

Program Catalog: Graduate Diploma in Christian Studies

The Graduate Diploma in Christian Studies (GDCS) is a program for students who hold a bachelor's degree in disciplines other than theology. The course helps students develop a strong foundation for understanding the Bible and Christian doctrine, as well as apply theological knowledge to their everyday ministry.

1 Program Aims

Upon successful completion of the program, students should demonstrate:

- Knowledge and understanding of the Bible and Christian doctrine
- Competency in the interpretation and application of Scripture
- Appreciation of the Holy Spirit's work in history and in ministry
- Love for the church and its mission in fulfilling the Great Commission

2 Admission Requirements

The admission candidate should meet these criteria:

- The applicant must possess personal and spiritual maturity.
- The applicant must be willing to engage in Christian ministry.
- The applicant must be recommended by his/her local church.
- The applicant must possess a Bachelor degree from a recognized institution with a minimum GPA of 2.5.
- International applicants must have obtained a TOEFL score of 80 (IBT) / 550 (PBT) or an IELTS score of 6.0.
- Applicants who wish to study online must be comfortable with technology and online interaction. They should also have ready and reliable access to the internet.

3 Modes of Study

There are 2 modes of study:

Onsite students will study their courses in face-to-face classes. They may also choose to take some online courses. A full-time student will study 3-4 courses a term whereas a part-time student will study 1-2 courses a term. Students can expect to spend a total of 8-9 hours of study time each week for each course.

Online students will study all their courses online. Students will adhere to a study track assigned by the school and complete 2 courses a term. Students can expect to spend a total of 8-9 hours of study time each week for each course.

4 Program Duration

The program consists of 10 courses (30 credits).

- Onsite full-time students will complete the program in 1 year.
- Onsite part-time students must complete the program within 3 years.
- Online students should adhere to a study track and aim to complete the program in 3 years.

5 Curriculum

Bible	9
Old Testament Foundations	3
New Testament Foundations	3
Hermeneutics	3
Theology	12
Systematic Theology I	3
Systematic Theology II	3
Systematic Theology III	3
Pentecostal Studies	3
General and Ministry	9
Online Orientation	0
Theological Research and Writing	3
<i>Ministry Electives</i>	6
TOTAL	30

Currently, the Ministry electives available as online courses are

- Spiritual Formation and Christian Character
- Christian Discipleship
- Biblical Worship
- Understanding World Religions
- Biblical Theology of Missions

Online Ministry electives begin with the course code “TELM” in the term schedule.

The course Theological Research & Writing is only offered in an online format. All students must start the program with this course.

6 Study Schedule

The School of Theology follows a trimester system with 3 terms in a year. Each term consists of 13 weeks. Students should check with the school for the exact dates for the school terms.

Term	Month
1	Jan – Mar
2	May – Jul
3	Sep – Nov

Students can be admitted into the program at the start of any school term.

6.1 Onsite Schedule

Students studying onsite should use the schedule below as a guide. These classes are taught in a face-to-face format. The school may schedule these courses during the day or in the evenings.

Track for Full-time students

Term	Courses offered
1	Old Testament Foundations Systematic Theology I <i>Ministry Elective</i>
2	New Testament Foundations Systematic Theology II Pentecostal Studies
3	Hermeneutics Systematic Theology III <i>Ministry Elective</i>
<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must start the program with the online course Theological Research and Writing. • The School may change the schedule of classes offered at any time without prior notice. Students should always refer to the respective Term Brochure. 	

Full-time students must take all courses listed in each respective term.

Part-time students should aim to take 2 courses each term and complete the program within 2 years. Onsite courses are usually rotated so that they are offered in the evenings on alternate years.

Onsite students have the option of taking some online courses. They should seek academic advice from the Dean to receive guidance on the selection of their courses.

6.2 Online Schedule

The school offers fully online courses according to the following schedule.

Term	Courses offered
1	Hermeneutics Systematic Theology III <i>Ministry Elective</i>
2	Old Testament Foundations Systematic Theology I <i>Ministry Elective</i>
3	New Testament Foundations Systematic Theology II Pentecostal Studies
<p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must start the program with the online course Theological Research and Writing which is offered each term. • The School may change the schedule of classes offered at any time without prior notice. Students should always refer to the respective term schedule. 	

Students studying their courses fully online will be placed on a two-year study track based on the term in which they begin their program. They can study 1-2 courses a term and have up to 3 years to complete the program. Sample tracks are shown below.

Track for students starting the program in Term 1

Term	Calendar Year 1	Calendar Year 2
1	Theological Research and Writing (Blended) Ministry Elective	Hermeneutics Systematic Theology III
2	Old Testament Foundations Ministry Elective	Systematic Theology I
3	New Testament Foundations Pentecostal Studies	Systematic Theology II

Track for students starting the program in Term 2

Term	Calendar Year 1	Calendar Year 2	Calendar Year 3
1		Hermeneutics Ministry Elective	Systematic Theology III
2	Theological Research and Writing Old Testament Foundations	Systematic Theology I Ministry Elective	
3	New Testament Foundations Pentecostal Studies	Systematic Theology II	

Track for students starting the program in Term 3

Term	Calendar Year 1	Calendar Year 2	Calendar Year 3
1		Hermeneutics Ministry Elective	Systematic Theology III
2		Old Testament Foundations Ministry Elective	Systematic Theology I
3	Theological Research and Writing New Testament Foundations	Systematic Theology II Pentecostal Studies	

Fully online students must adhere to their assigned track to pace their studies and aim to complete the program within the program duration.

7 Learning Activities

7.1 Onsite Courses

Most courses are taught in 3-hour classroom sessions held once a week. Several learning activities take place during the class time. These may include lectures, small-group discussions, project work, and student presentations. Students will also need to complete weekly readings and research outside the classroom time. A general guide is that students should spend 5-6 hours of self-study outside classroom time. Each 3-credit course consists of 100 hours of learning spread over the entire term.

7.2 Online Courses

Students taking online courses must be independent learners who are disciplined and proactive. Students are required to engage in a variety of learning activities every week. Some of these activities are described below.

- Self-study** Students will complete assigned readings from textbooks, journal articles, and other material. They may also watch some videos or listen to audio recordings.
- Worksheets** Worksheets are used to assess and reinforce material which a student has read. These worksheets are usually not timed, and students may refer to the readings to answer the questions.
- Forums** The course instructor will pose questions and students will have to post their responses in a forum. They are also required to comment and interact with forum posts made by their classmates.
- Journals** Journals may be used for students to critically reflect on their learning.
- Assignments** Students should devote time each week to research and work on their term papers and other assignments.

Learning activities should be completed and submitted before activity deadlines every week. Many of these activities are graded and they will contribute to the student’s final mark.

Students can expect to spend 8-9 hours each week on these learning activities. They should plan their week in advance and schedule enough time for their studies. Each 3-credit course consists of 100 hours of learning spread over the entire term.

8 Methods of Assessment

A variety of assessments are utilized for the program. Some common assessments are listed in the table below. Students should refer to the course syllabi for more details.

Onsite Courses	Online Courses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term papers • Examinations • Book and article reviews • Class presentations • Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term papers • Worksheets • Book and article reviews • Forum discussions • Blog posts and journals

9 Learning Resources

9.1 Course Textbooks

Students will need to purchase the course textbooks on their own. They may wish to purchase physical copies at a local retail store or through an online bookstore. They may also purchase the textbooks in an e-book format. The School does not facilitate the purchase of textbooks. Some possible bookstores are shown below.

Online Bookstores	Types
Amazon	Hardcopy and e-book
Christianbook	Hardcopy and e-book
Book Depository	Hardcopy
Kobo	E-book
Google PlayBooks	E-book
LOGOS	Bible software and e-book
Accordance	Bible software and e-book

Bookstores in Singapore
SKS Books Warehouse
Cru Singapore Media Ministry

9.2 Library Resources

All students can make use of the online learning resources provided by TCA College. This includes an e-book collection and an electronic database with access to a substantial number of academic journals. In addition, students may wish to explore access to electronic resources at their local library. For example, the Singapore National Library has many electronic resources which are readily available to its members.

Students with access to the campus library at TCA College can make use of the resources there. Online students in other countries may wish to explore access to theological libraries in their country.

9.3 Electronic Document Delivery

- Fully online students may request for electronic delivery of scanned copies of book chapters and journal articles from the Library's print collection.
- Limit of one chapter per book or one article per journal issue per request is allowed.
- Requested documents must be for personal research or study only.
- The Library reserves the right to process one request per person per day, depending on staffing and overall request volume.
- Students are entitled with up to 10 successful requests per term for free. Succeeding successful requests will be charged S\$0.05/page plus S\$2.00 service fee.
- Requested document will be delivered electronically within 2-3 working days. There is no rush service or hard-copy delivery service available.
- You may fill out an online form or email your request to library@tca.edu.sg.

10 Re-admission after expiration of program

- A student who desires to recommence his/studies after the expiration of duration of the previous program must seek re-admission to the program.
- Credits earned in the previous program are not valid after the expiration of the duration of the program.

11 Frequently Asked Questions

General

Q: What is the difference between an onsite course and an online course?

A: The learning objectives of a course remains the same regardless of whether it is taught onsite or online. However, the mode of study will determine the way in which learning is facilitated.

Q: Will the school help me purchase textbooks?

A: Students are responsible for purchasing their own textbooks. You must acquire your textbooks before the start of the course.

Q: Must I purchase the textbooks? Will I be able to borrow them from the library?

A: Students must purchase all textbooks for their courses. Lessons closely follow the textbook content and readings will be assigned from them. Library copies are kept as course reserve and will not be available for loan.

Q: Can the credits earned from the GDCS count toward a Master degree?

A: Yes, all credits earned from the GDCS can be transferred to a Master degree under the School of Theology (English).

Q: Can I transfer credits from another school into the GDCS program?

A: The School will evaluate requests for credit-transfer on a case-by-case basis. In addition, only one-third of the program can consist of transferred credits.

Q: I already have a Bachelor of Theology. Is the GDCS suitable for me?

A: The GDCS is meant for students who do not have a first degree in theology. You may wish to consider the Master degree programs available at TCA College.

Studying onsite

Q: I am an onsite student. Can I take some online courses?

A: Onsite students are permitted to take some online courses. You should seek academic advice from the Dean of SOTE before doing so.

Q: What ministry electives are available for onsite students?

A: The school offers various electives each term. Onsite students should refer to the relevant term schedule and attend academic advising sessions for more information.

Q: What is the study workload for an onsite course?

A: Onsite courses are taught in 3-hour classroom sessions held once a week. In addition, you can expect to spend 4-5 hours of self-study per week for each course. This means a total of 7-8 hours per week per course.

Q: What happens if I cannot attend a class?

A: You can find more information on our attendance policies in the Student Handbook. In general, a student must maintain an attendance of 80%.

Studying online

Q: I do not reside in Singapore. Can I take the program as a fully online student?

A: Yes, the GDCS (online) program is suitable for students who reside overseas.

Q: I wish to take an online course. Will I have to come to campus?

A: No, you do not need to come to campus for classes. You will have access to online resources through the College library. However, you may also wish to make use of the library for other resources.

Q: Are the online classes simply watching a series of video lectures?

A: No, our online classes are not driven by video lectures. You will be assigned material which you have to read and understand. You will then engage in learning activities such as worksheets, forums, journals and wikis, and write a substantial research paper.

Q: As an online student, how many courses am I permitted to study each term? How long will I take to complete the program?

A: An online student may take 2 courses each term and aim to finish the program in 2 years. The maximum duration for the program is 3 years.

Q: What is the study workload for an online course?

A: You can expect to spend 7-8 hours each week on online learning activities. You should plan your week in advance and schedule sufficient time for your studies.

Q: What ministry electives are available for online students?

A: At present, the following online ministry electives are offered: Spiritual Formation and Christian Character, Christian Discipleship, Biblical Worship and Biblical Theology of Missions and a few others. The course code of the Ministry electives begins with "TELM" in the term schedule.

Q: I am a fully online student. Can I take some onsite courses?

A: Fully online students are required to adhere strictly to the study track. They are not permitted to take any onsite courses. If you want to study an onsite class, you can request to change to the onsite GDCS program. A transfer fee is involved for the change of program. You should seek academic advice from the Dean before doing so.

Q: Are there plans for an online Masters program after GDCS?

A: We are in the process of writing more online courses for the Master of Arts in Ministry and Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies. Up to eighty percent of the programs will be fully online. There are plans for a fully online Masters in future.

12 More information

Please contact us if you need more information about studying at TCA College.

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