

Assessment Map for Master of Theological Studies

JURY July 2025

ATS Degree Program Goals for Standard D Degrees – The goals an institution adopts for these degree programs should include the attainment of a survey knowledge of various theological disciplines, or focused knowledge in a specific discipline, or interdisciplinary knowledge. Achievement of student learning outcomes for these degrees shall contribute to meeting these programmatic goals. The MTS is under Standard 4.8

Student Learning Outcome #1: Students will demonstrate biblical, theological, and historical knowledge.

Alignment to Mission Statement: Proclamation and Mission

Measures (means of program assessment)	Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)	Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester	Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)
<u>Direct Measure</u> MTSA6100 Summative Assessment (Core Exam): First Attempts ➤ Disaggregate questions for the following disciplines: OT 1&2, NT 1&2, Systematic Theology 1&2, Church History 1&2, and Baptist Heritage.	70% of students correctly answer 70% or above of disaggregated questions on the first attempt.	Percentage of total Students (19) during the measuring period (Spring 23 to Fall 24) who correctly answered 70% or above of disaggregated questions on the first attempt: ➤ Baptist Heritage: 89% ➤ Old Testament: 95% ➤ New Testament: 100% ➤ History of Christianity: 95% ➤ Systematic Theology: 84%	1. Set new Direct-Measure baseline for assessment: 85% 2. Dr. Riley will evaluate the Summative Assessment questions for Baptist Heritage to determine whether the focus of the test is facts/dates/names or Baptist distinctives. Update test to reflect emphasis of Baptist Heritage as currently offered. In other words, focus on what students need to walk away from when taking Baptist Heritage 3. Dr. Riley (program director) and Dr. Harwood (DAD for T&H) will encourage teachers of Baptist Heritage to highlight what it means to be Baptist, Baptist distinctives, and why being Baptist matters.

		Data of Exam score average for all students disaggregated by Academic Discipline and Semester: <u>Spring 2023</u> OT: 75 NT: 77.94 Church History:77.50 Systematic Theology:77.08 → Total Average Disaggregated: 76.88 → Total average for all exam questions: 77 Percentage of Students who correctly answered 70% or above of disaggregated questions on the first attempt: ➤ Baptist Heritage: 75% ➤ Old Testament: 100% ➤ New Testament: 100% ➤ History of Christianity: 100% ➤ Systematic Theology: 75% <u>Summer 2023</u> OT: 94.12 NT: 97.06 Church History: 95 Systematic Theology: 85.42 → Total Average Disaggregated: 92.9 → Total average for all exam questions: 85 Percentage of Students who correctly answered 70% or above	4. Set new Indirect Measure benchmark for assessment: new baseline: 4.5
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		of disaggregated questions on the first attempt: ➤ Baptist Heritage: 100% ➤ Old Testament: 100% ➤ New Testament: 100% ➤ History of Christianity: 100% ➤ Systematic Theology: 100% <u>Fall 2023</u> Baptist Heritage: 82.5 OT: 85 NT: 85 Church History: 92.5 Systematic Theology: 85 → Total Average Disaggregated: 86 → Total average for all exam questions: 83.66 Percentage of Students who correctly answered 70% or above of disaggregated questions on the first attempt: ➤ Baptist Heritage: 100% ➤ Old Testament: 100% ➤ New Testament: 100% ➤ History of Christianity: 100% ➤ Systematic Theology: 100% <u>Spring 2024</u> Baptist Heritage: 72.5 OT: 80 NT: 90 Church History: 90 Systematic Theology: 83.75 → Total Average Disaggregated: 83.25	
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		→ Total average for all exam questions: 84.67 Percentage of Students who correctly answered 70% or above of disaggregated questions on the first attempt: ➤ Baptist Heritage: 75% ➤ Old Testament: 100% ➤ New Testament: 100% ➤ History of Christianity: 100% ➤ Systematic Theology: 100% <u>Fall 2024</u> Baptist Heritage: 76 OT: 96 NT: 88 Church History: 72 Systematic Theology: 88 → Total Average Disaggregated: 84 → Total average for all exam questions: 83.8 Percentage of Students who correctly answered 70% or above of disaggregated questions on the first attempt: ➤ Baptist Heritage: 100% ➤ Old Testament: 100% ➤ New Testament: 100%	
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		➤ History of Christianity: 100% ➤ Systematic Theology: 100% ----- Spring 2023: <u>4.53</u> Fall 2023: <u>5</u> Spring 2024: <u>4.33</u> Fall 2024: <u>4.25</u>	
----- <u>Indirect Measure</u> ATS Graduate Student Questionnaire: ➤ Q18f: Knowledge of church doctrine and history	----- New metrics due to questionnaire changes		

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REFLECTION ON RESULT FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME 1:

- Following the MDiv Revision (August 9, 2023), the MTS was revised to include the MDiv core. The degree, however, is still a knowledge-based degree that emphasizes T&H and Biblical Studies courses.
- The program has maintained consistent, viable enrollment numbers.

- Although the data from the Summative Assessment Exam indicates that two disciplines could be targeted for improvement, the jury chose an action plan to improve outcomes in Baptist Heritage because it showed low scores more consistently. Additionally, Baptist Heritage is newer to the degree program, added after the MDiv Revision, and has, therefore, not yet been assessed.
- The action plan that most directly addresses the student improvement regarding Program Outcome 1 encourages teachers of Baptist Heritage to highlight what it means to be Baptist, what distinguishes Baptists, and why being Baptist matters. The jury thinks that retention of knowledge regarding Baptist distinctives best reflects student development in line with the mission of NOBTS. As such, professors should be encouraged to emphasize what it means to be Baptist and why it matters, while at the same time not neglecting historical facts and figures, which are so important for students to know in order to stand in the Baptist tradition.
- The indirect measure is new to the MTS program assessment since the 2023 assessment of the degree program. Data is now available to set a baseline metric. The jury expects the action plans to have a positive effect on the indirect measure.

Student Learning Outcome #2: Students will communicate their understanding of cultural and historical contexts.

Alignment to Mission Statement: Proclamation

Measures (means of program assessment)	Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)	Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester	Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)
<u>Direct Measure</u> Embedded Assignment for Christian Ethics ➤ Write a letter of Christian counsel addressing an ethical issue: Write a letter to a young believer (spiritual age, not necessarily physical age) who is struggling with how to relate to a friend who practices homosexuality or has strong same sex attractions. The friend makes statements like, "I believe Jesus is real and he died for me and all that, but I don't understand how he could make it a sin for me to be a homosexual when I honestly can't help it." ➤ Measures from Embedded Assignment Rubrics	3.10 out of 4.0	<u>Average Total for Spring 23-Fall 24: 3.19</u> Spring 2023: 3.24 Defend: 3.6 Online: 2.87 Summer 2023: 3.26 Online: 3.26 Fall 2023: 3.1 Online: 3.1 Spring 2024: 2.71 Defend: 2.87 Online: 2.54 ➤ KTI: No Data Summer 2024: No Data ➤ Prison (Angola): availability hampered due to prison policy Fall 2024: 3.28 Campus: 3.27 Online: 2.30 Clinton: 3.53 N. Ga. Hybrid: 4.0 ➤ KTI: No data	1. Set new benchmark for Direct Measure: 3.20 2. Dr. Riley, as the developer of the Online Christian Ethics course, which houses the embedded assignment, will develop a video to include in all online Christian Ethics Canvas shells that addresses the importance of communicating the content of Christian ethics faithfully, virtuously, appropriately, and contextually. 3. Dr. Riley will invite others who teach Christian ethics to address good, contextually appropriate ways to communicate a Christian position on ethical issues. 4. Dr. Riley will instruct the Office of Distance Learning, under the direction of Dr. Browning, to work with the prisons and those teaching ethics in the prisons to secure embedded assignments at the end of the semesters it is taught and in accordance with prison policy.

<u>Indirect Measure</u> Student Evaluations for Christian Ethics: ➤ Question 2: “The content of this course expanded my knowledge and skills in this area of study.”	New metrics due to changes in <i>NOBTS Course & Instructor Evaluation</i>	Spring 2023 #2 4.8 Fall 2023 #2 4.6 Spring 2024 #2 4.9 4.7 4.3 4.6 Fall 2024 #2 4.7 4.4 4.6 <u>Reflection on Results:</u> For the Direct Measure: The Benchmark of 3.1 was met or exceeded 4 out of 5 semesters that data was available. Overall, for the period measured, the	5. Dr. Riley will communicate and work with Dr. Bong Choi at KTI to ensure that the Ethics embedded assignments are included, gathered, and evaluated in English according to the approved rubric. The embedded assignments should be submitted and available in Canvas, though the assignments will be written in Korean. 6. Dr. Riley will also communicate and work with Dr. Fabio Castellanos, Director of Spanish Online Education, to ensure that the Ethics embedded assignments are included and uploaded to Canvas, gathered, and evaluated in English when Ethics is offered in the Spanish Language Program. 7. Set new Indirect Measure benchmark for assessment: new baseline: 4.6
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		Benchmark was exceeded by .09 points. In the one semester that fell short of the benchmark, ethics was offered in Defend and Online. The average for the overall period for Defend and Online follows: • Defend: 3.24 • Online: 2.81 The overall average for Spring Semesters was 3.0 ➤ Students in online sections performed low overall on the Ethics embedded assignment, though the benchmark was met or exceeded 2 out of 5 semesters.	

REFLECTION ON RESULT FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME 2:

- Overall, the MTS students exceeded the benchmark set for the Embedded Assignment. Even so, students in online sections consistently underperformed (SP 24: 2.87 & FA 24: 2.30). Because ethics is a discipline in which students will engage culture, communicating a Christian moral position contextually, the jury thought it important to encourage those who teach ethics to instruct students of communicating ethical content accurately, faithfully, and with Christian character.
- Because the MTS course Assessment Map and the Christian Ethics Canvas shell changed after the degree program revisions, Dr. Riley will look closely to ensure that the Canvas shell for Christian Ethics reflects accurately the changes to the Degree program.

Student Learning Outcome #3: Students will demonstrate personal and spiritual maturity in their program.
Alignment to Mission Statement: Servanthood and Devotion

Measures (means of program assessment)	Criteria for Success (benchmark set last cycle)	Results (report, summarize, reflect)—disaggregate by location and semester	Use of Results (make action plan to reach criteria, set new criteria if needed, AND discuss success of previous cycle's action plans)
<u>Direct Measure</u> <i>Embedded Assignment for Discipleship & Spiritual Formation:</i> ➤ Personal Discipleship Map (0-4 rubric): Each student will create a creative and visual personal discipleship map that depicts spiritual formation and relationships. The map should include a biblical foundation for spiritual formation, personal spiritual disciplines/devotional practices, and engagement in relationships through mentoring and groups. ➤ Measures from embedded assignment rubric ----- <u>Indirect Measure</u> ATS Graduate Student Questionnaire: ➤ Q17o: "Strength of spiritual life"	The MDiv set a benchmark at 8.5 out of 10 for 2023 Data, which we adopted for the MTS going into this assessment. ----- New metrics due to questionnaire changes	Spring 2023: 7.97 Online: 7.97 Summer 2023: 6.86 Online: 6.86 Fall 2023: 9.53 Hybrid: 9.53 Spring 2024: 9.6 New Orleans: 9.6 Summer 2024 9.8 Mentor: 9.8 Fall 24: 10 New Orleans: 10 ----- Spring 2023, 4.5 Fall 2023, 4.17 Spring 2024, 5 Fall 2024, 4.25	1. Keep MDiv Benchmark for the embedded assignment at 8.5 2. Dr. Riley will invite Dr. Harwood (DAD for T&H) and Dr. Ray III (DAD for Biblical Studies) to address their respective divisions in meetings about the importance of personal and spiritual maturity, discuss in division meetings practices in classes that would promote personal and spiritual maturity. That they would encourage their faculty to incorporate such practices in their classes, such as promoting chapel attendance, beginning classes with short devotionals and prayer, inviting students to lead devotionals, etc. 3. Set new Indirect Measure benchmark for assessment: new baseline: 4.5

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REFLECTION ON RESULT FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME 3:

- The Embedded Assignment for Discipleship & Spiritual Formation is not housed in the T&H or Biblical Studies divisions but appropriately measures a demonstration of personal and spiritual maturity. All MTS students are required to take Discipleship and Spiritual Formation, which houses the embedded assignment.
- The first two semesters of data for the embedded assignment fell short of the benchmark. A previous assessment led the Christian Education faculty to provide examples of what a quality discipleship map entails. After providing examples, the average per semester for the assignment improved markedly.
- The jury discussed how the T&H and Biblical Studies courses in the degree program might foster spiritual and personal growth in MTS students.