and training individuals for the pastoral ministry and other ministries of the church by providing a graduate level theological education in accordance with the doctrinal standards of the seminary, serving churches in North America and around the world.

## **Distinctives**

**Independent** - On October 1, 2019, the Trustees of IRBS unanimously approved amended by-laws affirming the independence of the seminary.

**Confessional** - From the beginning, IRBS has subscribed to the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith (2LCF) as the most faithful summary of God’s Word. All instruction conforms to this standard. The seminary has adopted the First London Confession of 1644/46/51 and the Baptist Catechism of 1695 as supplemental confessional standards.

**Reformed Baptist** - The identity of IRBS is solidly Reformed in fully subscribing to an historic Reformed Confession (2LCF) affirming Protestant, Reformed, and Covenantal doctrine. The seminary is also Baptist in recognizing the biblical teaching (reflected in the Confession) that professing believers are the only proper subjects of Baptism.

**Seminary** - Our primary mission is to train men for the gospel ministry in cooperation with local churches. Students study under world class pastor- scholars, and intern in local churches for real, practical experience in ministry.

## **Our Mission**

**The Need** - The need for a confessional Reformed Baptist seminary is demonstrated by several factors based on foundational scriptural truths: the church must be actively involved in the spread of the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20); the ascended Christ gives ministerial gifts to His churches (Eph. 4:11) for growth and edification; the Word of God commands Christian ministers to active involvement in the training of their successors (2 Tim. 2:2).

**Serve Churches** - IRBS serves the broader Calvinistic Baptist movement, and local churches at large. Our goal is for students from around the globe to study with our school and return to their churches prepared to further the cause of Christ.

**Serve the Globe** - IRBS is committed to assisting churches in preparing men for Gospel ministry. We will serve a global community, offering the Master of Divinity degree which provides robust academic preparation in the necessary theological and ministerial disciplines. IRBS also requires internships in local churches in order to provide real-life ministerial experiences. Together, these programs will prepare men to serve in churches around the world.

## **Our Plan**

**Thinking Generationally** - In order for the faith to continue, it is necessary that men be equipped to teach the next generation. The first 60 years of the modern Reformed Baptist movement have provided a solid foundation. We must ensure that the next 60 years move the story forward. There are wonderful opportunities before us.

**Knowledge and Experience** - This seminary is built upon a wealth of knowledge and experience. Over 18 years in other confessional seminary environments, in addition to the traditional academic pursuits, we have witnessed many aspects of administration, been engaged in conversations about curriculum structure, accreditation, and observed various fund-raising methods. We have an extensive set of contacts with a wealth of experience who enthusiastically support our stand-alone seminary.

**Affiliations and Practices** - We have secured all necessary affiliations for practices in administration, being governed by a Board of Trustees, a President, and other administrators. We employ a faculty consisting of academically qualified men who also have significant pastoral experience (all of whom subscribe to the confessional standard of the seminary). This combination of scholar-pastors will have a powerful impact on students and ensure a balanced Biblical training model. The need for a confessional Reformed Baptist seminary is demonstrated by several factors based on foundational scriptural truths: the church must be actively involved in the spread of the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20); the ascended Christ gives ministerial gifts to His churches (Eph. 4:11) for growth and edification; the Word of God commands Christian ministers to active involvement in the training of their successors (2 Tim. 2:2).

IRBS wants to assure its students and prospective students of its high academic standards and integrity. While even now operating at such standards, the seminary is pursuing official accreditation and has secured other forms of verification.

# **ACADEMIC CALENDAR, 2025-2026**

## **2025 Summer Term (13 Weeks)**

April 2 Registration Opens

June 2 Classes Begin

July 2 Add/Drop Deadline

August 25-30 Final Exam Week

## **2025 Fall Semester (13 Weeks)**

May 28 Registration Opens

September 1 Labor Day

September 2 Fall Semester Begins

October 3 Add/Drop Deadline

November 27-28 Thanksgiving Break

December 8-12 Final Exam Week

## **2026 Winter Term (4 Week Term)**

October 31 Registration Opens

January 5 Classes Begin

January 12 Add/Drop Deadline

January 26-30 Final Exam Week

## **2026 Spring Semester (14 Weeks)**

December 2 Registration Opens

February 2 Spring Semester Begins

March 2 Add/Drop Deadline

April 3 Good Friday

May 11-15 Final Exam Week

- Registration for self-paced LEGACY courses is always open.

## **IV. DEGREE PROGRAMS**



# MASTER/BACHELOR of DIVINITY

## Course Requirements (Sample Schedule)

**18 Units**—Language Studies

**26 Units**—Systematic Theology

**11 Units**—Church History

**22 Units**—Pastoral Theology

**24 Units**—Exegetical Studies

**4 Units**—Electives

**5 Units**—Apologetics

**110 Total Units**

Fall	1 <sup>st</sup> Year			2 <sup>nd</sup> Year			3 <sup>rd</sup> Year		
	Credits	Code	Course	Credits	Code	Course	Credits	Code	Course
	3*	LS-G 401	Greek I*	3*	LS-H 501	Hebrew I*	3	ET 601	Biblical Theology
	3	OT 501	Pentateuch	3	CH 601	Ancient Church/ Patristics	3*	ST 701	Christology*
	2	PT 500	Theology of Ministry	3*	ST 602	Doctrine of God*	3	ST 702	Soteriology
	3*	ST 601	Foundations of Theology	2*	PT 602	Homiletics I*	3	NT 702	Gen. Epistles & Revelation
	3	NT502	Gospels	1*	PT 603	Preaching Practicum I*	2	CH 701	Modern Church (Baptist History)
	1	ST500	Found. of Min. & Theo. Studies	2	ST 605	Covenant Theology	2	PT 703	Pastoral Theology II
	0	PT401	Introduction to Research Writing						
Winter	15 Total Fall Credits			14 Total Fall Credits			16 Total Fall Credits		
	2*	AP 501	Found. Of Philosophical Theology*	2*	PT 604	Missions & Evangelism*	2	PT 702	Pastoral Counseling
				2	CH 602	Medieval Christianity			
	2 Total Winter Credits			4 Total Winter Credits			2 Total Winter Credits		
Spring	3*	LS-G 502	Greek II*	3*	LS-H 502A	Hebrew II*	3	ST 703	Doctrine of the Church
	3	ET 501	Hermeneutics	2*	ST 603	Theological Anthropology	2	ST 704	Eschatology
	3	OT 502	History & Wisdom	3	NT 602	Acts & Pauline Epistles	2*	PT 704	Homiletics II*
	4	ST 501	Symbolics	3	PT 605	Pastoral Theology I	2	ST 705	Ethics and Reformed Moral Theology
	2	PT 706	Worship	1*	PT 606	Preaching Practicum II*	1	PT 701	Pastoral Administration
	1	AP 510	Reformed Apologetics	3	OT 602	Prophets	2	AP 701	Apologetics in Pastoral Ministry
				2	CH 610	Puritanism	4		Elective
				2	CH 603	Reformation			
	16 Total Spring Credits			19 Total Spring Credits			16 Total Spring Credits		
Summer	3*	LS-G 505	Greek III*	3*	LS-H 603	Hebrew III*	PLEASE NOTE: Attendance (live or virtual) is strongly recommended for italicized classes and required for classes marked with *		
	3 Total Summer Credits			3 Total Summer Credits					

# **Master of Divinity (MDiv)**

**Description** - The Master of Divinity Program is a 110-hour program designed to be completed in residence or via a hybrid academic model, with at least 30 hours of live (in-person or online) teaching, in a **minimum** of three years.

Exegetical, Systematic, Historical, Practical and Language courses are emphasized to provide the best preparation for men entering the ministry.

## **Degree Completion Requirements**

- o 110 Hours of coursework
- o Completion of 600 hours of supervised internship in a local church (See [Internship Requirements](#) page for more details).
- o Payment of all fees and tuition required in the program

## **Admissions Information**

- Students must have earned an undergraduate degree in order for admission into the MDiv degree program.
  - The BDiv program is intended to give mature students an opportunity to study at IRBS who have not yet earned an accredited undergraduate degree. Students accepted into this program pay the standard tuition rate and fees and participate in class as any MDiv student would, regarding assignments and examinations. Credits will not be transferred to other institutions. Students are initially placed on academic probation.
- Since IRBS believes in male leadership in the church, the MDiv & BDiv programs will be limited to admitting men only.
- Placement exams are available for those who have taken Hebrew and/or Greek at another educational institution. Placement exams are intended to determine a student's language skill and establish the appropriate course level for their demonstrated ability. The student's grade on the exam will be used to decide his level of entry into the language program. Please speak to your admissions counselor for more details. A failing grade requires entry into Greek I or Hebrew I.
- Exegetical, Systematic, and Practical Theology 600 and 700 level courses require demonstrated competency in Greek and Hebrew.
- Systematic Theology courses should be completed in sequence, as much as class availability makes possible.
- Students may request taking a Practical or Systematic Theology 700 level course out of sequence. This request must be submitted in writing to the Academic Dean.
- Please speak to your admissions counselor to inquire about transferring classes from another institution (toward the MDiv).
- If your native language is not English, sufficient evidence of English proficiency must be provided, demonstrated by a minimum score of 79 on the internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT), taken within two years prior to applying to IRBS.

**Our Admissions staff** is here to help you through the whole process—from first contact through graduation. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how IRBS can help equip you for what God has called you to, please reach out to us at [admissions@irbsseminary.org](mailto:admissions@irbsseminary.org).

# MASTER of ARTS in RELIGION

## Course Requirements (Sample Schedule)

**18 Units**—Language Studies

**7 Units**—Church History

**24 Units**—Exegetical Studies

**2 Units**—Apologetics

**18 Units**—Systematic Theology

**2 Units**—Practical Theology

**1 Units**—Electives

**72 Total Units**

Fall	1 <sup>st</sup> Year			2 <sup>nd</sup> Year			3 <sup>rd</sup> Year		
	Credits	Code	Course	Credits	Code	Course	Credits	Code	Course
	3*	LS-G 401	Greek I*	3*	LS-H 501	Hebrew I*	3	ET 601	Biblical Theology
	3	OT 501	Pentateuch	3	CH 601	Ancient Church/ Patristics	3*	ST 701	Christology*
				3*	ST 602	Doctrine of God*	3	ST 702	Soteriology
	3*	ST 601	Foundations of Theology				3	NT 702	Gen. Epistles & Revelation
	3	NT502	Gospels	1		Elective			
	0	PT401	Introduction to Research Writing						
	12	Total Fall Credits		10	Total Fall Credits		12	Total Fall Credits	
Winter	2*	AP 501	Found. Of Philosophical Theology*	2*	PT 604	Missions & Evangelism*			
				2	CH 602	Medieval Christianity			
	2	Total Winter Credits		4	Total Winter Credits				
Spring	3*	LS-G 502	Greek II*	3*	LS-H 502A	Hebrew II*			
	3	ET 501	Hermeneutics	2*	ST 603	Theological Anthropology			
	3	OT 502	History & Wisdom	3	NT 602	Acts & Pauline Epistles			
	4	ST 501	Symbolics						
				3	OT 602	Prophets			
				2	CH 603	Reformation			
13	Total Spring Credits		13	Total Spring Credits					
Summer	3*	LS-G 505	Greek III*	3*	LS-H 603	Hebrew III*	PLEASE NOTE: Attendance (live or virtual) is strongly recommended for <i>italicized</i> classes and required for classes marked with *		
	3	Total Summer Credits		3	Total Summer Credits				

# **Master of Arts in Religion (MAR)**

**Description** - The Master of Arts program is a 72-hour (including languages) program designed to be completed in a minimum of 2 years. This degree may be earned residually, online, or a hybrid of the two. Practical (Confessional), Exegetical, Systematic, Historical and Language courses are emphasized to provide a well-balanced education. This degree is not intended to serve as preparation for those entering Gospel ministry.

## **Degree Completion Requirements**

- 72 Hours of coursework completed
- Payment of all fees and tuition required in the program

## **Admissions Information**

- Students must have earned an undergraduate degree in order for admission into a degree program.
- Placement exams are available for those who have taken Hebrew and/or Greek at another educational institution. Placement exams are intended to determine a student's language skill and establish the appropriate course level for their demonstrated ability. The student's grade on the exam will be used to decide his level of entry into the language program(s). Please speak to your admissions counselor for more details about taking one of these exams. A failing grade requires entry into Greek I or Hebrew I.
- Exegetical and Systematic Theology 600 and 700 level courses require demonstrated competency in Greek and Hebrew.
- Systematic Theology courses should be completed in sequence, as much as possible with class availability.
- Students may request taking a Systematic Theology 700 level course out of sequence. This request must be submitted in writing to the Academic Dean.
- Please speak to your admissions counselor to inquire about transferring classes from another institution.
- If your native language is not English, sufficient evidence of English proficiency must be provided, demonstrated by a minimum score of 79 on the internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT), taken within two years prior to applying to IRBS.

## V. NON-DEGREE PROGRAMS

# **The Certificate Program (Credit)**

The Certificate of Reformed Baptist Studies Program (CORBS) is a 14 or 15-hour program designed to supplement previous ministerial studies. This program is intended for continuing education of pastors and theological students to gain an understanding of historical Reformed Baptist Doctrine. The certificate can be earned residentially, online, or a hybrid of the two. Courses listed with \* may be taken through our self-paced Legacy program. In order to ensure a student's academic success and completion of the Certificate Program, any failed courses must ordinarily be retaken prior to taking additional courses.

## **Certificate Courses:**

- PT401 Introduction to Research Writing (0 credits – Exemption possible with demonstration of research writing skill.)
- PT 500 Theology of Ministry (2 credits) \*
- AP 501 Foundations of Philosophical Theology (2 credits) **or** ST 601 Foundations of Theology (3 credits)
- ST 501 Symbolics (4 credits) \*
- ST 605 Covenant Theology (2 credits) \*
- OT 603 Preaching the Psalms to a Christian Congregation (1 credit) \*
- ET501 Hermeneutics (3 credits) \*

# **Special/Visiting Students (Credit)**

The Special/Visiting Student Program is designed for students who do not intend to pursue a degree at IRBS, or are still uncertain which degree path to follow, but would still like to take courses for credit. Visiting students may enroll in most courses offered at IRBS, assuming they have met the prerequisites for the class. Students may take up to 20 credits in this program without declaring a degree path. With the approval of the Academic Dean a student who meets all other admissions criteria may at any time transfer into one of our degree programs. The Visiting Student Program is not itself a degree path and is not intended to serve as preparation for Gospel ministry.

# **Auditing Program (Non-Credit)**

As a service to the Christian community and IRBS alumni and spouses, IRBS offers the option to audit many of the courses. Auditing privileges include regular class attendance, access to class files, copies of all photocopied or printed material distributed free to the class, and the opportunity to ask occasional questions in class. Normally auditors will not be permitted to participate in classroom exercises or recitations or to make seminar presentations, nor will assignments or examinations be reviewed or graded by the instructor. In order to audit a course, an Auditor Consent Form and Application must be filled out. Auditing fees will apply. Auditing fees are waived for officers (Pastors, Elders, and Deacons) of partner churches and discounted for lay members of partner churches. Technology fees will still apply.

# **Internship Program**

IRBS has adopted a structured internship program. This will provide detailed guidance to student interns and the elders who oversee their internships. All Master of Divinity and Bachelor of Divinity students will complete supervised ministry activities in 9 categories in order to prepare them for gospel ministry:

1. Leading Worship
2. Preaching
3. Teaching
4. Administration
5. Visitation
6. Counseling
7. Evangelism
8. Cross-Cultural ministry
9. Mentorship

This program requires a minimum of 600 hours of supervised internship activities. Transfer students will be judged to complete the requirement based on the total number of credit hours taken at IRBS. While there is no charge for this program and no academic credit recorded, completion of the requisite hours is mandatory for graduation. The student's final transcript will make note of the successful completion of the internship program.

Download the [Internship Manual](#) for more details.



## V. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## **Apologetics**

### AP501 Foundations of Philosophical Theology

2 UNITS Foundations of Philosophical Theology will examine the relationship between faith and reason and between theology and philosophy. Students will be introduced to the metaphysical and epistemological principles that have shaped the theological grammar of Christian orthodoxy and that continue to have abiding value for the defense of the Christian faith today.

### AP510 Reformed Apologetics

1 UNIT The purpose of this class is to help students (1) understand the role apologetics plays in the life and work of the ministry, (2) develop an effective apologetic method grounded in Scripture and consistent with the Reformed standards; and (3) identify and engage various common challenges, objections to, and attacks upon Christian faith on the contemporary scene.

### AP701 Apologetics in Pastoral Ministry

2 UNITS A practical examination of issues pastors may face in their churches such as pluralism, ethical issues arising from cultural changes, answers to scientific objections, and responses to militant atheism.

## **Exegetical Theology**

### ET501 Hermeneutics

3 UNITS This foundational study treats principles of Reformed hermeneutics, history of hermeneutics, sources of hermeneutical principles, canonical structure and hermeneutics, biblical genres and hermeneutics, the Bible's interpretation of the Bible, biblical theology and hermeneutics, typology, and some contemporary issues. **Available as Legacy.**

### ET601 Biblical Theology

3 UNITS Through this study the student is introduced to the discipline of biblical theology, covering its place and function in the encyclopedia of theology, a brief history, a working definition, various models and practitioners, and hermeneutics and biblical theology. It also provides a brief overview of redemptive history from creation to consummation, focusing on the progressive, organic, Christ-centered unfolding of Special Revelation in light of the entire canon of Scripture. The course concludes with examples of biblical-theological exegesis with the goal of preaching. *Prerequisite: ET501*

## **Church History**

### CH601 Ancient Church/Patristics

3 UNITS A study of the Ancient Church, also referred to as the period of the Patristics, or Church Fathers, following the Apostolic age. Here the student will cover roughly the historical period from the close of the 1st century to the close of the 6th century. In the course, through interaction with both primary and secondary material, the student will learn of the doctrine and life of the church in this crucial period of her early formation. **Available as Legacy.**

### CH602 Medieval Christianity

2 UNITS This class is designed to pick up at the close of CH 601 with the advent of the Medieval Period of Church History. It will broadly cover the years from the beginnings of the 6th century to the emergence of the Renaissance just prior to the time of the Reformation. Here the student will develop a working knowledge of an oft forgotten period in the history of Christ's church through engagement of material from both primary and secondary sources in an examination of key writers and points of theological development and corruption during these important years in the history of the church. **Available as Legacy.**

### CH603 Reformation

2 UNITS This course is designed to continue the narrative of the history of the church left off in CH602. Here the student will be taken from the dawn of the Reformation through the period of the 16th century itself as the Reformation spread from the continent of Europe to the lands of England in the north. Again, the student will, in the study of this period, be presented and engage with both primary and secondary sources to gain an understanding and appreciation for these glorious, and at times troublesome, years in the history of Christ's church. **Now available as Legacy.**

### CH610 Puritanism

2 UNITS An introduction to Puritanism in contexts of the ecclesiastical and civil struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the place of the movement in the church's theological development.

### CH701 Modern Church (Baptist History)

2 UNITS A survey of modern developments and personalities in church history, and of various Baptist groups from the time of the Reformation to the present. Special attention is given to the rise of the modern Reformed Baptist movement.

## **Language Studies**

### LS-G 401 Greek I

3 UNITS An elementary study of Greek grammar for the translation and interpretation of the New Testament.

### LS-G 502 Greek II

3 UNITS, Syntax and Exegesis, is a detailed analysis of Greek syntax, inflection, and vocabulary at the intermediate level. Includes exegetical readings of the Greek New Testament. *Prerequisite: LS-G 401 Greek I*

### LS-G 505 Greek III

3 UNITS An advanced study of Greek syntax, morphology, and verbal aspect theories which are applied to the translation and analysis of the Greek New Testament and early Christian literature. *Prerequisites: LS-G 401 Greek I & LS-G 502 Greek II*

### LS-H 501 Hebrew I

3 UNITS An elementary study of Hebrew grammar for the translation and interpretation of the Old Testament.

### LS-H 502A Hebrew II

3 UNITS An intermediate study of Hebrew grammar for the translation and interpretation of the Old Testament. *Prerequisite: LS-H 501 Hebrew I*

### LS-H 603 Hebrew III

3 UNITS An advanced study of Hebrew grammar for the translation and interpretation of the Old Testament. *Prerequisites: LS-H 501 Hebrew I & LS-H 502A Hebrew II*

## **New Testament**

### **NT502 Gospels**

3 UNITS This first course in our New Testament lectures sequence treats the genre, background, authorship, date, recipients, and contents of the four Gospels. It identifies the function of the Gospels within the New Testament and the entire canon of Scripture and introduces the student to Synoptic issues and the use of the Old Testament in the Gospels.

### **NT602 Acts and Pauline Epistles**

3 UNITS Continuing study in the New Testament, this course treats the genre, background, authorship, date, recipients, and contents of Acts and the Pauline Epistles. It shows the relationship between the Gospel of Luke and Acts. It identifies the function of both Acts and the Pauline Epistles within the New Testament and the entire canon of Scripture and introduces the student to the use of the Old Testament in these books.

### **NT702 General Epistles and Revelation**

3 UNITS This final course in the New Testament treats genre, background, authorship, date, recipients, and the content of the General Epistles and Revelation. It identifies the function of both the general Epistles and Revelation within the New Testament and the entire canon of Scripture and introduces the student to the use of the Old Testament in those books.

## **Old Testament**

### **OT501 Pentateuch**

3 UNITS An introduction to the foundational books for all biblical studies within the context of the Ancient Near Eastern background. Emphasis will be placed upon the biblical theological contribution of the Pentateuch as well as the hermeneutical principles necessary for understanding and application of the text.

### **OT502 History and Wisdom**

3 UNITS An introduction to the historical books (Joshua through Esther) and wisdom literature (Job through Song of Solomon) of the Old Testament within their literary and historical context. Emphasis will be placed upon the unfolding biblical theological story of Scripture. Additional emphasis will be placed upon the hermeneutical principles necessary for understanding and application of the text.

### **OT602 Prophets**

3 UNITS This course is designed to be an exegetical, biblical-theological study of the Old Testament writing prophets, Isaiah through Malachi. Special attention will be given to the office of the prophet, the role of the prophet and prophetic literature, forms of prophetic speech (oracle of salvation, covenant lawsuit, etc.), the biblical-theological message of the prophetic books, and select topics of theological significance in the prophetic corpus.

### **OT603 Preaching the Psalms to a Christian Congregation - Elective**

1 UNIT This course will examine the book of Psalms as a source for preaching in Christian congregations. Students will be introduced to the structure of the Psalms, their use in the New Testament, and examples of sermon preparation and presentation. **Available as Legacy.**

## **Practical Theology**

### **PT401 Introduction to Research Writing**

0 UNITS This course is designed to introduce students to academic writing and styles of writing that will be encountered and required throughout seminary education. This course offers a detailed, hands-on overview of academic writing styles as a recursive process emphasizing planning, writing, feedback, and revision. Students will also focus on style using the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) guidelines, constructing thesis statements, well-supported and researched assertions, and writing solid conclusions. Students will also refresh their skills in proofreading, research process, summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting material from sources while avoiding plagiarism. Overall, the course will introduce and prepare students for writing likely to be encountered in other seminary courses. **This course is required for first year students unless a writing sample submitted within 30 days of admission (no later than August 1) is approved for class exemption.**

### **PT500 Theology of Ministry**

2 UNITS An introduction to the nature of the Christian ministry, the nature of the call to the ministry, and the requisite gifts and graces for the Christian minister. It also addresses the centrality of the ministry of the word, the biblical and Reformed doctrine of the regulative principle of worship, as well as a wide range of subjects related to Pastoral Theology from a Reformed Baptist perspective. **Available as Legacy.**

### **PT602 Homiletics I - Preaching and Sermon Preparation**

2 UNITS After a brief reminder of Dr. Renihan's description of preaching (PT500), this course will first examine the biblical method, content, and goal of preaching. This will be followed by a method of sermon preparation based upon the integration of sound hermeneutics, exegesis, theology, and Christ-centered application to different kinds of hearers. The expository method will be emphasized.

### **PT603 Preaching Practicum I**

1 UNIT Students will prepare sermons which will be delivered in a worshipful context for the edification of one another (25-30 minutes taped). These sermons will be critiqued graciously and judiciously in class, followed by a more detailed critique in private by the professor. The purpose is to evaluate the presentations for the guidance of each student concerning his gifts and practice. Emphasis will be placed upon the integration of exegesis and the expository method for pastoral application. *Pre/corequisite: PT 602*

### **PT604 Missions and Evangelism**

2 UNITS The biblical foundations of missions and evangelism will be explored in this course. This includes the theology of missions in the Reformed faith, the question of contextualization in missions, the qualifications for a missionary (both local and international), the role of the local church in missions and evangelism, and the practical application of evangelism through the local church. This class will be taught on the Radius Campus in Tijuana, Mexico. It is required for the MDiv, MAR & BDiv programs and will not be recorded. **In-person attendance is mandatory.**

### **PT605 Pastoral Theology I - Theological Pastoring**

3 UNITS Building upon PT500, theological pastoring studies the preparation, identification, and work of the pastor/elder in the New Testament. Various topics of systematic theology will be integrated into a "whole counsel of God – sound doctrine" theology for pastoral thinking and practice, thus preparing the man of God to be "able to teach" and able to "rule." A part of this course is meant to help the student to understand that all pastoral work is theological, which enables the pastor to apply the Word of God accurately to each church and person. *Pre/corequisite: PT 500*

### PT606 Preaching Practicum II

1 UNIT Students will prepare sermons and deliver them in a worshipful context for the edification of one another (25-30 minutes taped). These sermons will be critiqued graciously and judiciously in class, followed by a more detailed critique in private by the professor. The purpose is to evaluate the presentations for the guidance of each student concerning his gifts and practice. Greater attention to the integration of exegesis, theology and pastoral application will be emphasized. *Prerequisite: PT 603; Pre/Corequisite: PT 704*

### PT701 Pastoral Administration

1 UNIT This course prepares students to lead and care for God's people by highlighting the importance of managing God's household well. Reviews principles of stewardship and its practical outworking in church finances, asset management, mobilizing people and ministry opportunities. We will also see how effective communication builds church unity, encourages service, and prepares God's people for seasons of change.

### PT702 Pastoral Counseling

2 UNITS A survey and introduction to the role of the pastor as a counselor of God's people using the Word of God. The course will survey theological, historical, and practical areas related to pastoral counseling and will focus on the use of the Scriptures in the counseling ministry of the church. Various topics will be addressed from a biblical perspective such as fear, depression, guilt, family, and habitual sin and will be surveyed alongside biblical anthropology, counseling methodology, and biblical solutions for addressing such issues.

### PT703 Pastoral Theology II - Practical Theology

2 UNITS Having established the theology of pastoring in PT605, this course will examine its practical applications to areas of the pastoral ministry. This includes an overview of preaching, pastoral oversight, the proper administration of the sacraments, the practice of church discipline, the relationship between the Elders and Deacons in the local church, the proper protocol for moderating the meetings of the officers as well as the congregation, weddings, funerals, constitutions, church building use, and other practical matters which may arise. In all these practical areas, the biblical pastoral decorum will be variously applied. *Prerequisite: PT 605*

### PT704 Homiletics II – Preaching

2 UNITS Following the foundations of PT602, this course will further refine the expository, Christ-centered preaching which integrates theology and application to various kinds of hearers. Further topics will include an overview of the Law and the Gospel in pastoral preaching, preaching Christ in all the Scriptures, and forming long-range plans for preaching in the local church. *Prerequisite: PT 602*

### PT706 Worship

2 UNITS Reformed worship, theology, and practice are examined in this course, including a biblical-theological comparison of revealed worship in the Old Testament with the instituted worship of the New Covenant in the New Testament. Topics include the regulative principle of worship both in the OT and NT. the proper elements of Christian worship defined biblically and confessionally, the role of God's Word and its proclamation in Christian worship, the consideration of proper music in worship, the proper forms and participants in worship, and the ultimate goal of all Christian worship: the glory of God. Modern schools of Christian worship will be considered in due course and evaluated in light of the regulative principle of worship.

## **Systematic Theology**

### ST500 Foundations of Ministerial and Theological Studies

1 UNIT This is a team-taught inter-disciplinary course covering topics such as the Christian life of theology students, intro to internship, library & theological bibliography, etc. **Required for first-year MDiv/BDiv students. Available as Legacy.**

### ST501 Symbolics

4 UNITS A detailed examination of the history, language, and theology of the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 in order to understand its historical setting and its theological relevance to the present. Historical comparisons will be made to the Westminster and Savoy Confessions. Other Baptist confessions will be considered as they relate to this document. **Available as Legacy.**

### ST601 Foundations of Theology

3 UNITS This course is an introduction to the nature and purpose of theology and the doctrine of Scripture from a confessional Reformed perspective. Particular attention is devoted to such topics as: the essence and attributes of Holy Scripture, as well as the proper object, cognitive principles, and ends of theology. **AP501 as a pre/co-requisite is recommended.**

### ST602 Doctrine of God

3 UNITS This course will consider the doctrine of God (theology proper) by examining God's existence and attributes, his triunity, and his acts of decree, creation, and providence. The contrast between classical Christian theism and its modern alternatives will be given special attention.

### ST603 Theological Anthropology

2 UNITS This course will explore the biblical doctrine of man from a systematic perspective. It will include the study of God's creation of man, his constitutional nature, the image of God, the moral law of God written on his heart, the covenant of works, the fall, the doctrine of sin, and the nature of human freedom.

### ST605 Covenant Theology

2 UNITS This course presents a start-to-finish biblical covenant theology. It establishes a hermeneutical and systematic foundation and studies the historical development of the covenants that God made with man and their relation to the eternal purpose of salvation in Christ hidden for ages but revealed in the last days.

**Available as Legacy.**

### ST701 Christology

3 UNITS This course considers the person & work of Christ in the accomplishment of salvation, examining the scriptural basis & systematic development of the doctrine from the conciliar debates of the 5th century, its appropriation & codification within the Reformed tradition, and its modern & contemporary modifications.

### ST702 Soteriology

3 UNITS This course examines the work of the Holy Spirit in the economy of salvation and the application of redemption. The doctrine of Soteriology is presented systematically, defended exegetically, explicated confessionally from within the Reformed Tradition, and contrasted critically with alternative views.

### ST703 Doctrine of the Church

3 UNITS A study of biblical ecclesiology, covering such subjects as the nature, purpose, and centrality of the church, the structure and function of a church, the sacraments of the church, church discipline, associations, missions, and cooperative efforts.

### ST704 Eschatology

2 UNITS This course presents a systematic account of Eschatology as it is both expressly set down and necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture. Alternative views are surveyed, and students will be taught to evaluate the biblical and confessional coherency, hermeneutical presuppositions, and theological implications of each of these views from a Reformed perspective.



ST705 Ethics and Reformed Moral Theology

2 UNITS This course studies the science of ethics with attention to the contributions of Reformed moral theology. Students will be introduced to moral realism as articulated in the natural law tradition and received in Reformed theology and practice. Competing metaethical and normative theories will be evaluated. Related issues such as natural and theological virtues, acquired and infused habits, and the division and use of the law will be addressed. The ethical reasoning developed throughout the course will be applied to contemporary problems in ethics and pastoral ministry. *Prerequisites: AP501 and ST603.*

## VI. ACADEMIC POLICIES

Upon acceptance into an IRBS degree program, your Admissions Counselor will be available to assist you with scheduling and registering for classes, according to your program requirements. Students are ultimately responsible for their progress as described in the Academic Catalog at the time of their acceptance. Please carefully review the Degree Completion Requirements and the academic policy information outlined herein in order to matriculate successfully through your chosen program.

### **Admissions Requirements**

Each of our degree (and non-degree) programs will require the following application elements...

- 1) Completion of the [Online Application](#)
- 2) Submission of Transcripts from any secondary or post-secondary educational institution where you have taken six hours or more (Instructions outlined in the Online Application)
  - 2.7 Minimum GPA Required
- 3) Payment of Application Fee (Complete in the Online Application)
- 4) A pastoral letter and church recommendation will be required in the application for admission so as to give evidence of the student's ecclesiastical standing.
- 5) An academic reference will also be required, by someone who can adequately vouch for the applicant's academic ability.
- 6) *(International students only)*—If your native language is not English, sufficient evidence of English proficiency must be provided, demonstrated by a minimum score of **79** on the internet-based *Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT)*, taken within two years prior. All three delivery methods of the TOEFL iBT, including the home edition & paper edition, will be accepted. Our institution code is D119.

*\*If you have completed an undergraduate degree in the U.S. (or in a primarily English-speaking country) with a minimum 2.7*

*GPA, you may be eligible to for exemption from the TOEFL requirement. Contact IRBS Admissions to discuss options.*

*\*Since IRBS believes in male leadership in the church, women are invited to apply for the M.A. in Religion only. All other degree programs will be limited to admitting men.*

*\*IRBS admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.*

### **Program Details**

Placement exams are available for those who have taken Hebrew and/or Greek at another educational institution. Placement exams are intended to determine a student's language skill and establish the appropriate course level for their demonstrated ability. The student's grade on the exam will be used to decide his/her level of entry into the language program(s). Please speak to your Admissions Counselor for more details about taking one of these exams. A failing grade requires entry into Greek 1 or Hebrew 1.

Exegetical, Systematic, and Practical Theology 600 and 700 level courses require demonstrated competency in Greek and Hebrew.

Systematic Theology courses should be completed in sequence, as much as class availability makes possible.

Students may request taking a Practical or Systematic Theology 700 level course out of sequence. This request must be submitted in writing to the Academic Dean.

Please speak to your Admissions Counselor to inquire about transferring classes from another institution.

## Degree Time Limits

1. All degree programs must be completed within seven years from the time of initial matriculation, including any leave of absences or unenrollment periods. In the case of Visiting Students, the degree time limit shall be calculated from the time they are accepted into a particular degree program. If the maximum time limit has been reached prior to finishing the degree, the student may apply for an extension, which must be approved by the Academic Dean and the Dean of Students. Extension fees will apply.
2. Students are ordinarily unenrolled after one-year of inactivity (defined as no credit-earning enrollment) and are required to resubmit application materials before re-enrollment, though they remain subject to the policies published in the catalog at the time of their initial matriculation.
3. Any IRBS courses, completed after enrolling in a degree program, that exceed the seven-year degree time limit shall no longer be eligible to be counted toward that degree nor will they be applied to the student's GPA.
4. Credits from other institutions that operate on a quarter system shall be considered two-thirds equivalent to that of a semester system.
5. Courses completed at another institution that are more than ten years old prior to initial matriculation, or the time of readmission, at IRBS will ordinarily not be considered for transfer credit.
6. In order to be considered for transfer credit, no less than a 2.0 GPA must have been earned for each course under review. Transfer credits shall not factor into a student's GPA.
7. The maximum number of credits transferred may not exceed one half of the total required credits for the MAR and MDiv/BDiv degree programs respectively (MAR—36 hours, MDiv/BDiv—55 hours).

## Transfer of Credit from Other Graduate Theological Schools

1. Transfer credits will neither be accepted for the Certificate program nor transferred to other institutions.
2. All potential students must submit official student transcripts to the registrar's office as part of their application process. Both digital and physical transcripts will be accepted. Once official transcripts have been received from the student's prior educational institutions, the registrar will review the transcripts and application to make sure everything is included. Then the registrar will forward all documents to the Admissions Committee, which consists of the Academic Dean, the registrar and one core faculty member.
3. When evaluating potential transfer credits, the committee utilizes the following general principles: 1) the relevance of the curriculum, 2) the equivalency of the curriculum in its content, 3) the equivalency of the curriculum in its quantity, 4) the received grade for the completion of the course curriculum, and 5) whether the course was completed within the last ten years. The Admissions Committee will review and collectively deliberate regarding the acceptance or denial of the potential transfer credits. Courses may be transferred as for either required or elective credits, at the committee's discretion. All decisions regarding the acceptance of transcripts and transfer credit shall be completed in a timely fashion, typically within a period of two weeks. The registrar will inform the student via email. All student transcripts are held in confidence, filed in the student's file, either digitally or physically in a locked file cabinet.
8. Concurrent transfer of credit (i.e., courses from other institutions taken concurrently with IRBS classes by registered IRBS students) is not ordinarily permitted except in unusual circumstances, which will require approval from the relevant department head and the Academic Dean. Credits will, however, ordinarily be transferable in cases when an IRBS faculty member teaches the exact equivalent of a required IRBS course at another institution and a student obtains permission to fulfill that course requirement through that institution.
9. IRBS shall ordinarily accept shared credit from a completed master's degree earned at another theological institution, not to exceed one half of the total required credits for the MAR and MDiv degrees respectively.
10. The Divinity programs require the completion of 600 hours of supervised internship in a local church, but the total number of remaining hours will be determined in proportion to the number of transfer credits received. For example, if a student is granted 55 transfer credits of the required 110 credits, there will only remain 300 internship hours to fulfill.

## **Advanced Standing**

1. Greek and Hebrew language courses completed at another institution will not be considered for transfer credit. Instead, a student may request to take an advanced standing exam to determine their proper placement within the language program. Advanced standing may be determined on the basis of an oral or written assessment, at the discretion of the professor. When a student is awarded advanced standing, the number of hours required for their degree will be reduced accordingly. A Greek or Hebrew language assessment may be requested at any time by contacting your admissions counselor.
2. If a student's enrollment has become inactive, they may be required to retake a Greek or Hebrew placement exam upon re-enrollment.
3. IRBS has cooperative agreements with certain institutions wherein the possibility of advanced standing at IRBS has already been evaluated and confidently predetermined. For a list of institutions with whom we presently have agreements, you may visit [irbs.org/international-relationships](http://irbs.org/international-relationships).

## **Grading System**

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	Quality Points
A	95-100	4.0
A-	91-94	3.7
B+	88-90	3.3
B	84-87	3.0
B-	81-83	2.7
C+	78-80	2.3
C	74-77	2.0
C-	71-73	1.7
D	0-70	0.0
I	Incomplete	-
W	Withdrawn	-
S (P)	Satisfactory (Pass)	-

## **Enrollment**

Students may enroll for classes in the current semester upon admittance to the seminary. Enrollment for future semesters will require students to pay the balance of their previous semester before enrolling or registering for the next. Enrollment can be completed in Student Management System (SMS), Populi, or with the assistance of the Admissions Counselor.

## **Definition of Full-Time**

A full-time student is one who takes 12 credit hours or more during the Fall and Spring semesters of an academic year. Students who take less hours in an academic year are considered part-time.

## **International Students**

International applicants are eligible to apply and learn through distance education courses. However, IRBS does not currently admit international applicants as residential students. International students wishing to attend a US college or university as residential students must be capable of obtaining an F-1 Visa. F-1 Visas are granted to international students who attend an academic program or English Language Program at an institution that is certified by the United States Government to issue I-20 Visa Applications. IRBS currently is not certified by the United States Government to issue such forms. Therefore, international students cannot be admitted as residential students. However, international students are eligible to apply for and take part in distance learning courses that are offered at IRBS.

If your native language is not English, sufficient evidence of English proficiency must be provided along with your application materials, demonstrated by a minimum score of 79 on the internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT), taken within two years prior to applying to IRBS. All three delivery methods of the TOEFL iBT, including the home edition & paper edition, will be accepted. Our institution code is D119.

*\*If you have completed an undergraduate degree in the U.S. (or in a primarily English-speaking country) with a minimum 2.7 GPA, you may be eligible to be exempt from the TOEFL requirement. Contact IRBS Admissions to discuss options.*

## **Course Extensions and Incomplete Coursework**

Students may be granted a course extension based on an emergency or extenuating circumstance. If a student is incapable of completing his coursework within the allotted number of course periods, the student may submit a *Request a Class Extension* form through their Populi profile. The request form will include the duration of the extension request (2, 3, or 4 weeks) and the reason for the request.

- Course extensions may be granted for:
  - Medical Emergencies
  - Death in the Immediate Family
  - Natural Disasters
- Course extensions may NOT be granted for:
  - Family Vacations
  - Poor Time Management

If the professor recognizes that there is a substantial basis for granting an extension, he may do so, though there is no obligation to grant course extensions to any student. If an extension is granted, the professor will determine the parameters and requirements for completing the course work and extending the course.

If the student is granted an extension and is incapable of completing the coursework before the submission of final course grades, then the student will receive an "I" for Incomplete on their transcripts. However, upon the completion of all course work and the receipt of a satisfactory grade from the professor, the "I" will be removed from the student transcript and replaced with the earned letter grade. If no extension is granted, the student may appeal to the professor for an Incomplete, using the *Request a Class Incomplete* form, which will not adversely affect the GPA and will allow for the student to make up the course in the future. No tuition refunds will be made in this case.

## **Dropping Courses and Tuition Refunds**

Students may drop a course until the end of the first quarter of any course (known as the Add/Drop date). A course dropped before the end of the first week of class (or the end of the first day of an intensive course) will not appear on the student's transcript. A course dropped between that time and the Add/Drop date will appear on the student's transcript as a W but will not affect the GPA. Students wishing to withdraw from a course that has already begun may submit a *Request for a Class Withdrawal* form through their Populi profile. If the course is dropped in the designated time frame, the student will receive a 100% refund of tuition. However, if a student does not drop the course in the appropriate time frame or fails to inform the Registrar, they will receive a 0% refund of tuition. Administrative and technical fees are not refundable.

Students of our self-paced LEGACY courses must drop the class within 1 month of registration in order to receive a tuition refund.

Students should speak with the Registrar regarding available options if they desire to drop a course once more than 25% of the course has been facilitated.

**Students from partner churches** do not pay tuition. They do, however, pay a Course Administration Fee of \$100 per course. This fee is not refundable. Students who must drop courses in exceptional circumstances may appeal for a refund of the Course Administration Fee to seminary administration. The decision of the seminary administration will be final.

Technology, application, and library fees are non-refundable.

## **Seminary Withdrawal**

A standard withdrawal is defined as dropping all classes for the current term after the semester/session has begun. Students who are considering withdrawal from the seminary should immediately consult the Dean of Students or their Admissions Counselor to discuss reasons for the withdrawal and possible alternatives.

The following process should be followed closely in the event a student prayerfully decides to withdraw from IRBS:

Step 1: Meet with the Dean of Students to discuss the withdrawal and possible alternatives.

Step 2: The student must submit in written form their intention to withdraw formally. This can be done in the form of a signed letter or email to the Dean of Students. It must clearly explain the reason for withdrawal. The written submission of withdrawal will be placed in the student's file permanently.

Step 3: Pay all semester or resource fees.

Students are advised that neglect to follow the prescribed withdrawal procedures may adversely affect their academic record. Students who have withdrawn must submit a new application and complete the admissions process again if they choose to return to their studies. The official withdrawal date placed on the student record will be the first class period missed, whether this class period is during or following the formal withdrawal process. The student will be responsible for all current bills, charges, tuition fees, semester fees, etc. The seminary reserves the right to restrict access to student transcripts and files pending payment of any tuition or fees.



## **Academic Probation**

The Seminary desires to see students succeed and to help them cultivate intellectual virtues, together with the moral virtues of fortitude and self-discipline, in order to do so. These virtues are necessary, not only in the pursuit of academic success, but in the pursuit of the pastoral ministry. Probationary status after matriculation is a means by which the seminary seeks to alert and assist students whose academic standing is uncertain and/or in jeopardy. Its purpose is to emphasize the need for the student to take special care to ensure their own success, including any necessary changes to their approach to theological study.

A student will automatically be placed on academic probation for any of the following reasons: (1) if, upon admission, the student either does not hold an undergraduate degree or has an undergraduate accumulative GPA below 2.7, or (2) if, at anytime after matriculation, the student's accumulative GPA falls below 2.0 (the minimum grade point average required for graduation).

When a student is placed on academic probation, the student will be notified of the cause(s) by the Academic Dean. With the help and approval of the Dean of Students, the student will be guided in producing a written plan-of-action for the coming term, which will be submitted to the Academic Dean.

A student on academic probation is ordinarily permitted to continue their studies for an additional 15 credit hours. If the student's accumulative GPA remains below 2.0, after the attempted 15 credit hours, there shall be grounds for the student's dismissal. If the student's accumulative GPA is no longer below 2.0 after the probationary period, the student shall automatically be removed from academic probation.

After a period of one year, any student who has been dismissed for academic reasons may apply for readmission. A student dismissed for academic reasons may also appeal to the faculty for reinstatement. Such an appeal should be made in writing and submitted to the Academic Dean, explaining the student's circumstances and proposing a plan for successful completion of seminary course work if reinstatement is granted. If reinstatement is granted, the faculty may also grant whatever credit it deems appropriate for work already completed.

Since probation is to be used to help the student demonstrate and develop his academic competency, neither probation at admittance nor academic probation shall be recorded on a student's permanent transcript.

## **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all class periods or (in unusual circumstances) listen to all recorded lectures. Each student has a unique and special responsibility to ensure his class participation. The seminary understands that due to employment, time differences, or other factors, live attendance may not always be feasible. Individual students who are unable to attend lectures live (in person or virtually) are responsible for communicating this ahead of time with the professor. Any sudden or emergency absences should, if possible, be made known to the professor prior to the course period. Those with unexplained absences may be penalized on their final letter grade at the discretion of the professor.

Any class that is not recorded requires live (in person or virtual) attendance. Classes in italics & marked with an \* on the Course Requirement page require mandatory live (in person or virtual) attendance. Classes in italics are those where live (in person or virtual) attendance is strongly recommended, due to the nature of the class. Any exceptions need to be granted by the professor.

If lecture recordings are available via video or audio, students are expected to listen to those lectures prior to the next course period following the absence.

In the case of self-paced Legacy courses, students are responsible for listening to each complete lecture and reaching out to the professor with any questions about the content. Populi keeps a record of each lesson observed, and this will be included in the Completion of Course Lectures/Online Attendance portion of the grade.

**Online Course Policies** Online Legacy courses will have a rolling enrollment; therefore, students may register for Legacy classes at any time. Students will have 4 months to complete each course from the time of registration when the course is taken for credit. Course documents will be immediately available in Populi on the course homepage when students register for their course online. Videos for each course can be viewed on the course homepage and all assignments can be submitted to the professor by uploading them to Populi or emailing them to the professor, whichever the syllabus indicates.

See our website for a list of current [Legacy course options](#).

Summary of Online Course Requirements:

- Listen to all recorded lectures.
- Complete all assignments including the required readings.
- Take the final exam (supplying proctor as needed).
- Submit a research paper if required.

## **Privacy of Student Records**

IRBS maintains the security and confidentiality of student educational records. All student records are kept in a secure location, in locked file cabinets and secure electronic locations. Additionally, all transcripts and pertinent information for current degree-seeking students are digitally “backed-up” by IRBS’s learning management system, Populi, and at a second digital location.

Since IRBS does not accept Title IV student loan monies, IRBS is not bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, IRBS confidentiality policies are generally consistent with FERPA. IRBS policies are as follows: A student may access/inspect and review his educational records and unofficial transcript after a request has been made to the Registrar’s office. The Registrar will arrange for the student to access the student file. The Registrar may be present during this access/inspection or review. The following is considered a student educational record: Record means any information recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwriting, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, and microfiche. If a student believes his academic file and/or unofficial transcript are inaccurate or misleading, the student may request to amend the file and/or transcript. The student should write the Registrar, clearly identifying the portion of the record that the student wishes to change and specifying what is inaccurate or misleading. If IRBS decides not to amend the file, the student may use the student appeal process to proceed. If IRBS agrees with the student and changes are required, all changes will be reflected in the students records and official transcript.

IRBS will not disclose any personally identifiable information found in the student’s academic file or transcript, without the written consent of the student. The following is considered personally identifiable information:

- A. The student's name
- B. The name of the student's parent or other family members
- C. The address of the student or student's family
- D. A personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record
- E. Other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name
- F. Other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty
- G. Information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates

## **Plagiarism**

Cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in the immediate failure of the assignment and potentially the course according to the discretion of the Dean of Students and President. Repeated acts of plagiarism will result in expulsion.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

IRBS seeks to promote an academic community where all members – students, faculty, and staff – are treated with courtesy, respect, and dignity. The seminary seeks to promote a learning environment free from all forms of conduct that can be considered discriminatory, harassing, coercive, or abusive. These behaviors violate a person's dignity as an individual made in the image of God. This policy is central to our mission as a learning community marked by Christian integrity and love. IRBS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, age, or national or ethnic origin, in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, and other school-administered programs.

## **Student Conduct**

All students of IRBS are expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature Christians. Student conduct is under the supervision of our Dean of Students. IRBS reserves the right to turn down or to dismiss students whose conduct fails to conform to the ethical norms and principles set forth in Holy Scripture. Consult the Student Handbook for more information.

## **Graduation Requirements**

1. The end of study is the commencement of a new phase of life—it's called graduation. A 2.0 (C) cumulative grade point average (GPA) is required in order for all IRBS students to graduate.
2. A student expecting to graduate with a **degree** is required to notify their Admissions Counselor by January 1 prior to the academic year in which the student expects to graduate. A student expecting to graduate with a **certificate** must notify their Admissions Counselor when they have registered for their final certificate course(s), if not before. The counselor will perform a degree audit for the student and email the results to the student's email address. The student is responsible for completing all program requirements, including registering for the appropriate courses, whether or not he or she receives the degree audit prior to the fall semester of the expected graduating year.
3. MDiv/BDiv students must complete the internship requirements to the satisfaction of the Dean of Students.
4. The conduct and attitude of the student must be satisfactory according to the norms of Scripture and standards of the student handbook.
5. The student must be clear of all financial obligations to the seminary before graduating.
6. All students expecting to graduate must make formal application for graduation to their Admissions Counselor. The graduation fee will be paid at this time.

## VII. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## Tuition Costs and Fees

**Standard Tuition** - \$250 per credit hour

**Tuition with Church Partnership Program** - \$0 per credit hour for students meeting the following criteria:

- **Contributing Church Partnership:** The student must be a member of a church which provides a monthly gift of \$200+ (or equivalent annual contribution) to IRBS. The student must be a member in good standing of the church prior to (and while) participating in the partnership program. Please speak with your admissions counselor ([admissions@irbsseminary.org](mailto:admissions@irbsseminary.org)) for more details on the CCP program and to see if you qualify.
- The following fees will **still apply** to Church Partnership Member Students:

<b>IRBS Fees (for all enrolled students)</b>	
Application Fee	\$50 one-time fee
Technology Fee	\$60/semester
Library Fee	\$25/semester
Graduation Fee	\$100 one-time fee
<b>Supporting Church student</b> tuition per credit hour	\$0 tuition/credit
<b>Supporting Church student</b> administrative fee*	\$100/course

\*As of May 2025, IRBS requires approximately 49 courses for the MDIV and BDiv. Students from supporting churches who enroll in all required courses from IRBS will pay a total of \$4900 in Course administration fees while enrolled, not including the miscellaneous fees outlined above.

\*As of May 2025, IRBS requires 27 courses for the MAR degree. Students enrolling in all required MAR courses from IRBS will pay a total of \$2700 course administration fees while enrolled, not including the miscellaneous fees outlined above.

**Auditing Fee** - \$125 per credit hour. An auditor attends the class, receives copies of handouts and class materials, and has access to the professor for follow-up discussion. An auditor may request to have his presence recorded after completion of the lectures. An auditor is not required to complete any class assignments. Auditing fees are waived for officers (Pastors, Elders, and Deacons) of partner churches, and partner church lay members pay a discounted auditing fee of \$60/class. Technology fees still apply.

<b>Additional Fees</b>	These fees apply to <b>all</b> students, including auditors.
Technology Fee	\$60/semester
Library Fee	\$25/semester

### **Payment Due Dates**

Payment of all tuition and fees is due within 30 days of the invoice date unless other arrangements have been made with your admissions counselor. Overdue charges may lead to a financial lock being placed on the student's profile, preventing them from registering for future classes or accessing their official transcripts.

### **Financial Aid**

Understanding that students might be prevented from receiving a theological education for financial reasons, IRBS offers scholarships to students who are pursuing Gospel ministry. Scholarships are granted based on financial need. An enrolled student may request a scholarship application from their admissions counselor. Once the application has been submitted, proof of financial need may be required. The scholarship committee will review scholarship requests and respond within 2-4 weeks with their decision. Scholarships are awarded by the seminary's scholarship committee and are given on a first come, first serve basis and according to need. Students must apply for financial aid each academic year, but scholarships are awarded on a semester basis, assuming that the student meets all the conditions of the scholarship for which he is applying. Scholarship applications will not be considered before an admission application has been accepted.

## VIII. PERSONNEL



## **Institutional Administration**

James Renihan, PhD  
President

Richard Barcellos, PhD  
Director of Publications

Charles Rennie, Drs.  
Academic Dean

J. Ryan Davidson, PhD  
Dean of Students

Brent Ward  
Director of Development

Kristen Wood  
Registrar/Admissions Counselor

Gatlin Bredeson  
Special Assistant to the President