



AMBS

explore ~ prepare ~ serve

teaching ministry

fact sheet

■ overview

“The most universal and most appreciated role of the Christian ministry through the ages has been teaching.”

—Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*

AMBS is a community of discipleship and scholarship. Therefore, spiritual formation is a special, foundational part of all study within the Master of Arts in Christian Formation. This program focuses primarily on the church’s ministries of personal and communal formation and transformation. Students in this program become equipped in crucial areas of Christian ministry: pastoring, spiritual guidance, counseling, academics. Our approach to the teaching ministry of the church is directly related to these vital expressions of the Christian faith and sees them as integrally related.

The teaching ministry concentration of the MACF offers a well rounded program of Scripture, history, theology, ethics and ministry formation, as well as courses in the concentration. The strength of biblical studies and Christian spirituality at AMBS provides a solid foundation in support of this concentration.

■ programs of study

In the Master of Arts in Christian Formation degree program, students complete 60 credit hours. Courses in the program span the breadth of the AMBS curriculum, with emphases in Bible, Christian formation, spiritual guidance and pastoral care along with specific attention to teaching ministry understandings and skills. The program of study includes a practicum and opportunities for practical experience in the areas of congregational, school and college teaching, and curriculum evaluation and development.

For the Certificate in the Teaching Ministry of the Church, students take the basic courses to give them a stronger foundation for their assignments in their church or school setting. Core courses and a practicum are included among the requires courses for the certificate.

Courses included in the program of study cover a wide range of issues for teaching and discipling. For example, the course *Jesus and the Teaching Ministry* encourages students to incorporate Jesus’ pedagogical strategies for their own ministries. Another course, *Education for Peace and Justice*, explores issues of poverty, violence, racism, and sexism in congregational discipling and other settings.

Master of Arts in Christian Formation,
Teaching Ministry concentration
(60 credit hours)

Certificate in the Teaching Ministry
of the Church (27 credit hours)

faculty

Mary H. Schertz, Ph.D.

Professor of New Testament

“Partners in God’s passion” in *At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security and the Wisdom of the Cross* (Herald, 2005)

“For God so loved” in *The Heart of the Matter: Pastoral Ministry in Anabaptist Perspective* (Cascadia, 2004)

“Preaching and the Bible: First we have to read it,” in *Anabaptist Preaching: A Conversation Between Pulpit, Pew and Bible* (Cascadia, 2003)

Seeing the Text: Exegesis for Students of Greek and Hebrew (Abingdon, 2001),
co-author

Daniel Schipani, Dr. Psy., Ph.D.

Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling

Educación desde la Fe Cristiana: Cinco Pistas para Nuestro Tiempo (SETECA, 2006)

Paulo Freire, Educador Cristiano (Libros Desafío, 2002)

“Jesus the Master Discippler,” in *Congregational Discipling* (Herald, 1997)

“Education for Social Transformation,” in *Mapping Christian Education: Approaches to Congregational Learning* (Abingdon, 1997)

Religious Education Encounters Liberation Theology (Religious Education Press, 1988)

■ ministry options

Theological education focused on the teaching ministry at AMBS has several possibilities for ministry. Some students also engage in these studies for their own vocational growth, faith enhancement, or to deal with important issues that they face. While the MACF is not intended for the training of sole or lead pastors of congregations, it is beneficial for those already involved in pastoral ministry. It is a very good program for associate or assistant pastors with primary responsibilities in the area of discipleship or Christian formation. This training also is useful for those involved in teaching, spiritual guidance and youth ministries in the church.

■ key resources

AMBS has an excellent **library** (with knowledgeable and helpful staff) and **faculty** with expertise in various areas.

AMBS gives considerable attention and resources to enhancing the **spiritual, theological, and ministerial formation** of its students. We encourage the practice of spiritual disciplines in various ways. Practicing spiritual disciplines is required in several classes, and students and faculty have the opportunity to pray the Daily Office together, to participate in weekly intercessory and centering prayer sessions and to use the prayer labyrinth for meditation time. Spiritual disciplines seminars are available in areas of prayer, journaling, Scripture and family spirituality. Other classes address teaching the Bible in the congregation and education for peace and justice.

The proximity of AMBS to a wide variety of congregations and to Goshen College in Goshen, Ind., provides opportunities for **practica in teaching ministries**.

As Christian formation and discipleship is connected to the Body of Christ, we foster **community life** in many ways. Students are invited to participate in forums, daily breaks, chapel services, vocal ensemble, and in a local congregation.

AMBS promotes **engagement with the neighborhood and wider world** through particular courses, the peace committee, opportunities for service and volunteering, and public witness.

■ additional information

- **AMBS web site:** www.ambs.edu

Select *Academics*, then *Degree programs*, then *Master of Arts in Christian Formation*.

- **AMBS Admissions Office**

admissions@ambs.edu or 800.964.2627

- **AMBS Catalog**

Request from Admissions Office or consult online at www.ambs.edu/student-resources/catalog