

**Graduate Program Review
Bible Theology Department
MATS Program**

I. MATS Program Mission Statement:

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.) program is designed to serve as an intermediate degree for further graduate programs in biblical and theological studies. It is also designed to provide advanced biblical and theological training for ministers who want to enhance their ministry in specialized areas such as teaching and church related writing.

II. Program Learning Outcomes and Goals/Objectives.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing the MATS program the student will be able to:

- 1. Assess the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testaments, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world.**
 - a. Construct a brief historical framework of the Ancient Near East including succession of empires in relation to the Old Testament.
 - b. Define the cultural background concepts and practices that are significant for understanding major Old Testament teachings.
 - c. Explain the major historical, critical, and interpretative issues involved with the books of the Old Testament.
 - d. Outline and describe key events in the political history of Judaism in the Hellenistic Period.
 - e. Describe and discuss the basic social structures that permeated the world of the New Testament.
 - f. List and discuss the major interpretive and introductory issues pertaining to the major portions of the New Testament.
 - g. Articulate God's plan for the universe from a biblical perspective.
 - h. Recognize the vital link between the kingdom of God, the church, and missions as expressed in both the Old and New Testaments.
 - i. Analyze the Christological paradigm for missions.

- 2. Formulate a paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.**
 - a. Discuss an understanding of the nature and work of hermeneutics as it relates to the task of exegesis and expository preaching.
 - b. List and define the principles that are appropriate for interpreting biblical texts in general and specific literary genres used in the Bible.
 - c. Apply the principles of interpretation to the exegesis of a biblical text.

- d. Critique and evaluate the various methods of New Testament interpretation, assessing both their positive contributions and limitations for New Testament exegesis.
 - e. Summarize the message of each book of the Old Testament in relation to Israel's context.
 - f. Understand the need for doing theology in light of the unreached people groups in specific contexts.
 - g. Apply biblical understandings and missiology to the contemporary world context.
- 3. Evaluate the major issues and key figures in church history and biblical and systematic theology in light of the mission of God.**
- a. Discuss the history of Christianity in its diverse cultural settings to the present.
 - b. Analyze the contributions of key personalities and movements to the development of Christianity.
 - c. Explain how diverse cultural contexts both enriched and challenged the witness of the faith.
 - d. Analyze new understandings of the mission of the Church that arose and the patterns of evangelism that were adopted.
 - e. Discuss the important theological issues that contributed to the further articulation of Christian doctrine.
 - f. Explain and reflect on the major doctrinal areas of the Christian faith.
 - g. Compare the evangelical formulations of theological topics with the contemporary theological discussion and development.
 - h. Assess the unique contributions and challenges of the Pentecostal tradition to the formulation of theological topics.
 - i. Defend the biblical foundations for the expression of theological topics.

III. MATS Program Capacity and Description (Railey/Gill)

a. Program Profile.

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS) is a 48-hour academic degree offered by the Bible and Theology (BTH) Department of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary at Evangel University. The MATS is designed to serve as an intermediate degree for further graduate programs in biblical and theological studies. It is also designed to provide advanced biblical and theological training for ministers who want to enhance their skills in specialized areas such as teaching and church-related writing.

All students in the MATS program have a Bible and Theology concentration which gives the widest range of course options (BAR [Biblical Aramaic], BGR [Biblical Greek], BHE [Biblical Hebrew], BIB [Bible], BNT [New Testament], BOT [Old Testament], BTH [Biblical Theology], HIS [History], PCP [Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies], and THE [Theology]). Students who so desire, may focus more narrowly by taking between 15-18 hours in NT Studies, OT Studies, Biblical Languages, or Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies.

- Degree Program Outcomes, Curriculum Maps and Degree Plans are provided in Appendixes B, C, and D.

b. Faculty.

The Bible and Theology Department employs six full-time faculty members and several adjuncts. Students also have access to faculty in other departments (e.g., Practical Theology, and Intercultural Studies) for elective classes.

- Faculty vitae are provided in Appendix A.

MATS Full-time Faculty Profile

Name	Highest Degree	Year Degree Obtained	Degree area specialization	Faculty Rank	Year hired
Roger D. Cotton	Th.D., Concordia Seminary	1983	Exegetical Theology	Professor	1987
Deborah M. Gill	Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary	1991	Old and New Testaments	Professor	2006
James D. Hernando	Ph.D., Drew University	1990	New Testament	Professor	1990
Doug Oss	Ph.D., Westminster Theological Seminary	1992	Hermeneutics and Biblical Interpretation	Professor	2005
James H. Railey	D.Th., University of South Africa	2000	Systematic Theology	Professor	1991
Charles E. Self	Ph.D., University of California, Santa Cruz	1995	History	Professor	2006

c. Enrollment History

MATS Admissions Profiles

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Number of applicants	20	12	19	17	16
Number Accepted	17	4	16	16	14
Number matriculated	18	10	10	3	7
Undergraduate GPA (mean and range)	3.05 2.1	3.48 1.2	3.37 1.5	3.48 0.69	3.14 1.17
Admissions Exam scores (mean and range)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Work Status of Graduate Students*	F/T	F/T	F/T	F/T	F/T
	P/T	P/T	P/T	P/T	P/T
	N/E	N/E	N/E	N/E	N/E
Attrition number					
Time between matriculation and graduation (mean and range)	3.1 6	2.7 4	3.75 4	3 5	3.8 7

d. Degrees Conferred

MATS Degrees Conferred

Students	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
FTE by major of all modes and locations	25	22	23	15	16
Degrees conferred by major and all modes and locations	21	18	8	8	7

e. Program Maps

MATS Program Map
4-year Rotation of Courses
(F, S, SS denotes Term: Fall, Spring, Summer Session)

Course Prefix and Number		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
BAR 630	Aramaic		SS		SS
BGR 530	Greek 1A	F	F	F	F
BGR 531	Greek 1B	S	S	S	S
BGR 611	Inductive Studies in the Greek NT I	F	F	F	F
BGR 612	Inductive Studies in the Greek NT II	S	S	S	
BGR 624	Studies in the Synoptic Gospels: Mark		F	F	
BGR 625	Studies in the Letters of Paul: The Thessalonian Correspondence	S			
BGR 625	Studies in the letters of Paul: 2 Corinthians				S
BGR 627	Studies in the General Epistles: James	F			
BHE 530	Hebrew – 1A	SS	SS	F, SS	F, SS
BHE 531	Hebrew – 1B	SS	SS	S, SS	S, SS
BHE 634	Studies in the Torah: Numbers	F			
BHE 637	Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes		F		
BIB 532	Hermeneutics	F	F	F	F
BIB 640	Africa Encounters the book: Contextualized Biblical Interpretation	S			
BNT 530	New Testament Introduction	S	S	S	S
BNT 533	Studies in the letters of Paul: 2 Corinthians				S
BNT 540	Studies in the Synoptic Gospels/Acts: Mark		F	F	
BNT 623	Expository Preaching in the Gospel/Acts		F		
BNT 624	Exposition of 1 st Corinthians				F
BNT 624	Expository Preaching in Epistles: Romans			F	
BNT 641	Special Studies in New Testament: Stewardship of Life and Money in the Synoptic Gospels				SS
BNT 646	Theological Studies Seminar	S	S	S	S
BOT 530	Old Testament Introduction	F	F	F	F

BOT 531	Studies in the Pentateuch: Leviticus and Numbers and Holiness		F		
BOT 531	Studies in the Pentateuch: Deuteronomy		SS		F
BOT 538	Studies in the Prophetical Books: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah	SS		SS	
BOT 538	Studies in the Prophetical Books: Isaiah		SS		
BOT 539	Studies in the Historical Books: The Messages of Chronicles and Revival	F		F	
BOT 540	Studies in Poetical Books: Psalms	S			
BOT 540	Studies in Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes		S		
BOT 620	Exp Preaching in the Pentateuch and Historical Books: Genesis		F	S	
BOT 621	Exp Preaching in the Prophets/Apocalypse: Revelation	F		S	
BOT 641	Positive Answers to Difficult Old Testament Questions	S		S	SS
BOTE 641	Special Studies: Genesis 1-11 and Science			SS	
BOT 646	Theological Studies Seminar	S	S	S	S
BTH 501	The Mission of God in Biblical and Contemporary Contexts	F, S	F, S	F, S	F, S
BTH 530	Old Testament Theology	S	S	S	S
BTH 532	New Testament Theology: Discipleship Focus	S,F	F	F	
BTH 532	New Testament Theology				F
BTH 533	The Holy Spirit in the New Testament Church		F		S
BTH 534	The Baptism in the Holy Spirit			SS	
BTH 538	The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament	SS	S	SS	S
BTHM 635	Theology and Practice of Spiritual Gifts	SS			
BTH 640	Positive Answers to Difficult Old Testament Questions	S		S	
HIS 528	Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements	F	F	F	F
HIS 532	History and Polity of the Assemblies of God	S	S	S	S
HIS 556	World Christianity I	F	F	F	F
HIS 557	World Christianity II	S	S	S	S
HIS 642	Special Studies: The Early Church				S
RES 512	Academic Writing	F, S	F, S	F,S	F

RES 531	Theological Research and Writing			F	F
THE 531	Systematic Theology I		F	F	F
THE 532	Systematic Theology II	S	S	S	S
THE 621	The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit	S		S	
THE 622	Communicating Christian Faith in a Pluralistic Society	S	S		
THE 623	God, Revelation and Truth		F		F
THE 624	Christ and Humanity in the Plan of God			F	
THE 625	Church End Times and Eternity		S		
THEM 628	Apologetics		SS		
THE 633	Divine Healing		S		
THE 639	History of Christianity in Asia			S	
THE 639	Culture, Gender & Cross Cultural Ministry				F
THE 644	Theological German			S	
THEM 649	Christian-Muslim Theological Issues		SS		SS

f. Curriculum Maps

Master of Arts in Theological Studies PLOs:

1. Discuss the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testaments, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world.
2. Construct an interpretive paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.
3. Demonstrate an ability extract and construct the biblical teaching on a given topic or doctrine that respects the progress of revelation within the biblical canon and employs sound principles of biblical interpretation.
4. Analyze contemporary socio-cultural challenges from society and construct biblically informed, relevant responses to those challenges that are faithful to historic Christian faith.
5. Identify and discuss the major issues and key figures in church history, biblical interpretation and theology in light of the mission of God.
6. Explain the historical trends and doctrines of Pentecostalism, and assess their contribution to theological developments both past and present.
7. Critique the various methods and critical approaches to biblical interpretation of both the Old and New Testaments and assess their positive contributions and limitations for biblical exegesis.
8. Seek to apply biblical/theological foundations and critique to current ministry practices within specific ministry contexts.

Course	PLO	Course	PLO
BTH/MHT 501	1,2,4,8	RES 531	2,3,4,8
HIS/MHT 556	4,5,6	Concentration Course	Various elective
HIS/MHT 556	4,5,6	Concentration Course	course options are
BIB 532	2,3,4,7,8	Concentration Course	offered, so learning
BOT 530	1,7,8	Concentration Course	outcomes will include
BNT 530	1,7,8	Concentration Course	all eight, depending
THE 531	3,4,5,6	General Elective Course	on the offering
THE 532	3,4,5,6	BNT/BOT/PCS 646	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8

g. Advising and Mentoring

Faculty are available to meet with students for academic advising and vocational mentoring.

Faculty advisors offer advice on course scheduling to assure students meet degree requirements; and they assist students in selecting specific courses based on their particular interests and future ministries. In the case of students moving toward Ph.D. work, the faculty guide them regarding biblical language proficiencies, research language preparation (suggesting, e.g., they consider taking Theological German), and may offer them practicum opportunities as a Teaching Assistant. Especially in the thesis-writing stage, drawing from their own scholarship and publication experience, faculty invest in research mentoring.

h. Facilities

The MATS degree program utilizes primarily 3 second-floor classrooms in the Seminary building designed for the adult-learner model of education, each with a 15-student capacity: Rooms 226, 227, 228. For classes with large enrollments, the degree program makes use of 2 first-floor lecture halls: Rooms 114 and 116. All classrooms are well-equipped with up-to-date audio-visual equipment. Library, computer lab, printers, campus-wide high-speed WiFi, student lounge, and chapel also contribute to serve the degree program.

i. Curriculum Comparison

For purposes of self-review the BTH Department has chosen 6 peer institutions with degrees similar to our MATS whom we respect and want to learn from. (See table below):

Comparison with Peer MATS Degrees Among Theological Seminaries

School	Source ¹	Degree	Credits	Admissions	Curriculum Breakdown	Special focus
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary	W	MATS	48 - 2 years	2.5 GPA	Mission of God/World Christianity (9 hrs), Bib/Theo (15 hrs), Theo Res (6 hrs), Concentrations (6 possible, 15-18 hrs), elective	39 hour with advanced standing; online MATS degree
Fuller Seminary	W	MA Theo	96 qtr hrs. - 2 years	2.7 GPA	NT, OT, Church Hist, Sys Theo, Christian Ethics, Spirituality, Cultural understanding, plus related electives (36 Q Hrs) and concentrations (17 possible areas) (20 Q Hrs)	May include upto 64 quarter hours transfer, or 48 quarter hours in distance learning; 10 year time-limit
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School	W	MA/TS	42 - 2-3 years	2.5 GPA	Biblical (8-12 hrs), Theo (8-12), Hist/global studies (5-9 hrs), additional courses; Field Ed	Can have a joint MA/TS and MA in Bioethics degree
Asbury Theological Seminary	W	MA (Theo Studies)	60 - 2-3 years	3.0 GPA	Min vocation, Missional formation, Church Hist, Christian Ethics, NT/OT Intro, Book study (MT, MK), Theo of Wesleys, electives	
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary	B	MATH	2 years		Church History, NT, OT, Primarily Theology—pass Grk and HBW exams	
Truett Seminary	W	MTS	48 - 2 years	2.7 GPA overall/3.0 GPA in major	Bible, Theo, Church Hist, Baptist identity, electives, Constructive Theo	Available MTS-MSW for 93 or 71 hours
Pentecostal Theological Seminary	B	MTS-BS/MTS-PT	60/48 - 2 years	2.5 GPA	MTS-BS—emphasis on biblical studies and Pentecostal hermeneutics, MTS-PT—emphasis on theology from a Wesleyan Pentecostal perspective	

j. Advisory Committee Members

- The BTH faculty in its entirety served as the overarching Advisory Committee. This includes members of the department which teach specific courses in the MATS program. In addition, it includes faculty that teach in other MA and doctoral degree programs. Multiple program faculty include Dr.s Paul Lewis, Charlie Self, and Randy Walls. Dr. Walls worked closely with the department to guide us in the assessment process as well as the crafting of the GPR.
- Research on curriculum changes for the MATS Program was conducted by the BTH faculty including the Dean of Faculty and members involved teaching courses relative to curricular changes. The Chair of the department served as a coordinator of that process.
- Student input was gleaned by examining the personal evaluation of the program goals and objectives solicited in the MATS Portfolio prepared during the Theological Studies Seminar. See Appendix I (MATS Program Manual)

k. Location, Sites, and Modes of Program

¹ W—Website, C—Catalog (2014-2015), B—Both; all sources last accessed December 12, 2015

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies is a two-year program offered residentially (on the main campus of AGTS at EU) in Springfield, MO, as well as online.

IV. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis

STRENGTHS

1. The most emphatic strength expressed is the quality of the faculty and their investment in students, spiritually as well as academically. One respondent said they were the best part of attending AGTS.
2. The next emphasized strength was the outcome experienced of effective Bible study for preaching and teaching, which is the major purpose of the program. Another said they were pushed to research, write, and think at a higher level.
3. Respondents stated that the program definitely did what it says it will do. They complimented the program on its clarity, well-roundedness, appropriateness of rigor, and the flexibility to make adjustments. The latter is something we have consciously sought to communicate.
4. Also mentioned was the developing availability of the degree online, which has become our current priority. [*At present AGTS has 2/3 of the online MATS courses developed, and the full curriculum is scheduled to go on line by Fall 2017*].
5. In answer to a later question one person said the strong emphasis on Islamic studies is a unique strength of AGTS. Another indicated it fascinated people that the alumni got a masters degree in Pentecostal theology.
6. Consolidation was considered helpful for networking and advantageous over all for opening up more options in the schedule.

WEAKNESSES

1. The two specific ones that we were already most conscious of and that are not unique to our degree are the scheduling of classes in relation to the problem of students finding jobs that will work with their schedules and then the cost of the degree.
2. One stated concern about the MATS degree was that the M.Div. had such higher respect. [The student was probably making reference to the fact that the M.Div. degree has a broader range of options for ministry vocations and further graduate studies].
3. A serious complaint, which we have been aware of, is that finding appropriate courses here after an undergrad Bible degree is made very difficult when courses are cancelled due to low enrollment. However, one respondent stated that even though he or she drove five hours one way they only had to take one directed research.
4. One complaint, the explanation for which is unclear to me, was about not having online courses available in Arkansas.
5. A lengthy frustration, yet with the realization that it may be unavoidable, was that in some classes the time spent on basic questions prevented delving deeper into the subject of the course. The assumption was that the school admitted students with quite disparate abilities to grasp the concepts, probably due to lack of background in the field. We should be aware of this concern as we conduct discussions in our classes. One terse suggestion was that there be "more presenting."

6. The one that most surprised me, and we need to make sure to address, is “assisting students with class selections throughout the program.” It seems possible that this was a perceived lack that was due to a misunderstanding of how to get such help from their advisor since the default approach to registration is simply to do it online without making an appointment with the advisor.
7. One respondent said it is frustrating to have to go over to EU to do seminary business. Another comment on consolidation was that the cultures of the two schools are very different.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. One was more a concern that we offer more degrees in non-residency because of the hardship of relocating here. We have realized we have been missing an opportunity here and we are in the process of putting a MATS degree totally online.
2. Another was that the department did not make students sufficiently aware of opportunities to attend professional meetings or join professional societies, such as the Society for Pentecostal Studies. This is definitely an area in which we could improve.
3. There was a suggestion to provide more one-week and three-week modules. It should be noted that the current summer schedule is nearly all one week modules.
4. Finally, there was a lament that relocating to Springfield made involvement in ministry in a local church a challenge, which seems to belong under threats.
5. One comment on the future of the program was that it was fantastic but maybe could use more research opportunities.
6. One suggestion made later in the survey was to provide the option for recent undergraduates to learn from current pastors who could themselves hone their abilities in the program. One suggestion that we have already been working on as a school is to appeal to other Pentecostal groups who don't have their own schools. More use of social media, more publishing by faculty, more recruiting in Chi Alpha groups, and using alumni success stories, were recommended, all of which opportunities we are well aware of.

THREATS

1. Not surprisingly, the greatest challenge expressed was financial: cost of the program; sources of funding available; debt from undergrad degrees; and the income prospects after graduation to offset the expenses of the education. This is a long standing school-wide challenge.
2. Again, the need of students for online degrees due to the inability to relocate families was reiterated.
3. The other obvious challenge, which is also a weakness, is the challenge of scheduling of courses when the student needs them. One respondent hoped that the consolidation has improved the situation, which it probably has not. That same person had a specific complaint that the first year Greek did not count on the MDiv transcripts, which is not really a threat but more of a perceived weakness.
4. One respondent saw the moving of the counseling program out of AGTS as a significant challenge to the school. A respondent observed what I consider a genuine challenge we

must deal with: People seem to be losing an interest in higher education and need to be shown clearly the value of our program. When asked, "What should the program become in the next several years?" one response was "more well-known outside A/G circles." However, one lament was that the use of the name of the Assemblies of God hinders prospective students.

5. One challenge we have struggled with is not being allowed to recruit on other A/G campuses.
6. Two comments indicated, as one said, that we need "a degree that flows into a higher degree." One even said they were afraid they wouldn't be accepted into a PhD program with only our MATS. Another said it had a low reputation in contrast with the MDiv. However, two felt it was strong, influential, challenging, and with it one could pursue doctoral work.
7. While overall, consolidation was expected to help both of the schools, there are the potential threats to seminary programs of increased bureaucracy slowing down services and making them less personal and the lack of allocation of resources to marketing our programs.

V. Peer Institutions/Benchmarking

a. See table below:

School	Source ²	Degree	Credits	Admissions	Curriculum Breakdown	Special focus
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary	W	MATS	48 - 2 years	2.5 GPA	Mission of God/World Christianity (9 hrs), Bib/Theo (15 hrs), Theo Res (6 hrs), Concentrations (6 possible, 15-18 hrs), elective	39 hour with advanced standing; online MATS degree
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Trinity Evangelical Divinity School	W	MA/TS	42 - 2-3 years	2.5 GPA	Biblical (8-12 hrs), Theo (8-12), Hist/global studies (5-9 hrs), additional courses; Field Ed	Can have a joint MA/TS and MA in Bioethics degree
Asbury Theological Seminary	W	MA (Theo Studies)	60 - 2-3 years	3.0 GPA	Min vocation, Missional formation, Church Hist, Christian Ethics, NT/OT Intro, Book study (MT, MK), Theo of Wesleys, electives	
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary	B	MATH	2 years		Church History, NT, OT, Primarily Theology—pass Grk and HBW exams	
Truett Seminary	W	MTS	48 - 2 years	2.7 GPA overall/3.0 GPA in major	Bible, Theo, Church Hist, Baptist identity, electives, Constructive Theo	Available MTS-MSW for 93 or 71 hours
Pentecostal Theological Seminary	B	MTS-BS/MTS-PT	60/48 - 2 years	2.5 GPA	MTS-BS—emphasis on biblical studies and Pentecostal hermeneutics, MTS-PT—emphasis on theology from a Wesleyan Pentecostal perspective	

VI. Assessment Procedures

MATS Assessment Procedures

Narrative Introduction/Background:

The MATS Program has been undergoing continual assessment and revision since its inception, but most intensely since the program review and assessment done in conjunction with our accreditation self-study in (2011). At that time, the BTH department evaluated the entire program internally through departmental meetings. As the evaluation was seminary-wide, each department reworked their program goals and objectives and the learning outcomes. In addition, each faculty member was instructed to evaluate the course objectives

² W—Website, C—Catalog (2014-2015), B—Both; all sources last accessed December 12, 2015

for core, required and elective courses and assess where they supported the MATS program mission, and learning outcomes and goal.

The assessment process was greatly aided by the fine-tuning of the requirements for the course BTH/BNT/BOT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar which was designed to be an integrative seminar which allowed for a peer-reviewed research in a chosen topic that reflected a concentration of their course work. The summative project was a Theological Studies Research Paper that was developed in multiple steps of review by both the course professor and the student in and out of class.

In September of 2011 the BTH collected feedback from rotating professors who had taught the class and authored their first MATS Program Manual that was intended to inform and guide all incoming MATS students as to the expectations, components and requirements of the program. See Appendix I– The MATS Program Manual. The manual is distributed at the beginning of the school year at the MATS orientation meeting. The manual has been revised and edited over the years by the BTH department. The MATS Program Manual listed in the Appendices does not reflect program changes made in 2016. The edits to the manual will be in the forthcoming revised edition that has not yet been published. The BTH chairman left the notations in the margins that reflect those changes.

MATS Program Goals:

There are (3) broad program goals for the MATS program:

1. Assess the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testament, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world.
2. Formulate a paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.
3. Evaluate the major issues and key figures in church history and biblical and systematic theology in light of the mission of God.

MATS Student Learning Goals and Outcomes:

The above program goals can be extrapolated in to a set of eight student learning outcomes:

1. Discuss the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testaments, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world.
2. Construct an interpretive paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.
3. Demonstrate an ability extract and construct the biblical teaching on a given topic or doctrine that respects the progress of revelation within the biblical canon and employs sound principles of biblical interpretation.

4. Analyze contemporary socio-cultural challenges from society and construct biblically informed, relevant responses to those challenges that are faithful to historic Christian faith.
5. Identify and discuss the major issues and key figures in church history, biblical interpretation and theology in light of the mission of God.
6. Explain the historical trends and doctrines of Pentecostalism, and assess their contribution to theological developments both past and present.
7. Critique the various methods and critical approaches to biblical interpretation of both the Old and New Testaments and assess their positive contributions and limitations for biblical exegesis.
8. Seek to apply biblical/theological foundations and critique to current ministry practices within specific ministry contexts.

Collectively the BTH department has worked to develop and refine our stated MATS goals and assessment of student learning. To facilitate the latter the MATS grading rubric was developed for the evaluation and grading of the MATS seminar papers (See Appendix K). Another was developed for the requirement of a MATS Portfolio, with content requirements and assessment guidelines and instruction. (See “MATS Portfolio Assessment Rubric” in the Program Manual) The contents of the MATS Portfolio will be referenced throughout the review and explanation of Assessment Procedures.

Indirect Procedures or Measures:

1. ***Institutional exit or alumni surveys*** – e.g. ATS institutional survey – The MATS Qualtrics Survey was sent out to AGTS graduates for the last five years. The survey questions were compiled by the faculty member who was in charge of the SWOT report for the MATS program. See Appendix D.
2. ***Course evaluations*** are conducted every semester and faculty members receive the results of those evaluations.
 - a. Efforts have been taken to place these evaluations online, but have met with unsatisfactory subscription to and low completion rates. Moreover, the EU course evaluation is not satisfactory for evaluating seminary and graduate courses.
 - b. Exploration is under way to determine if AGTS course evaluations can be conducted by putting our evaluation question on a Qualtrics Survey. Projected implementation is slated for the 2016-17 academic year.

3. **Program survey in the Theological Studies Seminar** – This is a capstone seminar that produces a summative project and program portfolio. In the program portfolio, the student is asked to:
 - a. Assess the achievement of MATS Program goals and learning outcomes by and to provide evidence from class assignments, projects and exams that correspond to those program objectives. Moreover, an approximately 10 page narrative is required that allows for fuller commentary on their assessment.
 - b. Complete a Program Assessment form using a 5 point Likert to assess satisfaction that the program goals and learning outcomes were achieved.
4. **A SWOT Analysis** and its findings contains data that will fill out the picture of whether the MATS degree is meeting its program goals. It will also provide insight into what contributes to student satisfaction.
5. **A MATS Curriculum Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**
 - a. The first step was to determine if all our SLOs of the MATS Program was being addressed or targeted by the MATS curriculum/courses. An examination and analysis of our curriculum was done by the BTH faculty teaching in the MATS program and they matched their courses with one or more of the eight SLOs. See Appendix C – “SLOs and MATS courses.”
 - b. Secondly, every faculty member teaching in MATS program was assigned to exam their grade rosters to determine what percentage of MATS students in the individual courses were successfully (B or above grade/84%) accomplishing the various learning outcomes attached to those courses. In the same report they were to attach the success percentage to the assessment tool used to achieve the SLOs. See Appendix A - “MATS Success of Assessment Tools – All Faculty”
6. **Stakeholders Survey** – Three individuals were chosen to review and critique the MATS program goals, its curriculum and requirements according to a set of questions prepared by the BTH chair. They included a graduate of the MATS program who went on to do a Ph.D. degree in the UK, a D. Min graduate who is an AG District Superintendent and another graduate who is president of one of our sister schools. For the questions to which they responded and the full text of their answers, see Appendix G- “Stakeholders Survey of the MATS Program- Instructions, Questions and Response”

Direct Procedures or Measures:

1. **Program survey in the Theological Studies Seminar** – This is a capstone seminar that produces a summative project and program portfolio.

The summative project – the Theological Studies Seminar Paper is graded by a rubric evaluation form (See Appendix K – “MATS Theological Studies Seminar Paper. The rubric has (5) categories and (25) items related to learning outcomes. The professor grades the paper using a 5 point Likert scale.

2. **Outstanding Theological Studies Seminar papers** are eligible for Stanley M. Horton Award – for the outstanding paper in the area of biblical theology or topic of related application. The BTH department maintains a file of these outstanding papers for our records and ongoing assessment.
3. **MATS Program Portfolio** asks the student to assess the achievement of program learning outcomes/goals using a 5 point Likert scale. Moreover, they are to provide evidence from class assignments, projects and exams that correspond to those program objectives. In addition they are asked to provide an 8-10 page narrative essay assessing the MATS program and describing their educational experience while in pursuit of their degree.
4. The data collected from the above two procedures are evaluated in the first BTH departmental meeting in the Fall Semester and recommendations and/or suggestions for change in curriculum, course requirements or evaluative instruments are considered.

MATS Assessment Plan: The BTH Department in the course of conducting the Graduate Program Review has seen need to look ahead and formulate a basic assessment plan that can continue to provide data that will help determine whether program goals and SLOs are being met, and assess whether there is need to adapt or change program goals and requirements. What follows is a brief sketch of our MATS Assessment Plan for the coming 2016-2017 school year.

Evangel University AGTS Assessment Plan Master of Arts in Theological Studies					
<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Learning Outcome (What is evaluated)</i>	<i>When administered</i>	<i>Analysis of fairness, consistency and accuracy</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Schedule for Review</i>
Summative projects	1) Revelation through OT & NT in light of mission of God 2) Biblical text & the contemporary world 3) Biblical-theological analysis and doctrinal formulation 8) Biblical-theological foundations, critique and application to ministry contexts	Throughout each course which uses summative projects to evaluate student learning	Use of summative project rubrics. Faculty trained in use of rubrics. BTH faculty members review hi/mid/lo samples of student work to maintain consistency.	Performance at the 84 percentile or above.	Reviewed annually by the BTH Department on the last BTH meeting - (4/18/16)

Research Papers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Revelation through OT & NT in light of mission of God 2) Biblical text & contemporary world 3) Biblical-theological analysis and doctrinal formulation 4) Contemporary challenges to historic Christian faith 5) 5) Major issue and figures in Church History & theology in light of the mission of God 6) Historical trends and doctrine within Pentecostalism 7) Evaluate methods and approaches to biblical interpretation 8) Biblical-theological foundations, critique and application to ministry contexts 	<p>Throughout each course which uses research papers to evaluate student learning</p>	<p>Use of research paper rubrics. Faculty trained in use of rubrics. BTH faculty members review samples of student work to assess whether the program goals re being met in order to maintain consistency.</p>	<p>Performance at the 84 percentile or above.</p>	<p>Reviewed annually by the BTH Department on the last BTH meeting - (4/18/16)</p>
Course exams	<p>(1-8)</p>	<p>Throughout each course which uses exams to evaluate student learning</p>	<p>BTH faculty members review hi/mid/lo samples of student work to maintain consistency.</p>	<p>Performance at the 84 percentile or above.</p>	<p>Reviewed annually by the BTH Department on the last BTH meeting - (4/18/16)</p>
Course discussions and student-peer critiques	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Revelation though OT and NT in light of the mission of God. 2) Biblical text & contemporary world 3) Biblical-theological analysis and doctrinal formulation 	<p>Throughout each course which uses discussions and peer critiques to evaluate student learning</p>	<p>Use of critique rubrics. Faculty trained in use of rubrics. BTH faculty members review the results of student/peer critiques to assess weaknesses and strengths in the evaluation process...</p>	<p>Performance at the 84 percentile or above.</p>	<p>Reviewed annually by the BTH Department on the last BTH meeting - (4/18/16)</p>
Theological Studies Seminar and Paper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Revelation through OT & NT in light of mission of God 2) Biblical text & contemporary world 3) Biblical-theological analysis and doctrinal formulation 4) Contemporary challenges to historic Christian faith 5) Major Issues and key figures in 5) Church History & theology in light of the mission of God 6) historical trends and doctrine within Pentecostalism 7) Evaluate methods and approaches to biblical interpretation 8) Biblical-theological foundations, critique and 	<p>In the summative seminar course which uses a masters-level thesis to evaluate student learning</p>	<p>Use of grading rubric for the Theological Studies Seminar Paper. BTH Faculty trained in use of evaluation rubric for the Theological Studies seminar paper. BTH faculty members review hi/mid/lo samples of student work to maintain consistency.</p>	<p>Performance at the 84 percentile or above.</p>	<p>Reviewed annually by the BTH faculty on the last BTH meeting - (4/18/16)³</p>

³ Collective analysis by the BTH department will also be conducted during the first BTH departmental meeting in September – the exact date TBA

	application to ministry contexts				
MATS Program Portfolio	1) Revelation through OT & NT in light of mission of God 2) Biblical text & contemporary world 3) Biblical-theological analysis and doctrinal formulation	At the end of the MATS program to evaluate student learning	BTH Faculty are responsible for the design of the MATS Program Manual, its contents and rubrics for assessing achievement of MATS Program goals and learning outcomes. The cumulative results of the evaluation is presented and discussed in the department at the beginning of each year with insights and recommendations	Performance at the 84 percentile or above.	Reviewed annually by the BTH faculty on the last BTH meeting - (4/18/16) ⁴

1. The MATS assessment is an on-going process conducted throughout the school calendar year and should begin with the first meeting of the departmental faculty in the Fall Semester of 2016 (usually in September the date TBA).
2. The BTH Department Chair will present the data gathered from the various instruments of assessment prepared for the Graduate Program Review by the BTH faculty in all facets of assessment of the MATS program at the first meeting of the departmental faculty in the Fall Semester, 2016. This will include:
 - a. The data assembled from the 2015 BTH departmental report of Student Learning Outcomes (hereafter SLO)
 - b. Review the composite report of all BTH faculty teaching students in the MATS program along with the chart, "2015 SLO Assessment Data of the MATS Program: Assessment Tools." The department should ask:
 - i. Does this data measure our effectiveness in meeting SLOs through the assessment tools being used?
 - ii. Is there something more we would want to know, and how can we acquire that data?
 - c. The data gleaned from the most recent Theological Studies Seminar (Railey – Spring of 2015) for which we have a resident class. In particular, observations and especially conclusions drawn by the faculty professor should be noted. See Appendix F – "Assessment Report to the BTH Department Regarding the 2015 MATS Graduates."
 - d. The department should ask:
 - i. Is there evidence of neglect with regard to any of the MATS student learning outcomes related to program goals?
 - ii. Were concerns raised by the previous evaluations addressed in subsequent course offerings, and is there evidence of remedy or improvement?
3. Collectively the department will establish a schedule for reviewing the data and afterwards to make recommendations for change if/as needed.

⁴ Collective analysis by the BTH department will also be conducted during the first BTH departmental meeting in September – the exact date TBA

4. Individual assignments can be handed out to faculty members to facilitate the review process, assessment and recommendations for a Performance Improvement Plan.
5. After a collective analysis of those recommendations by departmental faculty, a recommended list of actions steps should be written out, prioritized and a projected timetable of dates for implementation be assigned.
6. The plan should include recommendations for indirect, self-reported assessment procedures as well as performance, direct assessment measures.

Performance Improvement Plan:

1. The BTH Department Chair will present the data gathered from the various instruments of assessment at the first meeting of the departmental faculty in the Fall Semester.
2. Collectively the department will establish a schedule for reviewing the data and afterwards to make recommendations for change if needed.
3. Individual assignments can be handed out to faculty members to facilitate the review process, assessment and recommendations for a Performance Improvement Plan.
4. After a collective analysis of those recommendations by departmental faculty, a recommended list of actions steps should be written out, prioritized and scheduled with dates to be accomplished.
5. The plan should include recommendations for indirect, self-reported assessment procedures as well as performance, direct assessment measures.

VII. Findings

The MATS program goals and SLOs have been assessed through our curricula assessment tools described in the MATS Assessment Plan chart which matches the major types/categories of assessment tools with the SLOs. Moreover, each BTH faculty member teaching courses in the MATS Program was asked to conduct a study and analysis of the success each type of assessment tools in achieving their SLOs. In May, the BTH Department presented the following report “Review of Student Learning for the 2015 Calendar Year Courses.”

Bible Theology Department May – 2016

The Bible Theology Department (BTH) of AGTS oversees the curriculum of one Master’s program (MATS) and one doctoral program (Ph.D.) The Ph.D. in Biblical Theology and Interpretation is a stand-alone program with its own distinct delivery system and curriculum that warrants its own separate review. This portion of the Graduate Program Review will deal with the MATS program. In its April 18, 2016 departmental meeting, BTH reviewed the student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment data that it compiled for the MATS program. The following narrative describes the process and findings of the SLO assessment.

Masters of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.)

The AGTS M.A.T.S. is a 48 credit-hour degree program with a potential 9 hours of advanced standing based on appropriate coursework in a strong undergraduate religious program. The full program (See Appendix A for full curriculum description) would include 10 core classes or 30 credits in the MATS program: 9 credits in Christian History and Missiology, 15 credits in Bible and Theology, 6 credits in Theological Research and Writing including the capstone Theological Studies Seminar. A total of (14) students (unduplicated headcount) in the M.A.T.S. degree program took one or more of these courses

Table 1.1 Core course offerings in the M.A.T.S. Program for 2015

Bible/Theology Core	History/Missiology Core	Theological Research	Summative Project
BIB 532 Hermeneutics BNT 530 NT Introduction BOT 530 OT Introduction THE 531 Systematic Theology I THE 532 Systematic Theology II	BTH 501 Mission of God HIS 556 World Christianity I HIS 557 World Christianity II	RES 531 Theological Research and Writing BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar.	BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS 646 – Theological Studies Seminar Paper and MATS Portfolio

Using the SLO Assessment Plan for the M.A.T.S. degree program (see Appendix B), the BTH Department reviewed the student coursework used for each of the 10 courses noted in Table 1.1. A summary of this data is provided in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2 2015 SLO assessment data for the M.A.T.S. degree program

	Summative Projects	Course Discussions and peer critiques	Research Papers	Course Exams	Theological Studies Seminar and Paper	MATS Program Portfolio
Total Assessments	21	11	28	32	2	2
Total Students	45	22	33	41	6	6
(84% or >)	90%	90.9%	96.4%	85.7%	100%	100%

Based on this data, the BTH Committee came to a consensus agreement on the following observations:

1. The success of SLOs are clearly being met by the BTH faculty in the MATS program. None of the Learning Outcomes in the MATS Program are being neglected.
2. In some cases, more precise data could be provided by tracking which assessment tools (i.e., course assignments) are *most* effective for accomplishing which specific learning outcome, rather than a collective profile by category of assessment tools. E.g., summative projects can include a wide range of assignments: critical book reviews,

reflection essays, article or sermon critiques and analyses etc. However, the assessment process would be enhanced by looking to find correlation between specific learning outcomes and assessment tools and the requirements of those assessment instruments/tools.

Listed below is a comprehensive summary of the findings of the department's collective analysis based on data provided by the assessment tools reference within the summary:

- 1. Discuss the flow of biblical revelation through the Old and New Testaments, especially as it relates to the redemptive mission of God's people throughout the world.**
 - *Covered amply in the curriculum design which includes a biblical theological survey of the entire biblical canon and an application to how the mission of God is has been pursued historically and is now being pursued within a global perspective.*
 - *Courses that meet this goal would be Systematic Theology I and II, World Christianity I and II, Missions, and electives in both the OT and NT.*

- 2. Construct an interpretive paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.**
 - *All assessments demonstrate that this SLO is being adequately met in courses that require critical theological and hermeneutical reflection and relevance.*
 - *Success in assessment tools (research papers/essays and the theological studies seminar paper) that demand this competency have a very high level percentage of success rate. See Appendix E (MATS 2015 SLO assessment tools).*

- 3. Demonstrate an ability extract and construct the biblical teaching on a given topic or doctrine that respects the progress of revelation within the biblical canon and employs sound principles of biblical interpretation.**
 - *This SLO is largely achieved through courses in Systematic Theology, Hermeneutics and Biblical Studies electives.*
 - *One poignant concern raised a graduate stakeholder was the absence of theological reflection from the Pentecostal tradition.*

- 4. Analyze contemporary socio-cultural challenges from society and construct biblically informed, relevant responses to those challenges that are faithful to historic Christian faith.**
 - *Specifically courses that deal with a synthesis of biblical teaching (Systematic Theology) and its historical development (World Christianity) are meeting this SLO at a high level of success.*
 - *However, as noted in Appendix F (Assessment Report from 2015 BTH 646 Seminar), the knowledge of historical development and the engagement of historical interpretation are still not being satisfactorily integrated in theological reflection.*

5. Identify and discuss the major issues and key figures in church history, biblical interpretation and theology in light of the mission of God.

- *This SLO is primarily addressed in classes on World Christianity, but overlaps with the unit on historical schools of interpretation in Hermeneutics.*
- *As stated in SLO #3, there is a place here to integrate the prominent figures in the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions, especially as that tradition plays a prominent role in advancing the global missionary evangelism and church planting in the 20th century.*

6. Explain the historical trends and doctrines of Pentecostalism, and assess their contribution to theological developments both past and present.

- *This SLO can find achievement in several courses that deal with interpretation in the 20th century such as HIS/MHT 557 World Christianity II, but also PCS (Pentecostal Charismatic Studies) electives.*
- *However, given the concern (#3 above) to declare more prominently our Pentecostal distinctive, the BTH department may want to explore how that might be accomplished (e.g., rewriting the SLOs or course objectives in our syllabi, etc.)*

7. Critique the various methods and critical approaches to biblical interpretation of both the Old and New Testaments and assess their positive contributions and limitations for biblical exegesis.

- *OT and NT Introduction classes target this SLO with emphasis, but is also included in select OT and NT electives in biblical texts that require critique of critical approaches to biblical interpretation. Hermeneutics will also include a survey of critical approaches to biblical interpretation in its unit on the history of biblical interpretation.*
- *In response to an apparent weakness to engage and critique the history of interpretation as demonstrated in the Theological Studies Seminar (See Appendix F), departmental faculty may want to expose students in the MATS program with models that do the above with excellence and acumen.*

8. Seek to apply biblical/theological foundations and critique to current ministry practices within specific ministry contexts.

- *BTH/MHT Mission of God in Biblical and Contemporary Contexts targets this SLO directly. Dr. DeLonn Rance reports that in 2015 he had three MATS students who took that class.⁵ All three successfully achieved the SLOs for this class with an 84% or higher.*
- *Depending on the topic chosen this SLO could specifically be targeted in BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar. This SLO would fall under MATS Program Goal #2 (“The MATS program has prepared the student to be able to formulate a paradigm for bridging the horizons between the ancient biblical text and the contemporary world.”)*

⁵ While ten students took the course MHTM 501 only three were MATS students. There were three students in the M.Div. program, three in the MACM program, and 1 student in the ICS program.

According to the report from the 2015 report to the BTH Department the students in Theological Studies Seminar (See Appendix F)

VIII. Recommendations (based on assessment findings)

MATS Performance Improvement Plan

Data gleaned and analyzed from the 2015 Theological Studies Seminar producing the MATS Seminar Paper and Portfolio, the following observations and recommendations can be made:

Observations:

1. The data gleaned from the 2015 Theological Studies Seminar (See Appendix –F “Assessment Report to the Bible Theology Department”) shows that the MATS Program Objectives and SLOs are being achieved at a commendable level and that overall satisfaction with the program is high.
2. The quality of writing in the seminar paper continues to be a concern.
 - a. The mechanics of writing need to be emphasized along with proofreading
 - b. Organization of the paper needs to express logical development and the writing clarity and cogency of thought.
3. Not all students understand what materials to include in the MATS Portfolio, even though the requirement is specified in the manual.

Recommendations:

1. More time and attention should be given to what constitutes a good paper and exemplary papers provided for review and discussion in class.
2. The same as above is needed for the contents of a commendable MATS Program Portfolio.
3. Considerable time should be given to peer and professorial review and critique of the *rough draft* of the paper.

Action Items (additional – to be determined collectively by the BTH Department)

1. After a collective analysis of those recommendations by departmental faculty, a recommended list of actions steps should be written out, prioritized and scheduled with dates to be accomplished.
2. The plan should include recommendations for indirect, self-reported assessment procedures as well as performance, direct assessment measures.