

## **Certificate Chaplaincy Studies**

### **Description**

The CTS Certificate in Chaplaincy Studies is an 18-credit program designed to prepare participants for compassionate and competent spiritual care in diverse settings such as hospitals, prisons, the military, and community contexts. Integrating theological education, pastoral formation, and clinical skill development, the program equips students with the depth and practical tools needed for professional chaplaincy.

Through a combination of theological, interfaith, pastoral, and clinically informed courses, students cultivate reflective practice, cultural humility, trauma awareness, and counseling skills for ministry in complex care environments. The certificate also provides a strong foundation for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and pathways toward board certification.

Grounded in the expertise of faculty experienced in theology, counseling, and applied ministry, the program forms leaders who can offer thoughtful, justice-oriented, and contextually responsive spiritual care.

### **Targeted Audience**

The CTS Certificate in Chaplaincy Studies is designed for:

- Ministers and clergy seeking preparation for chaplaincy in healthcare, correctional, military, or community settings
- Professionals in care-based fields (e.g., healthcare workers, counselors, social workers) who wish to integrate spiritual care into their practice
- Individuals preparing to enter Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) as part of their pathway toward board certification in chaplaincy
- Graduates of theology or ministry programs who are not currently enrolled in a degree program but seek specialized training in chaplaincy
- Community and nonprofit leaders engaged in pastoral, spiritual, or trauma-informed care

**Format:** Synchronous hybrid/blended online or in-person

**Credits:** 18 credits

**Prerequisites:** None. Prerequisites may be established or revised through standard institutional curriculum review and approval processes.

**Transfer Policy:** Upon approval, a maximum of 6 credits may be transferred toward the certificate program. Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is not eligible for transfer credit. All transfer credits must meet CTS institutional transfer requirements and are reviewed on a case-by-

case basis, subject to approval by the Dean. Eligible coursework must be graduate-level, completed at an accredited institution, and directly relevant to the certificate curriculum.

Rationale: Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is a supervised clinical formation experience central to chaplaincy identity development and professional readiness. This certificate program is intentionally designed to provide a structured and integrated pathway that prepares students for CPE and advanced clinical training, or further deepens existing competencies, through theological study, counseling skills, interfaith competence, and applied pastoral formation.

Because CPE is highly experiential, site-dependent, and varies in its emphasis on theological integration across training contexts, it is not accepted as transfer credit. Recommending CPE during or after the program ensures a consistent formation sequence aligned with program learning outcomes and expectations for professional chaplaincy readiness.

**Program Completion Policy:** Upon approval, students have a maximum of three years in which to complete their respective Certificate, with extensions possible by petition.

### **Admissions and General Requirements**

A bachelor's degree (B.A. or equivalent) from an accredited institution is required. Preference will be given to applicants with prior graduate theological education and/or relevant ministry or professional experience in care settings. Applicants are expected to demonstrate readiness for graduate-level theological and clinical work, typically evidenced by such prior study and/or significant experience.

The certificate requires completion of 18 total credits (12 required and 6 elective), with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5.

### **Rationale**

Pastoral leaders today are serving in an increasingly complex ministry context shaped by the long-term effects of COVID-19, social disruption, trauma, and rapid cultural change. These realities have intensified the demands on clergy and exposed significant gaps in traditional theological education, particularly in areas such as trauma, addiction, moral injury, and crisis-informed care.

At the same time, professionals, clergy, and community leaders are increasingly seeking to be better equipped to serve as "spiritual first responders" in hospitals, prisons, military settings, and community organizations. This expansion highlights the need to prepare clergy, professionals, and community-based leaders for spiritual care across diverse contexts.

In response, the Chaplaincy Studies Certificate Program aims to prepare participants for theologically grounded, clinically informed, and culturally responsive spiritual care. As a structured professional and vocational pathway, the program supports preparation for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and eventual board certification, while also enhancing career development, supporting bi-vocational ministry, and strengthening existing professional roles.

The program is also valuable for chaplains who want to deepen theological reflection on their practice, refresh or expand clinical competencies, transition into new settings (hospital, military, or community care), or move toward—or strengthen readiness for—board certification. In this way, the program expands vocational pathways and contributes to the long-term sustainability of pastoral and community leadership. This certificate equips leaders to meet contemporary spiritual and pastoral care needs with depth, adaptability, and professional competence.

### Learning Outcomes

- Analyze and integrate biblical, theological, interfaith, and counseling frameworks in order to provide contextually appropriate spiritual care within healthcare, institutional, and community settings.
- Evaluate ethical, cultural, and systemic dynamics in diverse care environments and demonstrate professional judgment consistent with chaplaincy standards, interdisciplinary collaboration, and pathways toward CPE and board certification.
- Design and implement spiritually grounded, evidence-informed care interventions that reflect advanced counseling skills, cultural humility, and theological reflection in interfaith and pluralistic contexts.

### **THEOLOGY AND PASTORAL ARTS (12 credits) -- REQUIRED**

- THEO PXXX: Introduction to Chaplaincy Studies (3 credits)
- THEO P500 Pastoral Care and Counseling (3 credits)
- THEO B501 Hebrew Bible or THEO B502 New Testament (3 credits) or THEO T500 Introduction to Theology – 3 credits
- THEO T550 Global Wisdoms or Interfaith Collaboration (Distributed)\* (3 credits)
  - THEO C585: Interfaith Collaboration: Interfaith Engagement (3 credits)
  - THEO C580: Interfaith Collaboration: Intro to World Religions (3 credits)
  - THEO T641: Interfaith Collaboration: Jewish Christian Dialogue (3 credits)

### **COUNSELING (6 credits) -- ELECTIVES**

- \_\_\_\_\_ (3 credits)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (3 credits)

#### Courses to Choose From:

- COUN P510: Counseling Theories, Psychotherapy, and Personality (3 credits)
- COUN P511: Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships (3 credits)
- COUN P512: Foundations and Contextual Dimensions of Mental Health Counseling (3 credits)
- COUN P525: Aging and the Family
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- COUN P535: Ethical and Professional Issues in Clinical Practice

- COUN P531: Personality, Human Development, and Faith (3 credits)
- COUN P619: Sexuality, Gender, and Culture
- COUN P635: Ethical and Professional Systems Issues in Clinical Practice (3 credits)
- COUN P646: Family and Larger Systems

**Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE):** Students entering the certificate program may have already completed CPE. For those who have not, to further deepen their knowledge and skills, students are strongly encouraged to complete CPE at an ACPE-accredited Clinical Pastoral Education program, either concurrently through an approved institution or following completion of the certificate program.

### **Enrollment Model: Cohort Pathway**

The Certificate in Chaplaincy Studies is designed to be offered as a **cohort-based learning format**. Students are encouraged to enter the program beginning January 1, 2027, as part of a structured cohort of approximately 8–12 students to support formation, peer learning, and vocational integration.

### **Cohort Structure**

- Students begin the certificate together in a designated start term (e.g., January, Spring, Summer, Fall)
- Required courses are sequenced to allow for shared progression through the curriculum
- The cohort completes the 18-credit program over an established timeframe (typically 3 years, depending on course delivery)

### **Proposed Sequence Entering Class January 2027 -- First Cohort**

E- January Week Intensive 2027:	Introduction to Chaplaincy Studies -- 3 credits
E- Spring Semester 2027	Counseling Course -- 3 credits (pending which one)
O-Fall Semester 2027	Pastoral Care and Counseling -- 3 credits (Tuesday evenings)
O-Spring Semester 2028	New Testament (Tuesday evenings) -- 3 credits
E-Fall Semester 2029	Global Wisdoms -- 3credits (Thursday evenings) -- 3 credits
E- Spring Semester 2029	Counseling Course -- 3 credits (pending which one)

## Proposed Sequence Entering Class January 2029 -- Second Cohort

O-January Week Intensive 2028:	Introduction to Chaplaincy Studies -- 3 credits
O-Spring Semester 2028	Intro to Pastoral Care and Counseling (Tuesday evening) -- 3 credits
E-Fall Semester 2028	Counseling Course -- 3 credits (pending which one)
E-Spring Semester 2029	Counseling Course -- 3 credits (pending which one)
O-Fall Semester 2030	Interfaith Collaboration -- 3credits (Thursday evening) -- 3 credits
O-Spring Semester 2031	Introduction to Hebrew Bible (Tuesday evening) -- 3 credits

**Advising Guidelines for Certificates and Non-CTS Students:** Advisors are responsible for clearly communicating program structure, limitations, and outcomes for certificate seekers and students not formally enrolled in CTS degree programs. Advising should be more targeted, eligibility-focused, and policy-sensitive. **Certificate Advisor:** Dr. Christina Davis for advising and program guidance -- CDavis@cts.edu

- Whether courses must be taken within a defined timeframe
- Whether incomplete or interrupted progress affects certificate eligibility

### 5. Financial Implications

- Cost per credit or per course for non-CTS students
- Whether financial aid, scholarships, or institutional aid applies (often limited or unavailable for non-degree students)
- Additional fees for non-degree enrollment
- Clarification that certificate credits may not be covered by traditional degree-based aid packages

### 6. Enrollment and Declaration Process

- How to attain an CTS ID, email address, and login steps
- Registration procedures for non-CTS students (including any separate application systems)
- Deadlines, enrollment windows, and capacity limitations

### 7. Academic Policies (Adjusted Scope)

- Minimum grade requirements for certificate completion
- Transfer credit acceptance (often limited or case-by-case)
- Academic standing expectations for non-degree students
- Whether CTS academic policies fully apply to non-CTS students or only in part

### **8. Career, Vocational, and Ministry Outcomes**

- Practical application of certificate learning (ministry, vocational, continuing education)
- Whether the certificate is recognized by partner organizations or denominations
- Internships, practicums, or field components (if applicable)

### **9. Risks and Considerations (More Emphasized for Non-CTS Students)**

- Limited transferability of credits to other institutions
- Financial investment without degree completion pathway unless explicitly planned
- Scheduling constraints for part-time or external learners
- Potential misunderstanding of certificate vs. degree value

### **10. Documentation and Compliance**

Advisors should:

- Document advising conversations clearly, especially eligibility and limitations discussed
- Note status clearly (CTS degree student vs. non-degree/visiting student)
- Ensure acknowledgment that students understand certificate scope and limitations

### **Further Information:**

Board Certification Competencies

- Pastoral/spiritual assessment
- Interfaith spiritual care
- Self-reflection and use of self in care
- Group process and peer feedback