

Certificate

United Methodist Studies

Description

The United Methodist Studies Certificate provides non-CTS students with a focused grounding in the theology, history, polity, and practices of the United Methodist tradition. Rooted in the Wesleyan theological heritage, this certificate prepares students for leadership in Methodist contexts by engaging core doctrinal commitments, ecclesial structures, and the practices of discipleship, evangelism, and mission. The certificate serves those seeking ordination to the United Methodist Church from another denomination as well as current ministry practitioners seeking graduate-level theological education to deepen and advance their vocational practice.

Targeted Audience

The UM Studies Certificate is designed for:

- Individuals seeking ordination or candidacy within the United Methodist Church who require formal grounding in Wesleyan theology, history, and polity
- Ministers and clergy from other denominations discerning a call to serve within United Methodist contexts
- Current ministry practitioners seeking graduate-level theological education to deepen their understanding of the United Methodist tradition and strengthen their vocational practice
- Lay leaders and church leaders serving in United Methodist congregations who desire advanced formation in theology, discipleship, evangelism, and mission
- Students and professionals seeking structured preparation for leadership roles within United Methodist ecclesial settings

Format: Synchronous hybrid/blended online or in-person

Note: Students pursuing ordination in the United Methodist Church must register for in-person classes per UMC University Senate guidelines.

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. All transfer credits must meet CTS's institutional transfer requirements and are subject to review on a case-by-case basis with approval by the Dean. Eligible coursework

must be graduate-level, completed at an accredited institution, and directly relevant to the certificate curriculum.

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

The United Methodist Studies Certificate responds to the growing need for structured, graduate-level formation in Wesleyan theology, history, polity, and practice among individuals preparing for leadership in United Methodist contexts. As the United Methodist Church continues to navigate significant theological, ecclesial, and cultural transitions, there is increasing demand for clergy, candidates for ordination, and ministry practitioners who are theologically grounded in the distinctive commitments of the Wesleyan tradition and equipped to engage contemporary challenges in discipleship, evangelism, and mission.

This certificate provides a coherent academic pathway for those seeking ordination in the United Methodist Church from other denominational backgrounds, as well as for current ministers, lay leaders, and ministry professionals seeking to deepen and refine their vocational practice within Methodist ecclesial settings. It also supports individuals completing University Senate educational requirements for ordination by offering targeted coursework in theology, history, polity, and mission.

Rooted in CTS's commitment to rigorous theological education and ministerial formation, the program integrates academic study with practical engagement in ministry contexts. In doing so, it equips leaders to serve faithfully and effectively within the United Methodist tradition while addressing the evolving needs of congregations and the broader church in a rapidly changing religious landscape.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the United Methodist Studies Certificate, participants will be able to:

- **Analyze and articulate** the theological foundations of the United Methodist tradition, including Wesleyan doctrine, ecclesiology, and key historical developments, in relation to contemporary ministry contexts.
- **Interpret and apply** United Methodist polity, practices, and disciplinary structures to ministerial leadership, congregational life, and pathways toward ordination.
- **Integrate** Wesleyan theological commitments with practices of discipleship, evangelism, and mission in order to design contextually responsive and theologically grounded ministry strategies.

THEOLOGY AND MINISTERIAL FORMATION (12 credits)

- THEO M6XX: Methodist Theology and Doctrine — 3 credits**
- THEO M6XX: United Methodist History and Polity — 3 credits**
- THEO 6XX: Mission of the Church in Post-Christendom — 3 credits**
- THEO 6XX: Evangelism in a Secular Age — 3 credits**

ELECTIVES (6credits)

- _____ (3 credits)
- _____ (3 credits)

Elective Courses (Choose 6 Credits)

Students select two electives (6 credits) from the CTS M.Div. required course offerings to complement their core coursework. These electives may be any combination of courses and may be used either to fulfill outstanding University Senate requirements for United Methodist ordination (e.g., Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Church History, Worship/Liturgy) or to deepen a current ministry interest or practice area. Prerequisites may apply and must be completed prior to enrollment. Students pursuing UMC ordination should consult with their Board of Ordained Ministry and the program director to ensure selected electives meet remaining BGTS requirements.

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. Lane Davis for advising and program guidance -- LDavis@cts.edu.