

Admission requirements for master's degree, certificate and non-degree programs

For admission to Methodist Theological School in Ohio, master's degree, certificate and non-degree applicants are expected to have earned, at minimum:

- a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university;
- a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.7 on a 4.0 scale.

Although there is no required undergraduate major for seminary preparation, a course of study that includes a broad representation of studies in the human experience, including social and natural sciences, language, literature, religion, history, and philosophy, is recommended.

Decisions regarding admission to master's-level study will be based on consideration of an applicant's cumulative grade point average, personal references (as required), the written statement of rationale and vocational goals, a personal interview, and the applicant's graces, gifts and fitness for ministry. Other relevant factors for admission will also be considered.

New students are permitted to begin in Fall or Spring semesters. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Dual degree students are welcome.

The application process

All materials submitted in support of admission to any program are considered the sole and confidential property of Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Admission files are not accessible to applicants.

There is no application fee for master's, certificate and non-degree applications.

Required materials

A complete application file for all master's degree and certificate programs will include:

- the completed and signed [paper](#) or [online](#) application form;
- a written statement of 1,000-2,000 words explaining the applicant's vocational goals and rationale for seeking graduate theological education at MTSO. What is your understanding of the level of commitment that this will require? Please include a statement of your vocational goals and how you came to decide on those goals. (1000 words minimum, 2000 words maximum).
- official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate credits earned. You must arrange for each college, university and graduate school you have attended to mail an official transcript of your complete academic record to MTSO. Official transcripts must be sent directly to the MTSO admissions office from the institutions attended.
- a current resume or curriculum vita listing the applicant's work history, honors and awards, etc.;
- [background check authorization form](#);
- three [reference letters](#), sent directly to the MTSO Admissions Office.

Letters of reference

Reference letters require the submission of [the MTSO form](#) and a supporting letter on official letterhead. Reference requirements vary by program of application, as listed below:

- A **clergy/personal** reference is someone who can attest to the applicant's personal qualities that make the applicant an excellent candidate for the program to which he or she is applying. All applicants must obtain a clergy/personal letter of reference, and applicants for the Master of Divinity program must obtain this letter of reference from a church or judicatory official.
- A **professional** reference is an academic, clergy or lay supervisor familiar with the applicant's work habits and vocational responsibilities. All applicants will provide a professional reference with the exception of Master of Theological Studies applicants, who will provide a second academic reference in lieu of the professional reference.
- An **academic** reference is a professor who has taught the applicant in class and can attest to the applicant's research, writing and academic abilities. An academic letter of reference must be received on the letterhead of the referee's institution. All applicants must obtain an academic letter of reference, and applicants for the Master of Theological Studies program must provide two.

If an applicant has been out of school for over ten years and is unable to submit an academic reference, he or she may submit two professional references and one personal reference. In addition, he or she must submit an essay of 1500-2000 words on a topic to be assigned by the Director of Admissions. This is separate from the personal statement required for the admissions file. To receive the essay topic, please email admit@mtso.edu with your request.

Occasional applicants and Certificate applicants are not required to submit reference letters. Occasional students who later apply to become degree-seeking students will need to submit reference letters at that time.

Document Submission

Online applications can be completed [here](#).

Paper applications, reference letters, transcripts and the background authorization form must be mailed directly to:

Admissions Office
Methodist Theological School in Ohio
3081 Columbus Pike
Delaware, OH 43015

Written statements and resumes can be mailed to the above address or emailed as Word document attachments to admit@mtso.edu.

Interviews

Applicants for the Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries program must complete an interview with the program director. This interview will be scheduled by the admissions office after all other application documents have been received. Applicants for other programs and non-degree applicants may also be contacted for an interview with the director of admissions or other school officials prior to a decision regarding the applicant's admission.

Timelines for application

New students are admitted for Fall and Spring semesters.

- **College students** should apply for admission late in their junior year, or as early as possible in their senior year.
- **College graduates** or transfer students from another graduate school should apply at least four to six months prior to the beginning of the term in which they intend to enroll.
- **International students** are urged to apply at least one year prior to enrollment. Completed applications are reviewed on Feb. 1 for enrollment in the following Fall Semester.

Admission requirements for Doctor of Ministry degree program

Doctor of Ministry application materials are available [here](#).

New cohorts of five to fifteen students begin each July. The application due date for July matriculation is April 20. Courses run the last week of July and the second week in January. The minimum requirements for admission include:

- A Master of Divinity degree from an ATS accredited school, or its educational equivalent. Applicants who do not hold an M.Div. degree must submit evidence of their professional degree and/or advanced training and experience at time of application.
- Three years of professional ministry experience following graduation from theological school.
- Current engagement in some form of formal ministry.
- Completion of the paper application form and submission of a \$50 non-refundable application fee.

Evidence of ability to undertake advanced professional study. Evidence would include

- official transcripts of all course work completed at the college level or higher;
- references from a judicatory supervisor, a person with leadership responsibility in the ministry setting, and a professional colleague;
- an essay of 1000 to 1250 words tracing professional growth through continuing education since graduation from theological school, and identifying areas of professional strength and challenge in ministry;
- a 1000 to 1250 word statement of the initial goals for the Doctor of Ministry study.
- Cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in all graduate work. Students with less than a 3.0 cumulative GPA may apply to the program with the understanding that their application will be evaluated by the entire D.Min. committee and the Academic Dean. Additional materials may be required of applicants in this situation. MTSO will not consider D.Min. applicants whose cumulative graduate GPA is lower than 2.7. Students who took their academic work in a pass/fail grading system should provide letters of reference from professors testifying that their performance is rated at A or B level coursework.

International Students

International applicants are expected to meet all the admissions requirements listed above for degree-seeking students. Methodist Theological School in Ohio is authorized under federal law to enroll nonimmigrant students. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services have established certain health insurance coverage requirements that must also be documented.

International applicants are also required to show evidence of English language proficiency at a level that is adequate for success in graduate theological study. International applicants must be able to document official results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language. The minimum TOEFL score required will be 75% of the perfect total in all different tests (a score of 563 is required for the paper-based test, a score of 223 for the computer-based test, or a score of 85 for the Internet-based test.) This score must be sent to MTSO directly from the reporting agency. International applicants are also required to successfully complete a summer class of English as a Second Language.

International applicants also must be able to document that they have sufficient financial resources available to support all study and living expenses throughout the chosen degree program.

International students can enroll in Fall semester. International application documents are available [here](#).

Completed Files

When all materials have been received and reviewed, an admissions office representative will inform applicants of the Admissions Committee's decision.

Admission to Degree Programs

Degree student

A degree student is anyone who will follow a program leading to one of the degrees offered by Methodist Theological School in Ohio: Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Master of Arts in Christian Education (MACE), Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries (MACM), Master of Theological Studies (MTS) or Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.). The Master of Divinity program can be combined as a dual program with any of the other master's degrees to provide additional competency. Please read more about each degree program in the "Degree requirements" section of the [academic catalog](#).

Provisional admission

Applicants who are granted provisional admission for master's-level study meet the regular criteria for admission except that they are in the process of completing the final requirements for their bachelor's degree, and they must provide evidence of completion prior to beginning study at Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

Transfer admission

Transfer students must meet the same criteria as other applicants. Methodist Theological School in Ohio may grant credit for work completed at other theological schools accredited by the Association of Theological Schools or, when relevant, other regionally accredited graduate programs. Applicants must make requests for consideration of transfer credit at the time they are admitted, and prior to enrollment. Transfer credits are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Office of the Registrar. A maximum of one-half of the required credits needed for a master's degree or certificate can be awarded from transfer credits; however, there are limiting factors that may result in a lesser amount of transfer credit awarded. Courses taken more than 10 years ago cannot transfer to any degree program, except in special circumstances. Doctor of Ministry students may not normally receive transfer credit for courses completed prior to matriculation.

Early admission

This is an exceptional situation in which an undergraduate institution agrees to allow high-achieving students to begin graduate study prior to completion of a bachelor's degree and apply the credits toward the bachelor's degree. Applicants can be granted this status only with documentation of high academic performance, unusual potential for ministry and permission for this arrangement from the undergraduate institution. Students admitted under this policy must receive the bachelor's degree before they can be awarded any master's degree or certificate from Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

Under the Seminary Preview Program, junior and senior students with a GPA of 3.0 or above from United Methodist colleges and universities in the state of Ohio are permitted to enroll in up to six hours of courses tuition-free. More information about this program is available upon request.

Conditional admission

When all other criteria for admission are strong but past academic performance is weak, students may be admitted with the condition that they will be required to prove their academic ability in the completion of their first semester at MTSO. Conditional admission is also offered when unusual circumstances warrant that specific conditions be attached to admission. Conditionally admitted students are usually limited to enrollment in 10 credit hours per semester.

Preliminary admission

Once a master's degree-seeking applicant has been accepted by the Admissions Committee, preliminary admission will be granted based on successful completion of a background check. An applicant's signed permission statement will provide the appropriate agreement necessary to perform a basic background check on the following items: criminal records (national and regional); civil records; Social Security number validation/verification; educational credentials; and professional credentials (if applicable).

Admission to non-degree programs

Certificate programs

Methodist Theological School in Ohio offers three academic certificates: the Certificate in Basic Theological Education, the Certificate in Deacon Studies and the Certificate in the Advanced Course of Study.

The admission requirements and application process for the Certificate in Basic Theological Education, Certificate in Deacon Studies and the Certificate in the Advanced Course of Study are the same as admission to master's degree programs, with the exception that personal references are not required. An additional requirement for admission to the Advanced Course of Study program is completion of The United Methodist Church's five-year Course of Study program.

See the section in the [academic catalog](#) titled "MTSO certificate programs" for more information about these programs.

Occasional student

Admission as an occasional student is an option for those who want to enroll in classes at Methodist Theological School in Ohio for academic credit but are not presently applying for admission to one of the school's degree or certificate programs. Admission as an occasional student requires:

- the completed and signed application form;
- a written statement of 1,000-2,000 words explaining the applicant's vocational goals and rationale for seeking graduate theological education at MTSO;

- official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate credits earned. Official transcripts must be sent directly to the MTSO admissions office from the institutions attended.

Occasional Students are not required to submit reference letters.

Once admitted, occasional students can take up to 27 semester hours without having to declare a program. After that, occasional students must seek admission to one of our degree or certificate programs in order to continue their enrollment. Occasional students who later apply to become a degree-seeking student will need to submit reference letters at that time.

Guest registrant

Degree students at other graduate institutions outside the Theological Consortium of Greater Columbus (or another institution with whom Methodist Theological School in Ohio has a standing consortium agreement) who want to take courses at Methodist Theological School in Ohio for transfer credit to their home institution may apply to be guest registrants at MTSO. The required materials for guest applicants are the same as for other non-degree applicants, with the exception that the applicant's current academic transcript from the home institution is sufficient (rather than transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended).

In lieu of the current transcript, a statement of good academic standing from the academic dean of the student's home institution may be provided. Guest registrants must work with their home institutions to ensure that credit for any courses taken at MTSO will be accepted for transfer to the home institution.

Steps After Admission

Once an applicant is approved for admission to a master's degree program at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, an offer of admission will be extended, contingent upon the results of a criminal background check. Once accepted, applicants will be asked to confirm their intention to enroll by submitting a \$100 tuition deposit within thirty days. This nonrefundable deposit will be applied as a credit toward the applicant's first billing statement as a new student.

After admission, students may apply for [on-campus housing](#). Full-time degree-seeking students may apply for:

- [Scholarships](#)
- [Financial aid](#)
- [Student work-study employment](#)

All master's degree students taking at least 4.5 credit hours per term (Fall Semester and Spring Semester) are required to enroll in a health insurance plan offered through MTSO unless they show proof of coverage with another employer.

Denial of admission or discontinuation of enrollment

Methodist Theological School in Ohio reserves the right to deny admission to any applicant or to discontinue the enrollment of any student whose personal actions are deemed to be detrimental to its community or whose academic performance is below requirements. The school also reserves the right to determine, in its sole judgment, whether an applicant is a suitable candidate for a specific degree program or for the vocation which the program represents.

Methodist Theological School in Ohio does not lawfully discriminate in the administration of its employment, educational and admission policies.

Auditing courses

Pastors and others are invited to audit master's level courses at a reduced cost from regular tuition. Full-time students, spouses of degree-seeking students, members of Parish Partner churches, and current and retired employees of MTSO may audit one course per term at no charge. Senior citizens may audit at a discounted rate.

Auditors must fulfill the requirements for auditors as stated by the instructor of any course audited. These requirements may include readings, class attendance and other appropriate forms of participation. Auditors are neither required nor permitted to submit written work for evaluation, or to take examinations. If any assessment or evaluation is required, auditors must register, pay for full credit and be admitted by the school. Auditors cannot request at a later date to receive academic credit for courses audited.

For information about auditing courses, please refer to the [academic catalog](#). To request an auditor application, please contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) at registrar@mtso.edu.

The Course of Study Program of The United Methodist Church

Methodist Theological School in Ohio is home to the Course of Study School of Ohio, a program for part-time or full-time local pastors in The United Methodist Church. The Course of Study School of Ohio offers classes at Methodist Theological School in Ohio and United Theological Seminary. Those interested in Course of Study School of Ohio must apply through the Course of Study office. Applicants can contact the MTSO office by calling 740-362-3120 or sending an e-mail to cos@mtso.edu. See the section of the academic catalog titled "United Methodist Church educational programs offered at MTSO" or the Web site at www.courseofstudyschoolofohio.com for more details.