

## External Courses

External Courses, courses taken at an educational institution external to The Centre, are required to complete the CCS diploma and year long certificates.

### Why are external Courses part of the CCS program

- Provide opportunities for students to experience a wider variety of learning and teaching styles,
- Provide an opportunity for students to bring experiences of other teaching styles into the integrative process in CCS courses,
- Provide opportunities for students to learn from a variety of theological perspectives and to practice articulating their perspective in dialogue,
- Provide opportunities for students to learn together with people preparing for other expressions of ministry,
- Enable other communities of learners to benefit from the experience of students in an integrative process of learning,
- Provide opportunities to draw on resources that are available in the wider geography of Canada,
- Increase the accessibility and reduce the cost of the program,
- Enhance the resources and expertise among CCS staff, complementing the skills of CCS staff,
- Further demonstrate CCS commitment to the value of scholarly work and affirms the importance of intellectual resources.

### What external Courses are required?

Eight semester long courses are required for the Diploma, one for the Year Long Certificate.

#### Introduction to Christian Scriptures

an overview course of the content and context of the Christian Scriptures which introduces methods in biblical criticism; in some situations these courses are in two parts (semesters), one part is sufficient, but then the Christian Scriptures Theme should be complimentary

#### Christian Scriptures: Theme or Focus

a specific course (generally would require a prerequisite introductory course) and where appropriate and possible, at a second or third year level, that concentrates on a book or books, a writer, a theme or issue

#### Introduction to Hebrew Scriptures

an overview course of the content and context of the Hebrew Scriptures which introduces methods in biblical criticism, in some situations these courses are in two parts (two semesters), one part is sufficient, but then the Hebrew Scriptures: Theme or Focus should be complimentary

#### Hebrew Scriptures: Theme or Focus

a specific course (generally would require a prerequisite introductory course) that concentrates on a book or books, a writer, a theme or issue

#### Introduction to Theology

an overview course which introduces theological concepts and methodology in theological thinking

#### Theology: Theme or Focus

a specific course (generally would require a prerequisite introductory course) that concentrates on a theological topic or particular school of theological approach

#### Church History

a survey course of church history: three options are available, a complete overview of early church to modern era, an overview from early church to reformation, and an overview from reformation to modern era

#### Introduction to Ethics

an overview of methods in ethical thinking and approaches, not a "professional ethics" course.

### In what order should they be taken?

The program design suggests an order in which the External Courses should be taken, however there is flexibility in this order because it is recognized that course availability affects access.

It is recommended that:

- Introduction to Christian Scriptures be the first course taken
- the other introductory courses (Hebrew Scriptures, Theology) follow
- students complete, or have at least begun, their first External Course before beginning in a field placement
- normally, at least one External Course will have been completed before entering the second theme year and at least two External Courses will have been completed before entering the third theme year
- normally, students will enter the Integrating Year with no more than two externals remaining to be completed
- the Introduction to Theology course is a pre-requisite for the Integrating Year.

Applicants are encouraged to take the Introduction to Christian Scriptures prior to beginning the Leadership Module.

### **Where are courses offered?**

Students may take courses from the undergraduate Religious Studies Department of an approved University or from an approved Theological College. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to take courses from a Theological College and whenever possible at a Master's level. Students without an undergraduate degree may apply to Theological Colleges offering Masters programs, although space is often limited. Students with undergraduate degrees must seek special dispensation from their primary staff person in order to take a course at the undergraduate level. This dispensation may be granted based on the staff person's assessment of the particular needs of the student especially if geography or other factors make it difficult for them to obtain courses at the graduate level. Students who are interested in a joint degree with one of CCS's partners are advised that the level at which their externals are taken may affect their eligibility for joint degree requirements (i.e. Courses for a Master's degree may need to be at the graduate level).

Following is a list of schools recognized by CCS. This list is evolving and other schools may be added as students inquire with staff about their suitability. Students are advised that they must still consult with their primary staff person about courses at the schools listed below as not all courses may be approved.

Atlantic School of Theology	Queen's College (Nfld)	University of Toronto
Carleton University	Queen's Theological College	University of Regina
Emmanuel College	Queen's University	University of Waterloo
Emmanuel-St. Chad's College	Sir Wilfrid Laurier	University of Calgary
Huntington University	St. Stephen's College	University of Winnipeg
Huron College	St. Andrew's College	Vancouver School of Theology
Iona College	Trinity College	Western University
Laurentian University	Thornloe College	Wycliffe College
McMaster University	United Theological College	York University

Increasingly, Theological Schools are willing to set courses up in response to a request when there are sufficient students. Initiative among students to determine course needs in common and identify dates for courses that would work is encouraged. Students are required to be in touch with the Principal prior to approaching any Theological School to set up courses, to avoid duplication of requests.

## What methods of delivery are available?

Courses are available through an increasing number of delivery methods. Even within each method there are variations in methodology and tools.

- **Correspondence** (written lectures, audio lectures, video lectures)
- **Directed Study/Reading Courses** (one on one work with a professor)
- **Intensives** (week long, 3 weekends over a semester or year)
- **Internet** (some are correspondence, some with class interaction such as Chat Groups)
- **Intramural** (classes offered on campus on a weekly basis for a semester)
- **Telebroadcast** (remote, live lectures broadcast to gathered group with two way interaction)
- **Teleconference** (class gathers on a conference call)
- **Cluster/Tutorial** (correspondence type material with a local tutorial or reflection group)

Students are expected to take courses through a variety of delivery methods, with the balance of courses being taken in a method where there is a learning community and opportunities for dialogue. Normally a program of only isolated methods (for example, correspondence) would not be approved, however, it is recognized that geographical realities need to be considered when applying this expectation. Students are encouraged to look for some courses which compliment their preferred learning style and some which challenge them to grow in other learning styles.

Whatever the method of delivery, students are encouraged to take courses from institutions where a diversity of theological thought is encouraged and accepted.

## How will courses be approved?

An annotated list of offered and recommended courses is available and will be updated as information is available on new offerings. The list is available whenever students require information, and will be shared at admission, at the Leadership Module and during each spring LIC. In determining which courses are approved and recommended, CCS staff rely on input from students who have taken the courses. Students are asked to provide feedback to staff on an ongoing basis. Because CCS encourages students to integrate their choice of externals into their overall individual learning objectives, students are required to consult with primary staff about suitable courses for them even if the course they wish to take is on the list of course offerings.

Requests for approval of courses should be made as far in advance of the registration deadline for the course as possible. Staff will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible to requests for the approval of external courses but consultation is required amongst staff and this may take some time depending on staff schedules and workloads. Courses which are taken without prior approval may or may not be approved. Whether or not a course has been started will not be taken into account in the approval process.

**Applicants and newly admitted students** (prior to beginning the Leadership Module) should consult with the Principal or designate, who will approve courses.

**Leadership Module students** who are continuing into a year long certificate or the Diploma program, will consult with the program staff during the Leadership Module about courses and will have courses approved by the Primary Staff person or designate with whom they are corresponding.

**Continuing Students (reflection students, theme year students and integrating year students)** are encouraged to plan their External Course program in the spring and seek approval for courses from the Primary staff person or designate with whom they correspond. During the spring LIC, theme year students will be provided an opportunity to consult with one another and might plan to request courses from Theological Schools and coordinate attendance at other courses. Students may want to consult with one another at other times as well.

After discussion with their primary staff person, if a student is not satisfied with the decision not to approve an external course, she or he may initiate an appeal of that decision using the process outlined below.

### **What are the procedures about transferring courses taken prior to application for admission?**

In some cases, applicants to the program have already completed courses which meet the criteria of the external courses required. Such courses will be evaluated for their suitability as part of the admissions process. The Principal will inform applicants of decisions regarding credit for courses already taken when informing applicants about admission decisions. If, after discussion with the Principal, an admitted student is not satisfied with the decisions made regarding the transfer of courses, she or he may appeal that decision through the appeal process detailed below.

The following guidelines will be used in assessing courses taken previously:

- Normally, CCS would accept no more than 4 credits for transfer into the program.
- Normally, only courses taken within 10 years of application can be transferred, however CCS may acknowledge the course so an alternative could be taken (e.g. applicant has a 10 year old Introduction to Christian Scriptures course and no other credits for transfer: so would have to take 8 courses, but instead of Introduction to Christian Scriptures would take 2 specific Christian Scripture courses).
- Normally, courses which have been applied for credit towards another degree (i.e. undergraduate courses already applied towards an undergraduate degree) will not be credited towards the CCS diploma. However, CCS may acknowledge the course so an alternative can be taken.

Applicants for admission are required to consult with the Principal who can approve courses that they anticipate registering for between the time of application and the start of the Leadership Development Module. Such courses are considered on a par with courses approved by primary staff people and are not included as courses taken prior to admission

### **Can decisions regarding External Courses be appealed?**

If after discussion with their primary staff person, a satisfactory resolution to a disagreement about the approval of externals cannot be obtained, students may appeal the decision. This process applies both to the transfer of credits taken prior to admission to the program and decisions regarding approval of courses for current students.

The process will be as follows:

- Within 6 weeks of receiving notification of a decision regarding the transfer or approval of a course, students may make appeal in writing to the Chair of the Program Committee.
- Students should include with their request for appeal an explanation of their reasons for wishing to take the course, or, for presenting a course of credit consideration and as much documentation as possible about the course.
- The Chair of the Program Committee will inform the student that she/he will also ask the staff person who made the original decision regarding approval to provide a summary in writing of her/his reasons for that decision to be shared with the Chair of the Program Committee, or their designate and the student.
- The Chair of the Program Committee and one other member of the Program Committee will consider the information provided by the student and the staff person and will decide whether or not to approve the course.
- The student and the staff person will be informed in writing of this decision. The decision made by the Chair of the Program Committee and one other member of the Program Committee or designate will be final.