

## **STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS** **The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity**

### **Master of Divinity (M.Div.)**

The Master of Divinity degree program prepares candidates for priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic Church. Its comprehensive program of formation reflects the teaching of the Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992) and the norms of the *Program of Priestly Formation*, Sixth Edition (2022) from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which call for the integration of four inter-dependent dimensions of formation: namely, the Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral formation of the candidate for Holy Orders.

Since 2013, 77.3% of seminarians who have enrolled in the M.Div. degree program have either graduated or continue toward the completion of their degree at the present time. Of those who have completed the M.Div., 100% have been ordained to the ministerial priesthood and advanced to serve the Church, primarily as parish priests, but also as educators, chaplains, campus ministers, etc.

A wide array of instruments and artifacts, gathered and interpreted annually, are used to gauge educational effectiveness and the successful achievement of goals and outcomes in the M.Div. degree program. Faculty, Formation Directors, Teaching Parish Supervisors, the Dean of Seminarians, and the students themselves contribute to the evaluation process. Data gathered on the latest M.Div. graduates indicated that 90% of all measures used to assess program effectiveness scored at or above the desired threshold.

### **Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership (M.A.P.L.)**

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership degree program prepares men and women for leadership and service in the Church as lay ecclesial ministers and religious educators in a variety of contexts. This preparation involves the appropriation and integration of intellectual, pastoral, spiritual, and human formation as recommended by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*. The degree program's curricular and co-curricular elements are designed to prepare candidates to demonstrate competence in the criteria included in the *National Certification Standards for Lay Ecclesial Ministers*. They also incorporate guidelines and directives from the *National Directory for Catechesis*, *The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*, and other ecclesial documents that address Catholic education and lay ecclesial ministry.

The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity revised its curriculum for the formerly named Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry (M.A.P.M.) degree in 2020 and renamed the degree the Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership (M.A.P.L.). In addition, this curriculum revision included the merging of the M.A.P.M. with the former Master of Arts in Religious Education (M.A.R.E.) degree program given the considerable overlap that existed between the curricula of the M.A.P.M. and M.A.R.E. degree programs and the fact that M.A.P.M. and M.A.R.E. graduates typically found professional employment in similar contexts and positions. This statement of educational effectiveness thus combines data from the M.A.P.L., M.A.P.M., and M.A.R.E degree programs.

Over the past decade, 77.6% of all students admitted into the M.A.P.L., M.A.P.M., or M.A.R.E. degree programs have either completed their degree or remain enrolled, working toward the completion of the degree. Eighty-nine percent of M.A.P.L., M.A.P.M., and M.A.R.E. graduates over the past decade have achieved their professional or vocational aspirations with employment as lay ecclesial ministers, Catholic school teachers, or in other church-related work in Catholic parishes and organizations.

To fulfill their graduation requirements, M.A.P.L. candidates compile a portfolio that summarizes their experiences in the areas of intellectual, pastoral, spiritual, and human formation. M.A.P.L. program evaluation incorporates a review of these portfolios utilizing a set of criteria that correspond to program goals and outcomes. Exit interviews and other student survey data are also used for program assessment. A comprehensive evaluation of the M.A.P.L. degree program to assess the effectiveness of curricular changes made in 2020 is scheduled for the 2023-2024 academic year.

### **Master of Arts in Theology (M.A.T.)**

The Master of Arts in Theology degree program offers advanced study of theology for those seeking broad preparation across the theological disciplines or in-depth study in areas such as Scripture, moral theology, systematic theology, and historical theology.

Since 2013, 78.3% of all students admitted into the M.A.T. degree program have either completed the degree or remain enrolled, working toward the completion of the degree. Among the total number of graduates over the past decade:

- 43% are ordained priests and/or members of religious orders;
- 37% are employed as lay ecclesial ministers at the parish level &/or as campus ministers or teachers at elementary and secondary Catholic schools;
- 14% are engaged in other educational/ministerial related work at arch/diocesan offices, non-profit organizations, or institutions of higher learning;
- 10% pursued further graduate study at the doctoral level after graduation from SPSSOD.

M.A.T. program evaluation utilizes faculty review of student theses and comprehensive exams to measure the degree to which program goals and outcomes are being achieved. A review of the M.A.T. degree program in 2021 provided evidence of a very high level of success in five of the eight M.A.T. degree program outcomes, a somewhat lower, yet still satisfactory level of success in a sixth outcome, and a lower than desired result in two learning outcomes. It should be noted, that neither of the outcomes that scored below the desired threshold were judged as indicative of a lack of student achievement, but rather, faculty generally observed that the artifacts used in the evaluation process contained insufficient evidence on which to assess those criteria. This was in itself, an affirmation of the school's concurrent effort to revise the M.A.T. curriculum, and in particular, to significantly overhaul the degree program's capstone experience so that the comprehensive examination process will provide a more thorough treatment of all areas of Catholic theology and the application of theological content to contemporary issues. A subsequent review of the M.A.T. degree program in 2022 yielded excellent results with 92-100% of all comprehensive exams reviewed exceeding the designated threshold for each of the four M.A.T. degree program goals.

## **CERTIFICATE IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (C.S.L.)**

The graduate certificate in Catholic School Leadership provides the theoretical knowledge and practical skills needed to form effective leaders of Catholic educational institutions. Through its integration of the foundational realities of the Catholic faith and competencies to run complex, non-profit institutions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the certificate program prepares individuals to be inspirational leaders in schools tasked with the formation and education of the next generation of faithful disciples.

Since its inception in 2019, 91% of the students who have matriculated into this fourteen-month program have either completed the certificate or remain enrolled, working toward the completion of its requirements. Graduates of the certificate program serve in Catholic elementary and secondary schools around the country in a variety of leadership roles, and many have moved into higher-level positions since the completion of their studies. A comprehensive assessment plan for the certificate program was adopted in the spring of 2023 and results are forthcoming.