

## **NDS Statement of Institutional Effectiveness**

Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology (NDS) measures its effectiveness through the use of sustainable, institution-wide assessment processes which measure the extent to which each program is achieving its stated outcomes. In accordance with its mission, NDS offers four graduate degree programs: the Master of Divinity; Master of Arts (Theological Studies); Master of Arts (Philosophy for Theological Studies); and the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership. In addition to these graduate programs, NDS offers a post-baccalaureate Bachelor of Philosophy (Philosophy for Theological Studies) degree program. NDS is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). In addition, all master's degree programs at NDS are approved by the ATS.

Each NDS degree program must complete annual Institutional Effectiveness Plans which show how the student learning outcomes are being met using both direct and indirect data. This annual review of data allows the faculty to examine the effectiveness of the individual programs and develop program improvements based on the data. To document the institution's success with respect to student achievement, the NDS mission and the specific goals of each program must be taken into consideration.

### **Master of Divinity Degree**

As the primary mission of Notre Dame Seminary is the preparation of men for ministerial priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church, the seminary offers those preparing for the priesthood the Master of Divinity degree program of study. Two of the measures used to document the program's success with respect to student achievement are graduation rates (6 years) and percent of graduates who are recommended for ordination. Of the 21 seminarians who entered the program in 2013, 90.5% (19) graduated by 2019 (within 6 years), and 100% of these graduates were recommended for priestly ordination. Of the 22 seminarians who entered the program in 2014, 90.9% (20) graduated by 2020 (within 6 years) and 90.9% of these graduates were recommended for priestly ordination.

In addition, it is important to note that enrollment of seminarians at NDS grew from 83 in the 2013 – 2014 academic year to 154 in the 2020 - 2021 academic year.

### **Master of Arts (Philosophy for Theological Studies)**

The Master of Arts (Philosophy for Theological Studies) program is offered to give more academically oriented seminarians in the Pre-theology program a deeper exposure to philosophy in preparation for graduate theology studies; it is also open to non-seminarians who are interested in the study of philosophy, especially those whose professions would benefit from refined critical thinking and logical reasoning skills. Two criteria used to measure the success of this two-year program are graduation rates and the percent of graduates that are retained for further study at NDS or another major seminary. Of the 5 seminarians who entered the program in 2016, 100% (5) graduated in 2018 (2 years) and 80% (4) of these graduates remained at NDS to enter the M.Div. program. Of the 5 seminarians who entered the program in 2017, 100% (5) of them graduated in 2019 (2 years) and 100% (5) were retained at NDS for further study. Of the 4 seminarians who entered the program in 2018, 100% (4) graduated in 2020 (2 years) and 75% (3) were retained for further study at NDS, 25% (1) of the graduates continued study at another major seminary.

### **Bachelor of Philosophy (Philosophy for Theological Studies)**

The Bachelor of Philosophy (Philosophy for Theological Studies) program is offered to college graduates who need to transition into seminary life and complete the undergraduate academic

courses in philosophy, theology, and Latin required by the USCCB's Program for Priestly Formation. This program, therefore, aims to prepare men to study theology at the graduate level in preparation for ordination. Two measures for assessing the success of this program are graduation rates (2 years) and the percentage of men who continue priestly formation at the graduate level. Of the 10 men who entered the BPHIL program in 2016, 80% (8) graduated in 2018 (2 years), and 100% (8) were retained at NDS for further study. Of the 6 men who entered the BPHIL program in 2017, 83.3% (5) graduated in 2019 (2 years) and 66.7% (4) were retained at NDS for further study. Of the 10 men who entered in 2018, 80% (8) graduated in 2020 (2 years) and 83.3% (6) were retained at NDS for further study.

### **Master of Arts (Theological Studies)**

The Master of Arts (Theological Studies) degree is offered to seminarians choosing to receive an academic degree and to non-seminarian applicants seeking to deepen his or her understanding of Catholic theology and/or preparing for leadership and catechetical roles in the Church. Two measures used to measure the student achievement in this program are graduation rates (6 years) and percentage of students who gain employment in fields related to the degree. Of the 7 new students who enrolled in the MATS program in Fall 2013, 57.1% (4) graduated by 2019 (6 years). Of the 7 new students who enrolled in the MATS program in Fall 2014, 71.4% (5) graduated by 2020 (6 years).

### **Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership**

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree program is composed of students who have completed the Institute for Lay Ecclesial Ministry (ILEM) Commissioning program and wish to take additional theology courses to earn a master's degree. ILEM is committed to educating and forming men and women in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of lay ecclesial ministry. Candidates who successfully complete the ILEM program are commissioned by their bishop as lay ecclesial ministers. The MAPL degree program is available to those participants, who by taking on additional courses and assignments, wish to receive such a degree. This degree would then serve to provide additional graduate-level competence for future lay ecclesial ministers. Although approved to begin accepting students in the Fall 2014 semester, the program did not actually begin to accept students until the Fall 2015 semester. Two criteria used to measure student achievement in this program are graduation rates and percentage of students who gain employment in fields related to the degree. The six-year graduation rates and job placement statistics will be computed following the 2021 spring graduation date.