Masters Handbook

Preparing Real People for a Real Ministry in a Real World

Introduction - What is a Masters of Religious Education?

Carolina Christian College is a distinctively special-purpose Biblical higher education institution that prepares students for real ministry in a real world. The Master of Religious Education (MRE) is a professional degree for those who want to prepare for service in the church as a Director of Christian Education, Director of Program Ministries, Director of Youth or Children's Ministry, and other ministries related to religious education. It also serves others who wish to strengthen their skills and knowledge in religious education through the study of major sources of biblical, theological, historical, ethical, and cultural studies and the integration of those studies into the ministry of education.

Program Goals:

1. Each student will be active in Christian service, ministry, and character formation.
2. Each student will have knowledge of ways to communicate well.
3. Each student will have a thorough knowledge of the Bible and its essential teachings.
4. Each student will grow spiritually.

This is the official handbook for students enrolled in the MRE program, and as such, presents the current policies and procedures as a means of guiding masters students through the program. The College retains the right to change or update any of these policies, procedures, and requirements at its discretion.

1. Preliminary Consideration, Policies, and Academic Information
Criteria for admissions are described in the current Academic Catalog.

1.1. Admissions Policy & Procedures
Once accepted into the program, students are expected to enroll in a course the next available semester. In the event that the student is unable to begin studies in the semester of acceptance, he or she will be marked as "did not attend" and will need to contact the Office of Admissions for re-application.

1.1.1. Admission Requirements

1.1.1.1. An accredited bachelor's degree or equivalent from a recognized college or university

1.1.1.2. Grade of B or higher on upper-level baccalaureate work

1.1.1.3. A completed application to Carolina Christian College

1.1.1.4. Official transcripts sent to the school in a sealed envelope

1.1.1.5. Submit a statement of faith

1.1.1.6. Provide proof of active ministry involvement (reference letter, ministerial license, or ordination)

1.1.1.7. Complete a pre-assessment

1.1.1.8. Non-refundable $50 application fee.

1.2. CCC Accreditation and Authorization

1.2.1. Accredited by the Association of Biblical Higher Education, 5350 T.G. Lee Blvd. 5850 T.G. Lee Blvd. Suite 130, Orlando, Fl 32822. Telephone (407)207-0808.

1.2.2. Chartered (1947) by the State of North Carolina as an educational institution

1.2.3. Recognized by all appropriate federal agencies, such as the United States Department of Education and the Veterans Administration.

1.2.4. Authorized to participate in Title IV Federal Financial Aid Program

Graduate degree programs of study offered by Carolina Christian College have been declared exempt from the requirements for authorization/licensure under provisions of North Carolina General Statutes (G.S.) 116-15(c) as an institution that began conducting post-secondary degree activity prior to 1972. Exemption from licensure is not based upon any assessment of program quality under established licensing standards.

1.3. FERPA
A student's record is confidential. Federal law governs the release of information from a student's permanent record. Only directory information may be released by the institution without the consent of the student. Directory information includes the following: student's name, address, telephone number, birthplace and date, field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational institution attended. Each year, Carolina Christian College is required to give notice of the various rights to students and to the parents of dependent students, as determined by law, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students and such parents have a right to be notified and informed.

In accordance with FERPA, the student is notified of the following:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Carolina Christian College receives a request for access. A student should submit to the Registrar's Office (in person or at frontoffice@carolina.edu [this must be submitted through the Carolina email account]) a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected or will email the requested documentation to the student. If the records are not maintained by the school official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. A student who wishes to ask Carolina to amend a record should write to the Registrar's Office, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed and specify why it should be changed. If the Carolina registrar's office decides not to amend the record as requested, Carolina will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before Carolina discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Carolina Christian College discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official typically includes a person employed by Carolina in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position; a person serving on the board of trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of Carolina who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of CCC from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent or a student volunteering to assist another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for Carolina Christian College.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Carolina Christian College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:
    Family Policy Compliance Office
    U.S. Department of Education
    400 Maryland Avenue, SW
    Washington, DC 20202

1.4. Nondiscrimination Policy

Carolina Christian College (CCC)admits students of any race, sex, color, handicap, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the institution. In accordance with its doctrinal position, CCC does not discriminate on the basis of these categories in admission of students and in the administration of its policies and procedures.

1.5. Time Limits for Degree Completion

1.5.1. Maximum Time Limit

The maximum time limit for degree completion is 7 years.

1.5.2. Continuous Enrollment

A student is expected to maintain continuous enrollment in the program until the successful completion and defense of the capstone project, by registering for a minimum of one course per semester and paying the corresponding tuition and fees. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment will result in suspension from the program.

1.5.3. Leave of Absence

In the event of extenuating circumstances, a student may request one Leave of Absence in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Pending Dean approval, the student will be allowed a maximum leave of absence of two semesters (summer semester not included). A student who remains inactive for longer than two semesters must reapply to the program. Special accommodations will be extended for military deployments.

1.6. Program Description

The Master of Religious Education (MRE) is offered with two specializations: Pastoral Care and Christian Education. Both tracks require a total of fifty-seven (57) semester hours of graduate study as detailed in Program Requirements below.

The program will be taught in a non-traditional instruction format. Instead of the traditional 50-minute lecture for 3 days a week and 16 weeks in the semester, the students will meet for 4 hours a week for 6 weeks. Outside work will focus on individual learning for an estimated 20 hours a week.

The educational goals of the **Pastoral Care** track of the MRE program:

1. The learner will analyze the history, teachings, and the theoretical concepts pertaining to the teachings of the Old Testament and New Testament.
2. The learner will be able to plan, create, and/or design effective approaches to communication of the gospel through worship, evangelism, education, and ministry within the church.
3. The learner will be able to compare and contrast the teachings and beliefs of the non-Christian to the Christian in America.
4. The learner will gain training while applying theory, concepts, and practical applications to resolve problems related to ministry.
5. The learner will apply counseling theories to resolve the sociological and psychological needs in ministry.

The educational goals of the **Christian Education** track of the MRE program:

1. The learner will analyze the history, teachings, and the theoretical concepts pertaining to the teachings of the Old Testament and New Testament.
2. The learner will be able to plan, create, and/or design effective approaches to communication of the gospel through worship, evangelism, education, and ministry within the church.
3. The learner will interpret scripture relevant to the use of gifts in Christian education.
4. The learner will develop curriculum and programs to support the educational needs of children and adults in ministry.
5. The student will compose a strategic plan to enhance the philosophical teaching of the Christian educator.

1.7. Program Length and Program Extensions

The program is fifty-seven (57) semester hours, with graduation upon completion of prescribed courses (including transfer semester hours) with a minimum overall GPA of 3.00 (with no more than one C grade) and the successful completion of the Capstone Project presentation.

All work for the degree must be completed within a period of seven (7) years from the date of initial enrollment. Any approved Leave of Absence will extend the amount of time for completing the degree by the length of the inactive period.

Petitions for an extension may be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies before the end of the final semester. The petition must include a justification for the extension, including all pertinent documentation.

1.8. Tuition & Fees

The fee schedule is provided on the CCC website and is subject to change without prior notice. Failure to make regular payments of tuition and fees may result in suspension from the program.

1.9. Transfer Credits

Students may transfer a maximum of fifteen (15) semester hours of graduate level work from a non-conferred degree at another accredited institution. The Dean of Graduate Studies evaluates transfer credit on a case-by-case basis. All requests should be submitted to CCC with accompanying course descriptions (if available), official transcripts, and other documentation requested.

The transferability of credits earned at Carolina Christian College is at the complete discretion of an institution to which a student may seek to transfer. If the credits that a student earns at Carolina are not accepted at the institution to which a student seeks to transfer, he or she may be required to repeat some or all coursework at that institution. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that attendance at Carolina Christian College will meet the student's educational and career goals.

1.10. Academic Advising

Following acceptance into the program, students are assigned an academic advisor. The academic advisor can be contacted via Carolina Connect.

1.11. Registration

Upon receiving an acceptance letter, the student will be enrolled in the first sequence of classes. The advisor will enroll the student each term based on the course sequence except for elective course options. Via email or phone, the student will be contacted in the prior semester to register for an elective course. Due to the number of sections in the MRE course schedule, students do not register themselves in this program.

Following registration, students should contact the Financial Aid Office (336-744-0900) frontoffice@carolina.edu to make payment arrangements. Payment is not required to complete the arrangements, but the registration process is not complete until financial arrangements are finalized and approved.

1.12. Dropping/Adding Courses

A student who desires to withdraw from or add a course must consult with his or her academic advisor and submit the request in writing. If approved, the advisor will submit a drop/add form on behalf of the student, which is then processed through Financial Aid and the Registrar's Office.

1.13. Academic Standing

Students are evaluated in their course work according to the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Ten-point scale %	GPA
A+	97-100	4.0
A	96-94	3.8
A-	93-90	3.7
B+	89-87	3.3
B	86-84	3.0
B-	83-80	2.7
C+	79-77	2.3
C	76-74	2.0
C-	73-70	1.7
D +	69-67	1.3
D	66-64	1.0
D-	63-60	0.70
F	59 - 0	0
CR	CREDIT	
NCR	NO CREDIT	
RC	REPEAT COURSE	
INC	INCOMPLETE	
X	ABSENT FROM FINAL	
VWP	VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL PASSING	
VWF	VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL FAILING	
AU	AUDIT (NON-TRANSFERABLE)	
AUF	AUDIT (NON-TRANSFERABLE)	
P	PASS	
F	FAIL	
AP	ACADEMIC PROBATION	
AD	ACADEMIC DISMISSAL	

Students in Good Standing
- Must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher
- Be continuously enrolled in MRE courses (at least one course per semester)
- Be making satisfactory academic progress towards a successful capstone defense

Students on Academic/Financial Aid Suspension
If, at the end of any term, the student does not meet the above requirements, the Dean of Graduate Studies will review the student's academic standing. All grades of D or F must be repeated. Students are allowed to earn one grade of C in the program, but a second or subsequent C must be repeated. If at any time a student's cumulative GPA drops below a 3.00 the student's academic standing will be reviewed and he or she will be placed on Academic Warning, Academic Probation, or Academic Suspension status. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 is required for MRE graduation.

1.14. Satisfactory Academic Progress
Graduate students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements in order to continue their enrollment and to advance toward degree completion. The SAP policy includes standards for Qualitative and Quantitative measures. The academic record of all students is reviewed at the end of each semester, and after evaluation, letters are sent from the Financial Aid and Registrar's Office notifying those with insufficient academic progress when they are being placed on Academic Warning, Academic Probation, or Academic Suspension as a result.

1.14.1. GRADUATE Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements

Attempted Hours	% Earned Hours	Minimum Cumulative GPA
1 - 57	70%	3.00

1.14.1.1. Definition of Attempted Hours
The hours for which the student is registered as of the last date to drop a course without academic penalty (published in the Academic Catalog) at Carolina Christian College.

1.14.1.2. Definition of Completed Hours
The hours for which a letter grade of A, B, C, or D is received at Carolina Christian College. A grade of F or WF receives zero credits in the GPA.

1.14.1.3. Qualitative Standards
Cumulative GPA is composed of all attempted hours at CCC. To meet the qualitative standards, a student must meet the minimum cumulative GPA as determined by his or her classification and program. The Registrar's Office calculates the GPA.

1.14.1.4. Quantitative Standards Student Classification
Masters of Religious Education students must maintain a cumulative 3.00 GPA.

1.14.1.5. Quantitative Standards

The student must complete the required number of attempted hours of coursework at his or her current level. The requirement for the Masters of Religious Education Post-Graduate Program is a 90% completion rate.

1.14.2. Satisfactory Academic Progress

1.14.2.1. Financial Aid Warning

Any student who does not meet either the qualitative or quantitative standard for his or her degree and/or classification at the end of any payment period will automatically be placed on Financial Aid Warning for one semester. Federal financial aid eligibility will continue for the semester the student is under warning. After one semester of Financial Aid Warning, a student who does not meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements will not be eligible for Federal Financial Aid unless an appeal is made and granted.

1.14.2.2. Financial Aid Probation

A student who fails to make Satisfactory Academic Progress following their Financial Aid Warning semester will lose Title IV eligibility unless the student successfully appeals. If an appeal is made and granted and the institution determines the student has the capability to make SAP after one payment period, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for the warning semester. If the student on Financial Aid Probation is not making SAP by the end of the probationary term, or meeting the standards as outlined in the academic plan, the student will become ineligible for Federal Student Aid.

1.14.2.3. Financial Aid Suspension

A student who fails to make Satisfactory Academic Progress after the Financial Aid Warning semester and a Financial Aid Probation semester (if applicable), or who fails to meet the requirements of his/her academic plan will lose eligibility for Federal Student Aid. Eligibility will be reinstated after the student has met both the qualitative and quantitative standards.

1.14.3. Academic Warning

Any student who does not meet either the qualitative or quantitative standard for his or her degree and/or classification at the end of any payment period will automatically be placed on Academic Warning.

1.14.4. Academic Suspension

After an initial warning semester, any student whose semester GPA or completion rate does not meet the requirements for his/her degree and/or classification is placed on academic suspension. A student whose semester GPA and rate of completion meet the requirements but whose cumulative GPA and rate of completion do not meet the requirements will be placed on Academic Warning. It is possible to be on Academic Warning and Financial Aid suspension during this semester. After a semester on Academic Warning, a student whose cumulative GPA and rate of
completion does not meet the requirements is placed on Academic Suspension. The suspension will last for a period of one semester, and the student must reapply for

admittance and must meet any standards mandated by the Admissions Committee at that time. Students re-entering from Academic Suspensions will be readmitted on Academic Warning, will be guided by an approved Academic Plan, and will not qualify for Federal Financial Aid or institutional scholarships until they meet appropriate GPA and Rate of Completion requirements.

1.14.5. Filing an Appeal
Appeals to the Satisfactory Academic Progress evaluation must be made within two weeks of student notification. Students are notified within 2 weeks of the end of the fall semester. The appeal is to be submitted prior to the start of the spring semester. The appeal is made in writing. It is required to address the specific areas of deficiency in the appeal letter. It is required for the student to be specific in the details for the SAP committee to be informed regarding circumstances, which led to the deficit, and the circumstances, which will allow the student to achieve academic success in future terms. Examples of documentation to support the student's appeal include doctor's letter regarding medical condition, attorney documents regarding legal issues, or counselor's letter regarding emotional crisis. Students must be specific in stating why the course could not be completed due to extraordinary circumstances during the semester in question.

A student is responsible for monitoring his/her grades throughout the semester. It is a good idea to document any instances where a student tried to get assistance to avoid failing a course, meetings with professors, tutoring sessions, email correspondence to show ongoing issues, etc.

2. Program Status

2.1. Withdrawal from the Program
In the event that a student has decided to withdraw from the College, the College should be notified in writing. Counsel with the student's Academic Advisor is required before an acceptable dismissal can be permitted, as failure to withdraw correctly can have significant financial and academic penalties. If students' attitudes or conduct do not conform to their pledge, the College reserves the right to request withdrawal. The same holds true if students demonstrate that they are unsuited to the work of the College because of inability to maintain a satisfactory grade point average. Grades are recorded as Withdrew Passing or Failing as of the day of withdrawal. Financial obligations are also computed as of that date. Refund information for withdrawals is found in the annual Schedule of Fees at www.carolina.edu.

2.2 Suspension from the Program
Students may be suspended from the program for the following reasons:
- Student's cumulative GPA falls below a 3.00
- Student fails to meet the standards of academic integrity
- Student fails to maintain continuous enrollment
- Student fails to maintain good financial standing

2.3 Readmission to the Program
A student who has withdrawn or been suspended from the program and desires to resume his or her plan of study must reapply, following current admissions requirements. Additionally, an interview with the Dean of Graduate Studies may be required. A student who finished all

coursework and was in the dissertation writing phase at the time of withdrawal or suspension will be required to submit to the Dean of Academics a proposal and all work completed towards the dissertation, including drafts.

Readmitted students come in under the current catalog at the time of readmission.

3. Program Format

The Master of Christian Education at Carolina Christian College is designed with two main sections: coursework and the capstone project. The coursework is designed to develop students' mastery of his/her leadership style, capability in their ministry context, and their ability to contribute to the field of ministry. The capstone project is designed to demonstrate what the students have learned and how they will contribute to the field of research.

3.1. Course Structure

The Master of Religious Education (MRE) is a professional degree for those who want to prepare for service in the church as a Director of Christian Education, Director of Program Ministries, Director of Youth or Children's Ministry, and other ministries related to religious education. It also serves others who wish to strengthen their skills and knowledge in religious education through the study of major sources of biblical, theological, historical, ethical, and cultural studies and integrating those studies into the ministry of education.

3.2. Course Attendance

3.2.1 Enrolled online students must attend courses, continue with assigned work, or officially withdraw.

3.2.2 Failure to attend will result in administrative withdrawal from the course.

3.2.3 Ongoing participation will be based on the student fulfilling scheduled requirements of a course.

3.2.4 Students who withdraw after the add/drop period may receive a grade of "WP" or "WF."

3.2.5 Students who check-in to a course and fail to maintain ongoing participation but do not officially withdraw will receive a grade of "F."

3.3. Course Offerings

3.3.1. Foundational Courses

BI 501 Old Testament Survey 1
BI 502 Old Testament Survey 2
BI 503 New Testament Survey 1
BI 504 New Testament Survey 2
BI 505 Biblical Theology 1
BI 506 Biblical Theology 2
BI 510 Acts of the Apostles
BI 511 World Religion
BI 512 Apologetics
BI 601 Hermeneutics
BI 801 OT Seminar
BI 802 NT Seminar
MA 701 Ministry of Evangelism
MA 703 Church Administration

HI 601 Church History 1
HI 602 Church History 2
PH 601 Ethics

3.3.2. Pastoral Care
PC 701 Spiritual and Pastoral Care
PC 711 Group Theory and Practice
PC 712 Religious and Psychological Research

3.3.3. Christian Education
CE 701 Ministry of Teaching
CE 702 Ministry to Children
CE 703 Ministry to Adults
CE 704 Ministry to Youth
CE 710 Educational Psychology
CE 713 Curriculum Development
CE 711 Philosophy of Christian School Education
CE 715 Christian Education Seminar

3.3.4. Electives
CO 601 Christian Counseling
CO 602 Marriage & Family
CO 603 Pastoral Counseling
ML 601 Dynamics of Christian Leadership
ML 602 Church Planting

4. The Capstone Project

The student's capstone project is the final stage in the Masters of Religious Education. It represents years of study, course work, and original research. The capstone examines a particular problem or issue related to the discipline of Christian education and addresses one or more research questions related to that topic. This process spans the complete curriculum, and therefore should begin upon the start of the program. The capstone project involves identifying a problem in your community or context, submitting a proposal for how to address this problem, field work in which you enact your plan, and a final presentation including a report and analysis of the process. The entirety of the materials presented to the capstone committee will comprise 30-50 pages as well as a PowerPoint presentation during the defense. The capstone project is divided into three parts, each of which must be approved by the Academic Dean before proceeding to the next stage.

4.1.1. Stage 1: Project Proposal

- Submit topic for approval (paragraph)
- Spiritual Autobiography (2 pages)
- Ministry Context (2 pages)
- Outline of Research Topic and Annotated Bibliography
- Contextual Connection (3-4 pages)
- Final Project Proposal including plan to address problem

4.1.2. Stage 2: Project Implementation, Reporting, and Analysis
- Get the approval of the necessary organizations and individuals that will be involved with your project
- Identify the research methods you will implement to gather and record data
- After having outlined your project plan in Stage 1, revisit the plan and elaborate on how each step was implemented. Document any changes to the plan, record data gathered, and include an analysis of each step
- Include a conclusion with thoughts on the project, its effectiveness, recommendations, and plans for moving forward

4.1.3. Stage 3: Defense and Presentation
- The final writeup of the project must be submitted to the academic dean and the rest of the capstone committee no less than two weeks before the scheduled defense. This gives the committee time to read, annotate, and form questions for the defense
- The student must submit a professional, topically relevant PowerPoint to the Academic Dean no less than a week before the defense for approval. It will need to include the most pertinent talking points and data from the project. The PowerPoint will be used as a visual aid during the defense

Due Date	Assignment	Materials Needed	Length	Submit to:
Level I- Completed by the end of year 1	Submit Topic	What topic or area would you like to focus on within your specialization? **Begin to look for journals to use**	1 page	Dr. Thorpe
All level 1 work to be submitted by end of Year 1	Spiritual Autobiography	Who were you? Who impacted you? How has it affected you? Who are you now? Who are you becoming? How will it impact your topic?	2 pages	Dr. Thorpe
All level 1 work to be submitted by end of Year 1	Ministry Context	What are you doing in ministry? (Church, Institution, non-profit group) What is most important in your place of ministry? Does this importance relate to your topic? Explain how it does or does not relate to your topic? What are the major concerns? What are the demographics? What are the challenges and opportunities? How is God active in your place of ministry?	2 pages	Dr. Thorpe
All level 1 work to be submitted by end of Year 1	Outline of research topic and annotated bibliography	Specific areas to cover problem identification, rationale, and addressing the problem	1 page	Dr. Thorpe