

# CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY (M.A.)

## Requirements

The Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in Christian spirituality requires 36 credits for completion, including the selection of a concentration.

## Course Requirements (All Concentrations)

Course	Title	Credits
SPGR 6834	Methods in Christian Spirituality	3
SPGR 6702 & SPGR 6703	History of Christian Spirituality I and History of Christian Spirituality II	6
SPGR 6830	Discernment in the Christian Tradition	3
RLGR 6010	Old Testament	3
RLGR 6011	New Testament	3
<i>One course in Theological Anthropology or Christology:</i>		3
RLGR 6030	Christology	
	or RLGR 6031 Theology of the Human Person	
<i>One course in Sacramental Spirituality or Ecclesiology:</i>		3
SPGR 6720	Sacramental Spirituality	
	or RLGR 6032 Church and Society	
<i>Completion of a Concentration</i>		12
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>36</b>

## Thesis Capstone or Comprehensive Examination Requirement (All Concentrations)

Students in the Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in Christian spirituality program may choose to pursue either a thesis capstone or comprehensive examination option to complete their degree.

### About the Thesis Capstone

Students contemplating post-M.A. studies in Christian spirituality or theology are encouraged to consider the M.A.-C.S. Thesis Capstone option. This capstone component involves completing a major research paper in the academic discipline of Christian spirituality under the guidance of a Christian spirituality faculty mentor. The research paper is typically 60 pages (including bibliography) and must conform to the most recent *Turabian* stylebook.

M.A.-C.S. students must apply for acceptance into the thesis capstone option. The student application includes a completed M.A. (C.S.) Thesis Capstone Submission Form, a completed Research Readiness Review [RRR] form along with the original 20-page research paper under review, and proof of competency in a research language other than English, typically one of the following: French, German, Spanish, Latin, or Greek. Approval for any exceptions to the language policy will be made by a vote of the Christian Spirituality faculty at an area meeting during the Fall and Spring semesters only. Students may petition for faculty permission to substitute an alternate research language. Translation knowledge of a research language may be indicated by exam (see the assistant academic dean for possible dates and locations) or coursework

(two semesters of university-level courses within the past six years with a grade of B+ or higher). Proof of competency in a research language requires a letter from the assistant academic dean indicating that you have shown competence in an approved foreign language by examination or review.

Students graduating in May must submit their M.A.-C.S. thesis option application on or before November 1. Students are advised to first consult with a Christian spirituality faculty member well in advance of the application deadline.

The M.A.-C.S. Student Review for Research Readiness [RRR] form and the M.A.-C.S. Thesis Capstone Submission Form are available in the "Academic Forms" section of the GRE-Students Organization in Blackboard.

### Comprehensive Examination Capstone

The M.A.-C.S. comprehensive examination typically takes place over two days in April or May of each year. There are written and oral components to the examination. The materials below provide an overview of the kind of materials usually covered on this exam; they are not a definitive list of what your examination will encompass.

The capstone requirement for M.A.-C.S. students pursuing a terminal degree in Christian spirituality is a comprehensive exam, which is based on M.A.-C.S. course requirements and students' course selections. The comp exam is divided into three parts: (I) the history of Christian spirituality (broad themes); (II) either spiritual direction or spiritual discernment; and (III) oral exam on parts I and II (including questions from Friday morning that were not answered and are related to student's course selections). In preparation for the exam, students receive a M.A.-C.S. general bibliography including suggested readings in the following areas of competency:

- A. Historical Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality, which are divided into four general periods (ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary). This bibliography includes primary and secondary resources.
- B. Spiritual Direction
- C. Ignatian Spirituality and Discernment
- D. Topics in Christian Spirituality

**Bibliography A:** As explained in the bibliography, M.A.-C.S. comps exam students select any three primary authors/texts from each historical period (ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary)—for a total of 12 authors/texts—that each student is prepared to be examined upon. Please note that all secondary texts listed in this bibliography offer background and contextual reading for the authors/texts each student selects. Students are not asked to indicate what secondary texts they have read. The secondary texts offer an overview of materials students have read in various M.A.-C.S. courses.

**Bibliographies B and C:** M.A.-C.S. students admitted into the practicum in spiritual direction are held responsible for material listed in Bibliography B. These students will be given a spiritual direction case study in Comps II of the M.A.-C.S. exam (Friday afternoon). All other students are held responsible for material listed in Bibliography C: Ignatian Spirituality and Discernment. These students will be given a spiritual discernment case study in Comps II of the M.A.-C.S. comps exam (Friday afternoon).

**Bibliography D:** All citations herein are from M.A.-C.S. required and elective courses. When answering Comps Exams I & III questions, students are encouraged to draw from any of the materials listed in Bibliography D. Again, this bibliography is offered as a review of course materials. Students do not indicate which texts they are responsible for knowing.

## **M.A.-C.S. General Comprehensive Exam Organization**

The M.A.-C.S. Comprehensive Exam typically will be held in April or May at locations to be announced on the Fordham University's Rose Hill campus. Distance students unable to travel to campus for the comp exam must make alternate arrangements with the assistant dean's office for completing all three components of the M.A.-C.S. comp exam. The comp exam is usually organized as follows:

- Friday
  - Exam Part I: 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. – Written
  - [Lunch Break 12 – 1 p.m.]
  - Exam Part II: 1 – 4 p.m. – Written
- Saturday
  - Exam Part III – Oral (a sign-up sheet will be provided)

## **M.A.-C.S. Comprehensive Exam Overview**

- Exam Part I (Friday, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.) is a written exam covering the 12 authors/texts each student selects from "Bibliography A" (primary texts). From a pool of six previously distributed general themes, the faculty presents each student with three general themes. The student writes an essay response to one of these general themes.
- Exam Part II (Friday, 1 – 4 p.m.) is a written exam based on a verbatim or case study. Students accepted into the M.A.-C.S. spiritual direction concentration and who have participated in the practicum courses in spiritual direction, respond to a spiritual direction verbatim. All other students respond to a spiritual discernment case study.
- Exam Part III (Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.), is an oral exam focused upon the 12 authors/texts each student previously selected, student's written responses to Exam Parts I & II, and unanswered questions from Exam Part I that relate to student's coursework. A sign-up sheet will be provided so that students can choose a 30-minute slot during this time.

## **Preparing for the Capstone Exam I**

In preparing for this part of the Capstone Exams, students should prepare essay responses for the six general themes previously distributed. The content of each essay should (a) address the general theme selected and (b) focus upon at least four or more of the 12 authors/texts selected by each student. On the day of the exam, the faculty presents each student with three essay options. The student then writes an essay response to one.

## **Preparing for the Capstone Exam II**

Review the sample case study or verbatim appearing in the "MA\_Christian\_Spirituality: COMP EXAM MA CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY" Organization in Blackboard. On the day of the exam, students respond to a similar case study or verbatim.

## **Preparing for the Capstone Exam III**

This part of the exam is entirely oral. Students are asked questions about their responses to Exams I & II. At the time of this oral exam, faculty may also question students about any of the other Exam Part I questions that the student chose not to answer but are related to that student's

coursework—for example, either Christology or Theology of the Human Person and either Church or Sacraments.

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## **Further Information**

A student may take the M.A.-C.S. Comprehensive Exam no more than three times. The M.A.-C.S. Comprehensive Exam will only be offered in the spring. Students who wish to retake the Comprehensive Exam will be required to pay a Maintenance of Matriculation fee during the intervening fall semester to remain in good standing.

## **M.A.-C.S. Comprehensive Exam Deadlines**

- Students must register for the Comprehensive Exam SPGR 8500 Comprehensive Exam MA Christian Spirituality) during the registration period prior to the beginning of the spring semester and no later than the Add/Drop deadline for spring courses.
- January 20: All M.A.-C.S. students intending to take the Capstone Exams must submit to the M.A.-C.S. faculty (fmcagoon@fordham.edu, coltanderson@fordham.edu, and smcalister@fordham.edu) a completed M.A.-C.S. Exam Entry Form in which they indicate the following: (1) their intention to take the M.A.-C.S. Capstone Exam in that spring semester; (2) their qualification either for the spiritual direction verbatim or spiritual direction case study; and (3) their list of the 12 authors/texts from Bibliography A for which they will be held responsible in Exams I & III. The M.A.-C.S. Exam Entry Form is available in the Academic Forms section of the GRE-Students Organization in Blackboard.

Students who register and submit the required paperwork for the Comprehensive Exam capstone will receive further information and guidance.