



Non-degree / non-accredited Admission Policy

A bachelor's degree is required for admission to Wartburg Theological Seminary's Master of Divinity (MDiv) and Master of Arts in Diaconal Ministry (MA-DM) degree programs in accordance¹ with our accrediting body the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Successful completion of an undergraduate degree is the best indicator for success in graduate theological education and ensures a corpus of knowledge that is important both for further study and for ministry. However, ATS does make provision for member schools to admit a few students who have not met this requirement, but who are able to establish "equivalency."

1 ATS Bulletin 50 - Standard Es. B.4.1 The professional master's program grants a post baccalaureate degree. Admission requirements shall include (1) a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education accredited by an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or approved by a Canadian provincial quality assurance agency, or the demonstrated educational equivalent of an accredited or approved North American baccalaureate degree; (2) evidence of the commitment and desired for ministerial leadership; and (3) the academic ability to engage in graduate education. B.4.2 As many as 15 percent of the students in the professional master's degree program may be admitted without possession of the baccalaureate degree or its educational equivalent. Admission of such applicants should be restricted to persons with life experience that has prepared them for theological study at the graduate level. An institution admitting persons without a baccalaureate degree or its educational equivalent shall demonstrate that its process and criteria for evaluating academic ability are educationally appropriate and rigorous.

The following guidelines are established for applicants seeking admission to the MDiv/MA-DM degree programs who do not have an earned bachelor's degree or who have an earned degree from an institution that is not accredited. The applicant will normally:

- Have 20 years or more of adult life and leadership experience
- Have successfully completed (2.5 GPA or higher) 72 credit hours of undergraduate education
- Interview with the admissions committee
- Submit all application materials by May 1 for fall semester matriculation.

The applicant may strengthen his/her file by:

- Submitting a well-written essay that articulates a clear sense of call to serve the church
- Seeking endorsement from his/her ecclesial body
- Submitting additional references or materials that help establish his/her equivalency and/or competence for graduate theological study
- Completing undergraduate courses in the following subject areas:
 - o English – Literature
 - o English -Writing
 - o History
 - o Philosophy/Reason
 - o Natural science
 - o Social science

The admissions committee will receive, and review completed applications according to the guidelines listed above. Successful completion of the application does not guarantee the applicant's admission.