

ADMISSION

Overview

A seminary education provides excellent training for the ministry, regardless of a student's prior undergraduate or graduate experience. Students who have not yet completed their undergraduate degree should pursue theological studies with a strong emphasis in liberal arts. A broad, comprehensive college education will provide an edge during seminary years and also with the responsibilities associated with a ministry calling.

Pre-Seminary Studies

Function of Pre-Seminary Studies

College courses prior to theological seminary should provide the cultural and intellectual foundations essential to an effective theological education.

1. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in the ability to use certain tools of an educated person:
 - a. The ability to write and speak English clearly and correctly. English composition should have this as a specific purpose, but this purpose should also be cultivated in all written work. Coursework in speech will aid significantly.
 - b. The ability to think clearly. In some persons this ability is cultivated through courses in philosophy or logic. In others, it is cultivated by the use of scientific methods or by dealing with critical problems in connection with literary and historical documents.
 - c. The ability to read at least one foreign language and, in some circumstances, more than one.
2. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in increased understanding of the world in three areas:
 - a. The world of ideas includes knowledge of English literature, philosophy, and psychology.
 - b. The world of nature is provided by knowledge of the natural sciences, including laboratory work.
 - c. The world of human affairs is aided by knowledge of history and the social sciences.
3. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in a sense of achievement:
 - a. The degree of mastery of a field of study is more important than the credits and grades received.
 - b. The sense of achievement may be encouraged through academic concentration, through honors work, or other plans for increasingly independent work with as much initiative from the student as they can muster with profit.

Subjects in Pre-Seminary Study

The student's work should be evaluated on the basis of mastery of the fields rather than in terms of semester hours or credits. Students are encouraged to take three-fourths of their college work in the following specific areas, depending on their interests and abilities:

- **English** – language, composition, and literature
- **Speech** – fundamentals, argumentation, group communication, persuasion, oral interpretation, and drama
- **History** – ancient, modern European, American, and non-Western cultures
- **Philosophy** – orientation in history, content, and method
- **Natural Sciences** – the physical and life sciences
- **Foreign Language** – one or more of the following linguistic avenues to human thought and tools of scholarly research: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German, and French, with Greek especially recommended.

Admission 2

Students who anticipate postgraduate studies are urged to undertake these disciplines early in their training.

- **Religion or Christianity** – biblical studies, together with an introduction to the major religious traditions and theological problems

It is possible to include many other elements in one's college studies while building an adequate foundation for seminary studies. The aim is to prepare persons who understand the world and have developed the ability to communicate the Word of God effectively to that world. Students who have completed college work and have not followed these suggestions are still urged to apply to seminary if God is prompting such action.

If there is reason to doubt the validity of the high school diploma, transcript, or recognized equivalent, Bethel University will follow its procedures to verify completion of high school, recognized equivalent of a high school diploma, or college coursework.