



# GCS Goals and Objectives

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Grace Communion Seminary  
P.O. Box 5005  
(2011 E. Financial Way)  
Glendora, California 91740

**GCS Mission:** “*Equipping the Saints for Pastoral Ministry.*” We are committed to equip the saints for pastoral ministry through graduate education in biblical, theological, ministerial and pastoral studies informed by Trinitarian Incarnational faith.

**Institutional Goals:** Grace Communion Seminary seeks to:

1. Serve graduate-level educational needs of pastors and others engaged in Christian ministry who seek to grow deeper in relationship with our Triune God and to be able to more effectively serve in the Incarnational life of the Church in Jesus Christ.
2. Provide formal programs of instruction and other learning opportunities that foster intellectual curiosity, facilitate the work of the Spirit in transforming the student, arouse the social and moral conscience of its students, and cultivate in them a willingness to respond to God as he leads them to address the global needs of humanity.
3. Provide seminary education that conveys the Trinitarian nature of God in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.
4. Provide courses and programs that meet traditional academic standards, but are designed to suit the needs of bivocational pastors who can study only on a part-time basis, and also allow fulltime students to progress at a traditional pace.

**Institutional Objectives:** Grace Communion Seminary seeks to:

1. Provide quality distance education programs for graduate students in biblical, theological, historical, ministerial, and pastoral studies that are centered in Trinitarian Incarnational theology.
2. Provide credentialed faculty members who have experience in teaching and in ministry-related areas.
3. Provide adequate administrative staff to facilitate direction and coordination of student services, faculty development, financial accountability, and technological support.
4. Provide structured graduate-level programs in a semester-long format that is readily accessible to clergy and others engaged in Christian ministry in a flexible, asynchronous manner through technologically sound, cost-effective educational systems.
5. Provide a four-tiered, stepped curriculum that enables students to meet personal goals in higher education, from taking courses of their choice in the Master's Level Courses, the Certificate of Theological Studies (CTS) program, to the Advanced Diploma in Christian Ministry (ADCM) program, to the only full degree Master of Pastoral Studies (MPS) program.
6. Provide holistic Christian education through online courses by means of directed readings, online lectures, written assignments, practical application experiences, examinations, and interaction with peers and professors.
7. Provide Master's Level Courses in a program that offers maximum flexibility to bivocational pastors and others who do not wish to enroll in a specific program, but want to take courses based on their own circumstances and interests.
8. Provide online graduate education in a foundational, four-course Certificate of Theological Studies program for clergy and others who desire greater understanding of Trinitarian Incarnational faith.

9. Provide online graduate education in a seven-course Advanced Diploma in Christian Ministry for Christian leaders who desire to serve effectively in ministry.
10. Provide an online Master of Pastoral Studies degree of fourteen courses to best accommodate full-time, dual career, and bi-vocational clergy and pastoral assistants.

### **Overview of GCS Programs of Study**

The church needs its pastors and ministers to have formal education that prepares them to handle the larger questions of the meaning of our existence and equips them with tools to provide spiritual meaningfulness for the daily commitments and responsibilities of its church members. Many ministers and pastors serving our church today hold careers outside of fulltime ministry, so we have built a flexible program of study to facilitate their time and travel constraints.

For this important purpose, we provide a stepped approach to our curriculum, with the first level leading to and included in the second program; the second program is in turn included in the full Master of Pastoral Studies degree.

Students start in the Master's Level Courses (MLC) program, in which they may choose from courses across the GCS curriculum. All of our courses are offered at the master's level, and all courses taken in the MLC may be used for later programs. Many lay persons and dual-career ministers value additional education at the graduate level, but may not feel the need to complete a full master's degree.

We provide a Certificate of Theological Studies for students who complete a set of four courses in biblical and theological studies, which for some of our students completes their educational goals. If and when they complete three more prescribed courses, we grant an Advanced Diploma of Christian Ministry as another level of achievement for those more inclined toward general ministry development. These programs are levels of achievement that can stand alone, but also as levels included in the master's degree.

Our only full degree program is the Master of Pastoral Studies, which requires completion of fourteen courses (42 units). All students in a course are given the same assignments and are evaluated on the same grading scales, regardless as to their personal goals.

### **Purpose Statement: Why Grace Communion Seminary?**

Grace Communion Seminary serves the needs of pastors and others engaged in Christian service who want to grow deeper in relationship with our Triune God and to be able to more effectively serve in the Incarnational life of the church in Jesus Christ.

**Grace** is the essence of our lives. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ reveals God to us, grants us life in him, leads us in forgiving and being forgiven, and gives us salvation. Our Triune God and his grace and love through Jesus Christ is the center of our theology.

**Communion** defines the relationship we have with God, Jesus, and one another. The communion of the Holy Spirit binds us with Jesus who is the head of the Church, enlivens God's love in our hearts, and unites us as followers of Jesus Christ. We live in inseparable unity in Christ in the perpetual effects of his incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost.

**Seminary** describes the scope of our educational goal. We are committed to enabling pastoral ministry in the universal church that effectively shares the love of the Father with the world. We teach from a perspective of Trinitarian Incarnational theology.

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:14).

### **Educational Philosophy**

GCS provides holistic Christian education for laity and ministry to develop biblical and theological understanding for pastoral leadership by means of directed readings, online lectures, written assignments, practical application experiences, and interaction with colleagues and professors.

We see as fundamental to the accomplishment of these purposes a profound dedication to the search for and dissemination of truth. We believe, therefore, that the students, faculty, staff, administrators, and board members should be committed to and supported in their pursuit of knowledge and truth.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Through maintaining the educational objectives in our curriculum, the student is intended to accomplish the following learning outcomes:

1. Explain the revelation of the Bible in its historical and cultural setting as it relates to God, Jesus Christ, and salvation, and its application for faithful living today.
2. Reason from a sound theological basis as new covenant Christians centered in Trinitarian Incarnational faith.
3. Model the love of God the Father, the grace of the Son Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit in congregations.
4. Conduct the work of pastoral ministry in witness to and representation of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.
5. Integrate biblical exegesis with sound theological exposition that informs personal spiritual growth and that directs effective ministry in Jesus Christ.

## **Foundational Tenets**

The Statement of Beliefs of Grace Communion International provides the doctrinal foundation for GCS.

### **We believe:**

- There is one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God the Father made all things through the Son, sent the Son for our salvation, and gives us the Holy Spirit.

- The Son of God, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, was born of the virgin Mary, fully God and fully human, and is the perfect revelation of the Father and the perfect representative of humanity. He suffered and died on the cross for all human sin, was raised bodily on the third day, and ascended to heaven. Standing in for all humanity before the Father, Jesus Christ provides the perfect human response to God. Since he died for all, all died in him, and all will be made alive in him.
- The Holy Spirit brings sinners to repentance and faith, assures believers of their forgiveness and acceptance as God's dearly loved children, and works in them to conform them to the image of Jesus Christ.
- The Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God that testifies to Jesus Christ. The Bible is fully authoritative for all matters of faith and salvation.
- Salvation comes only by God's grace and not by works, and it is experienced through faith in Jesus Christ. Christians respond to the joy of salvation when they gather in regular fellowship and live godly lives in Jesus Christ.
- We look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.

(For full *Statement of Beliefs*, go to <http://www.gci.org/aboutus/beliefs>.)

### **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

Grace Communion Seminary admits students of any race, sex, color, creed, age, or national origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, age, or national origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.