

External Courses at the Centre for Christian Studies

Policy:

External Courses, that is, courses taken at an educational institution external to The Centre for Christian Studies, are required to complete the CCS diploma and year long certificates as laid out in the curriculum of CCS. For CCS Joint Degree Programs, external courses must meet the requirements of the degree granting institution.

Changes to this policy will not be applied retroactively. Students who are currently registered in or have completed external courses that have been approved in writing will not have that approval revoked except if the course was misrepresented to staff when the approval was obtained. Any changes to the approval policy for externals will be communicated to students in writing prior to taking effect. Due consideration will be given to the expectations of students when they started the program and substantial changes will not be applied to current students who complete the program within 8 years of admission unless the student chooses to follow the new processes.

A. Courses taken prior to Admission to CCS

Policy

Students may apply to have up to four courses (12 credit hours) taken within the past ten years credited toward their CCS external course requirements.

Outline

The Centre's diploma program requires the completion of 8 external courses (semester long, total of 24 credit hours) at a Theological School or University Department of Religious Studies. Often applicants to the program have already completed courses which meet the criteria of the external courses required. Courses taken at recognized institutions but not used for a degree or diploma 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.

Transfer of External Credits

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

- Normally, CCS would accept no more than 4 courses (12 credit hours) 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.

B. Protocols for courses taken after admission to CCS:

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 (3 credit hours) 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

complementary

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 complementary

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: a complete overview of early church to modern era is strongly recommended, an overview from early church to reformation, and an overview from reformation to modern era may be used in some situations.

Introduction to Ethics

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

Where are courses offered?

Students may take courses from the undergraduate or graduate Religious Studies Department of an approved University or from an approved Theological School. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to take courses from a Theological School and whenever possible at a Master’s level. Students without an undergraduate degree may apply to Theological Schools 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 learning needs of the student. 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 Carleton University College of Emmanuel- St. Chad Emmanuel College Huntington University Huron College Iona College Laurentian University McMaster University	Queen's College (Nfld) Queen's Theological College Queen's University Sir Wilfrid Laurier St. Stephen's College St. Andrew's College Trinity College Thornloe College United Theological College	University of Toronto University of Regina University of Waterloo University of Calgary University of Winnipeg Vancouver School of Theology Western University Wycliffe College York University
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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)

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?

Students are required to consult with primary staff about suitable courses for them. Requests for approval of courses should be made as far in advance of the registration deadline for the course as possible. 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.

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 ask for a review of the decision by a second Program Staff member. This applies both to the transfer of credits taken prior to admission to the program and decisions regarding approval of courses for current students. The second Program Staff person will review the request from the student and the reason it was not accepted and make a decision about the course, informing both the student and the person who made the original decision. The decision of the second Program Staff member will be final.

How are results of courses shared with CCS?

Students are responsible to provide CCS with transcripts of External Courses. Once a student has completed all of the courses they plan to take at a particular external school, then they should arrange to have an official transcript forwarded to the registrar at CCS. Diplomas can not be granted until the transcripts have been received. However, while students are still taking courses with an external school, a

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photocopy of the “report card” is sufficient. Students are requested to send the photocopy as soon as they receive the report from the external school. Normally, a grade of 65% or equivalent on an External Course will be required in order to satisfy the requirements of the Centre for Christian Studies.

Can External Courses be counted towards a degree?

Students must register with at least one of the recognized schools to access courses. Students may register at the school as a special student or in a degree program.

The Centre has Degree program arrangements with St. Stephen’s College for a Master of Theological Studies in Diaconal Ministry and a Bachelor of Theological Studies in Diaconal Ministry and with University of Winnipeg for a Masters of Arts in Theology or a Bachelor of Theology. See agreements with St. Stephen’s College and University of Winnipeg for details.

Students will not be able to automatically transfer credits from other institutions into degree programs. Although they may be usable in the CCS diploma program, it is up to the degree granting institution what courses they will accept. Most will not accept courses that have been credited toward another degree.