

Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling Program Structure and Summary

Africa Reformation Theological Seminary, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Master of Arts Biblical Counseling (hereafter MABC) is a practical degree designed for men and women preparing to serve Christ as biblical counselors, in professional or informal settings. It seeks to equip for biblical counseling ministry in the church and community with a strong emphasis the practice of biblical counseling and on the training of others for biblical counseling. Biblical counseling requires a foundation of biblical and theological knowledge and a myriad of skills in order to help people solve personal and interpersonal problems in order to help people cope with life in a Christ-honoring manner. The graduate is equipped to serve as a biblical counselor, to plant a church-based biblical counseling ministry, to train biblical counselors and to train primary and secondary school teachers in biblical counseling of students. This degree may be added to the Master of Divinity, either before or after earning the MDiv degree. Required time is 3 years for a full-time student and up to 5 years for a part-time student. ARTS has established a three-year program out of the conviction that this is in the best interest of our students and of the churches they are being trained to serve. The three-year programme compensates for students who enter ARTS without a background in Bible and theology training.

1. Rationale for theological education

The Need

ARTS seeks to address the ever-increasing need for training and equipping pastors and church leaders for the burgeoning African church. African pastors have a great need for formal biblical and theological education. With untrained and poorly trained leadership, the African churches become vulnerable to false teaching, false gospels, syncretism, and enslaving, confusing and Bible-distorting cults. The proliferation of pastors who mislead and use congregations for self-agendas and aggrandizement also results. The growth in Africa of western-generated cults and indigenous African cults stems almost exclusively from churches in which nominalism prevails and congregations have not been taught the truths of God's Word.

The Opportunity

Africa, the earth's second largest continent and second most populous, will grow from 1.216 billion (2016) to 2.39 billion by 2050 and will then be able to claim that 1 in 4 humans are African. Uganda, ranked the 65th largest nation in 1960 (6.7 million), will grow from 40.3 million in 2016 (35th global rank) to 61.9 million in 2030 (25th rank), to 101.8 million in 2050 (18th global rank), and then astoundingly to 205 million in 2100 and become the 10th largest country on earth.¹

Africa had 350 million Christians (all denominations) in 2000, and that number is projected to grow, at a rate of 20,000 per day, to 600 million by 2025, at which time Africa will have more professing Christians than any other continent.² However, the church in Africa is susceptible to legalism, moralism, syncretism, cultism, nominalism, antinomianism, and militant Islam. Where will the pastors and leaders be trained for biblical, gospel-driven, grace-saturated, Christ-exalting churches? Each new generation is an unreached people group. What a huge need, opportunity, and challenge the church faces in Africa.

ARTS is positioned to make a significant contribution and impact for the training of pastors and church leaders for Ugandan and Africa. ARTS will train a select group of highly qualified, motivated, and determined church leaders, many of whom are already seasoned pastors. After having been trained and equipped through the Seminary's MDiv curriculum that is Bible-soaked, theology-driven, and practitioner-oriented, these leaders will, in turn, teach and minister to hundreds and thousands of people over a lifetime. Some 99% of African pastors have no formal training and cannot afford it. ARTS brings affordable, Reformation-shaped seminary education to Africa in order to impact a needy Uganda and continent with pastors, church planters, evangelists, biblical counselors, and churches who are passionate for Scripture alone, Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone, and to God alone be the glory.

2. Rationale for the Master of Arts Biblical Counseling

The Master of Arts Biblical Counseling degree program (MABC) requires 86 credits; or 88 credits with the required non-credit bridging course).

This degree is highly valued in the church for the skills it imparts. Fear, depression, worry, anxiety, anger, bitterness, resentment, family, clan and tribal relationships, sexual promiscuity, urbanization, government corruption, the impact of African traditional religion and "ancestral curses," the impact of poverty,

¹http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=UG; <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/uganda-population/>.

²Lamin Sanneh 2003, *Whose Religion is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West*, Grand Rapids, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 41.

marriage, divorce and remarriage, preparation for marriage, bride price, costs of a wedding, conflict management and resolution, interpersonal relationships, coping with health problems and diseases, alcohol and drug addictions, HIV and a host of other problems today await the servant of God in Africa who would be Christ's minister and guide his people according to the Bible. Understanding the heart issues and skillfully utilizing the Scripture to cure the hurting heart are the skills required for the biblical counselor. Seeking to bring change that glorifies God, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that accords with His Word, and that restores people to love, obedience, perseverance, Christ-likeness and usefulness in serving Christ, His church and His mission in His world, are the goals of biblical counseling.

The discipline of biblical counseling is designed to prepare the student to minister within the context of the church and Christian NGOs to help people struggling with the problems of living. The program provides a strong background in both biblical and theological studies to establish the foundation for Biblical counseling. Utilizing this foundation the student will build a knowledge of counseling that will enable him/her to work effectively with hurting people, teach preventative programs, interact with the many diverse groups within the church and society at large and to train people to be disciples (learners) and counselors of others who are self-feeding, self-counseling, Spirit-dependent and Word-directed problem solvers.

Rationale for ARTS to offer both the MABC and the MATS BC degrees

1. The MATS BC degree program is designed to prepare men and women for various ministries in the church and community where the insights and skills of biblical counseling may be applied. This degree especially equips the ordained teaching elder or pastor for church ministry with a focus on biblical counseling. It also equips for non-ordained church roles and for those who want to bring Christian leadership and influence to education, business, industry, administration, government, and development. The MATS BC is appropriate for Christian professionals (physicians, attorneys, teachers, administrators, writers, journalists and other lay people) who simply wish to gain a strong biblical and theological foundation for their work and callings and who also have a strong interest in biblical counseling and problem solving. The MATS BC curriculum requires eleven (11) courses (22 credits) in biblical studies, Greek, historical theology and missions not in the MABC program.
2. The MABC program is designed to equip non-ordained men and women to practice and develop biblical counseling ministries for the local church and especially to train and equip lay-counselors for biblical counseling. To this end, the MABC program is more oriented to the practice of biblical counseling and requires six (6) biblical counseling courses (12 credits) not required in the MATS BC.
3. The plan of ARTS to offer both a masters degree in biblical counseling with a strong biblical studies and theology orientation (MATS BC) as well as a more practice-oriented counseling degree (MABC) provides the student the option of choosing which degree best fits his or her needs and ministry and career goals.
4. Since the two degrees share a significant number of courses in common, it is not difficult administratively or for the teaching staff to offer both programs.

The MABC degree and the Master of Divinity degree

The Master of Divinity degree and the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (MABC) degree may both be earned by the same student. ARTS does not grant any other combination of two degrees. Either the MABC or the MDiv degree may be earned first. The student desiring to earn both degrees will be advised to finish one degree before being admitted to the second degree program.

1.3 Programme Objectives

General Objective

The MABC programme seeks to equip church practitioners with a knowledge of biblical counselling and the skills to apply the Bible's approach and methods to counselling in order to bring change that glorifies God and restores people to usefulness in serving Christ, his church and the world.

Specific Objectives

The MABC programme is intended to accomplish the following Specific Objectives:

1. Define and describe the distinguishing standards, goals, values, features, marks and methods of counseling that is distinctly biblical;
2. Identify and defend biblical goals, skills and methods to address specific personal and interpersonal problems and the character required in the counselor for effective counseling;
3. Indicate, analyze and relate the criteria and standards for evaluating counseling approaches, both secular and Christian, to the biblical model;
4. Arrange, formulate, construct and explain plans for training others in biblical counseling especially lay people in order to promote a biblical counseling reformation and movement in churches.

1.4 Learning Outcomes

General

Upon graduation from the MABC programme, the learners should be able to demonstrate an understanding of biblical counselling and to exhibit the ability and skills to apply the Bible's approach and methods to counselling in order to bring change that glorifies God and restores people to usefulness in serving Christ, his church and the world.

Specific Learning outcomes

Upon graduation from the MABC programme the learners should be able to:

1. Distinguish the standards, goals, values, features, marks and methods of counseling that is distinctly biblical;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the biblical goals, skills and methods to address specific personal and interpersonal problems and the character required in the counselor for effective counseling;
3. Apply the criteria and standards for evaluating counseling approaches, both secular and Christian;
4. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills for training others in biblical counseling especially lay people in order to promote a biblical counseling reformation and movement in churches.

1.5 Career Prospects

The Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling degree is not intended to prepare the student for government licensure or government recognition in counseling. The curriculum is designed to produce biblical people-helpers who will work under the auspices and oversight of the church rather than the state, while at the same time respecting the state.

Ministry and career opportunities include church staff, women's ministries, men's ministries, children's ministries, youth ministry, youth vocational counseling, HIV and AIDS counseling, rescue missions, crisis pregnancy centers, orphan homes, primary and secondary school staff, and various Christian NGOs. Physicians, lawyers, to work in schools as teachers of Christian Religious Education or Divinity at various levels, undergraduate degree lecturer, university administrator, university consultant NGO founder, NGO developer, NGO Director, NGO consultant and church consultant. Other helping professionals may want to add this degree to their training to make them more effective in their work with people. Many pastors may want to consider adding the MABC to their Master of Divinity degree to better understand and minister to the many church members and members of the community who come seeking assistance with the problems and challenges of living.

1.6 Admission Requirements

1. Students admitted to the MABC degree program must submit proof of a first or bachelor's degree. This degree may be in any relevant field.
2. Applicant must have a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and a genuine desire and internal call to serve Christ and His church;
3. Applicant must have the endorsement of his or her church;
4. Applicant must submit two academic and two church references;
5. Applicant must demonstrate competence in general computer skills as required for graduate level theological studies and research in this programme. The Seminary will facilitate courses for students who do not meet this computer requirement.

1.7 Assessment

Continuous Assessment

Students will be required to complete all course work assignments. Course work will consist of assignments such as reading and reading response papers, book reviews, research papers, exegetical papers, theological papers, historical-theological papers, practical theology papers, sermons, class presentations, quizzes and tests; and group projects. Together these will constitute 40% to 70% of the final assessment of the course.

Examinations

Students will also be required to write a course end-of-semester examination that will contribute 30% to 60% of the final assessment. To pass this exam for final grading, a candidate must attain a grade of 50% on this final exam.

The student's combined marks will constitute 40%-70% coursework and 30%-60% final examination. The student's performance will be indicated by the letter grades and grade points as given below:

Marks	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Interpretation
80-100	A	5	Excellent
75-79	B+	4.5	Very Good
70-74	B	4.0	Good
65-69	C+	3.5	Fair
60-64	C	3.0	Pass
55-59	D	2.5	Compensatory Pass
0-54	F	0	Fail

Credit shall be earned when a student has obtained at least the Pass Mark (60%) in each course in which he/she had been assessed. In other words, no credit shall be earned in a course in which a student has failed the Assessment.

The Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling Project

This project will be assessed in accordance with NCHE guidelines for such and will include an oral defense.

1.8 Program Duration and Graduation requirements:

Three (3) years for the full-time student and up to five (5) years for the part-time student. ARTS has established a three-year program out of the conviction that this is in the best interest of our students and of the churches they are being trained to serve. The three-year programme compensates for students who enter ARTS without a background in Bible and theology training. Graduation requires 82 credits (including a Project and Project Paper). To qualify for the award of a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling a candidate shall also have a CGPA of

1.10 Programme Structure

Computation of Credit Units

In the computation of the Credit Units in the curriculum matrix below, we use the following guide from the National Council For Higher Education.

1. 1CH = 1LH = 2PH = 2TH
2. 1LH means one hour or 60 Mins of Classroom instruction.
3. 1CU = 15CH = 15LH = 30TH = 30PH

LH – Lecture Hour

CU – Credit Unit

TH – Tutorial Hour

PH – Practical Hour

CH – Contact Hour

During this semester, students will take the first portion of the foundational and prerequisite courses.

Course Code and Name	LH	PH/TH	CH	CU
CT0101 Computer Applications in Research	15	30	30	2
PT1101 Introduction to Theological Studies and Research Writing	30		30	2
OT1101 Introduction to the Bible and Old Testament Survey	30		30	2
NT1101 New Testament Survey	30		30	2
NT1104 Gospel of John (Choose John or Synoptic Gospels offered year 2, semester 1)	30		30	2
BC1101 Introduction to Biblical Counseling	30		30	2
ST1101 Bible Interpretation	30		30	2
ST1102 The Doctrine of Scripture and God	30		30	2
ST1103 The Doctrine of Man	30		30	2

Year 1 Semester 2

During this semester, students will take the remaining portion of the foundational and prerequisite courses.

Course Code and Name	LH	CH	CU
AP1201 Introduction to Apologetics	30	30	2
BC1202 Marriage and Family Counseling	30	30	2
ST1204 Introduction to Reformed Theology	30	30	2
PT1204 Biblical Principles of Christian Education and Discipleship	30	30	2
OT1202 Genesis	30	30	2
NT1203 Unity of the Bible and Covenant Theology	30	30	2

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) in Theological Studies

Candidates who have successfully completed the first year courses and gained at least 24 credit units and who for any reason wish to terminate their studies may be awarded a postgraduate certificate in Theological Studies.

Year 2 Semester 1

Student will build on the foundational and prerequisite courses of year one by taking more courses in the different fields of theology.

Course Code and Name	LH	PH/TH	CH	CU
ST2105 The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ	30		30	2
ST2106 The Doctrine of Redemption and the Holy Spirit	30		30	2
NT2105 Synoptic Gospels (Elective or Gospel of John)	30		30	2
BC2105 Counseling & Lay Counselor Training in the Local Church I	30		30	2
BC2103 Premarital Counseling	30		30	2
BC2104 Advanced Marriage and Family Counseling	30		30	2
BC2111 Understanding and Evaluating Professional Literature	30		30	2

BC2107 Advanced Biblical Counseling	30		30	2
PT2109 Personal Evangelism	25	10	30	2

PT3001-PT3020 Mentored Internships

At the end of the semester, having completed about half of the courses in the degree program in which the student is enrolled, the student will draw upon the material learnt to increase preparation, skill, and effectiveness in the mentored ministry experience. Mentored ministry may occur in-between semesters but may also be done during the remaining three semesters.

Year 2 Semester 2

The student will continue to build on the foundational and prerequisite courses by taking more courses in different fields of theology.

Course Code and Name	LH	PH	TH	CH	CU
NT2207 Romans	30			30	2
BC2206 Introduction to Biblical Self-Counseling	30			30	2
BC2213 Biblical Parenting	30			30	2
BC2214 Groups Dynamics	30			30	2
BC2215 Counseling in the Local Church II	30			30	2
PT2215 Research Methodology	30			30	2
BC3217 Biblical Counseling Practicum					2
BC3218 Biblical Counseling Project					4
BC3212 Readings in Biblical Counseling (Tutorial)		56	4		2
BC3216 Case Studies in Biblical Counseling	20	20		30	2

Award of a postgraduate diploma (PGD) in Theological Studies (Counseling)

Candidates who have successfully gained at least 40 credit units including at least 10 credits units from Counseling courses and who for any reason wish to terminate their studies during or after the second year may be awarded a postgraduate diploma in Theological Studies (Counseling). Such candidates shall be required to undertake an industrial attachment and write a report. To qualify for the award of a PGD a candidate shall have a CGPA of no less than 3.0.

Year 3 Semester 1

Student will continue with the semester courses, complete the mentored internships, and submit (and receive approval for) his/her proposal (as part of the application of PT2215 Research Methodology) for the next and last semester's project.

Course Code and Name	LH	PH/TH	CH	CU
ST3107 The Doctrine of the Church and the Means of Grace	30		30	2
ST3108 The Doctrine of Last Things	30		30	2
PT3106 Prayer and the Christian Worker's Personal Life	30		30	2
PT3110 Conflict Resolution and Peacemaking	30		30	2
BC3109 Using the Bible in Counseling	30		30	2
BC3110 Biblical Approach to Addictions	30		30	2

BC3108 Counseling Theory	30		30	2
PT3107 Women's, Children's and Youth Ministry	30		30	2

PT3001-PT3020 Mentored Internships

Year 3 Semester 2

The student will complete the required semester courses and work on the project. The student will submit the project paper at the end of the semester and defend his/her project.

Course Code and Name	LH	PH/TH	CH	CU
ST3211 Christian Ethics	30		30	2
OT3205 Poetry and Wisdom Literature	30		30	2

PT3001-PT3020 Mentored Internships

2.0. Summary of Courses According to Departments

The credits for the required courses for each department are in parentheses. All courses are two (2) credit hours unless noted.

Genesis and Old Testament (6)

OT1101 Introduction to the Bible and Old Testament Survey

OT1102 Genesis

OT3205 Poetry and Wisdom Literature

New Testament (8)

NT1101 New Testament Survey

NT1203 Unity of the Bible and Covenant Theology

NT1104 Gospel of John **OR** NT2105 Synoptic Gospels

NT2207 Romans

Systematic Theology (18)

ST1204 Introduction to Reformed Theology

ST1102 The Doctrine of Scripture, God

ST1103 Doctrine of Man

ST2105 The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ

ST2106 The Doctrine of Redemption and the Work of the Holy Spirit

ST3107 The Doctrine of the Church and the Means of Grace

ST3108 The Doctrine of Last Things

ST1101 Bible Interpretation

ST3211 Christian Ethics

Apologetics (2)

AP1201 Introduction to Apologetics

Practical Theology (12)

PT1101 Communications and Research Writing

PT1204 Biblical Principles of Christian Education and Discipleship

PT3106 Prayer and the Christian Workers Personal Life

PT2109 Personal Evangelism

PT3110 Conflict Resolution and Peacemaking

PT3107 Women's, Children's and Youth Ministry

PT2215 Research Methodology
CT1101 Computer Applications in Research

Biblical Counseling (34)

BC1101 Introduction to Biblical Counseling

BC2105 Counseling and Lay Counselor Training in the Local Church I

BC2206 Introduction to Biblical Self-Counseling

BC2107 Advanced Biblical Counseling

BC3108 Counseling Theory

BC3109 Using the Bible in Counseling

BC3110 Biblical Approach to Addictions

BC2111 Understanding & Evaluating Professional Literature

BC3212 Readings in Biblical Counseling

(Tutorial)

BC2213 Biblical Parenting

BC1202 Marriage & Family Counseling

BC2103 Premarital Counseling

BC2104 Advanced Marriage & Family Counseling

BC2214 Group Dynamics

BC2215 Counseling in the Local Church II

BC3216 Case Studies in Biblical Counseling

BC3217 Biblical Counseling Practicum

BC3218 Biblical Counseling Project (4)

Mentored Internships (0)

Two non-credit Mentored Internships are required for the MABC program. **Both of the Mentored Internship must be in biblical counseling.** Mentored Internships involve ministry experience and evaluation under an experienced pastoral or ministry supervisor and do not entail classroom work. See PT3001-3020 Mentored Internships for a description.

MABC degree program is 86 total credits

Total required courses: 43 **(42 are credit courses and CT1101 is required and non-credit)**

Total required credits: 86 (with CT1101 equivalent to 88 credits)