



College of Liberal Arts and Education

Pre-Ministry

University of Wisconsin-Platteville

The Profession

Professional ministry as a pastor, rabbi, youth leader, teacher, or parish worker is an extraordinarily demanding vocation. One must be a thoughtful, aware, balanced, and caring person. One must be a good theologian, philosopher, scholar, psychologist, public speaker, writer, politician, mediator, counselor, and teacher. One must know something about history. One must be aware of social realities—the city and the country, the work-place, politics, economics, prejudice, conflict, trends in popular culture, war, and peace. One must be aware of personal realities—of birth, childhood, marriage, middle age, old age, death, and dying. One must be aware of everything that touches the lives of people for good or ill. And one must be specially sensitive to the human hunger for meaning, perspective, and understanding.

Perhaps you are appropriately awed by these demands of a professional ministry in church or synagogue—yet attracted by its challenge and its great possibilities. Perhaps the idea of being involved helpfully and creatively in people’s joys and sorrows, dreams and hopes, anxieties, and victories is one that continues to intrigue you. And you would like to keep thinking about those challenges and possibilities as you pursue your college education.

The Program at UW-Platteville

It is with you in mind that the philosophy faculty at UW-Platteville has established a pre-ministry program.

The program aims to provide you with supportive counsel and helpful experiences—not only if you are certain of entering a professional religious vocation, but also if you are not certain but interested, and need a chance to explore the possibilities. Interested faculty will help in three ways:

1. We will help you plan a broad liberal arts academic program designed to help you grow to be more aware, reflective, and sensible. One of us will serve as your academic advisor, at least for the freshman year. Though the philosophy faculty is in charge of the program, and though philosophy and religious studies are appropriate areas of study for those entering the ministry, it is not assumed in advance that you will major or even minor in either. There are other liberal arts majors and minors that may for one reason or another be more suitable to you—such as history, English literature, psychology, political science, art, drama, the natural sciences. We will help you plan what is best for you.
2. We will help you find—if you desire—appropriate off-campus work or study opportunities in a church, synagogue, or social agency. We might help you arrange, for example, to work as a pastoral assistant or director of a youth program, perhaps even for pay. Or we might help you arrange for an internship semester with a social agency or a mental hospital. Through such an internship, you may be able to earn college credit by undertaking some work-related research.
3. We will work with you personally—if you desire it—in helping you think through your professional plans and hopes. It may be that you will need a sympathetic listener. Or it may be that you can be assisted by vocational counselors from your own denomination or religious tradition.

In short, we will work to provide whatever you need to make a sound decision about your future.

Theological Seminary

Just about every denomination and tradition requires that clergy be professionally educated. This usually means a three-year graduate program in an approved and accredited theological seminary. No later than your junior year at the university, you need to be in touch with vocational counselors from your own denomination or tradition. We will be glad to help you establish those contacts—if such help is needed.

High School Preparation

The best high school preparation for the ministry is working hard to be a good student, especially in subjects that focus most on human beings—such as writing, literature, languages, history, social studies, theatre, and art.

Professional Opportunities

One does not enter the ministry with a view to making a lot of money or being “successful” in the usual sense, or because it’s easy to get a prestigious job. It is true that in some churches, like the Catholic Church, there is a desperate need for more priests, and in many others opportunities for women are expanding dramatically. People enter the ministry because they believe they have something to give that the world needs, and the professional ministry seems to be the best way to do it. The opportunities for such persons are endless.

For More Information

For more information write to the Pre-Ministry Advisor, Department of Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, 1 University Plaza, Platteville, Wisconsin 53818-3099, or call 608.342.1828.

For general information on the university and its programs, consult the website at www.uwplatt.edu or contact the UWP Prospective Student Services, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, 1 University Plaza, Platteville, WI 53818-3099, or call toll-free 1.877.897.5288 or locally 608.342.1068.

What follows is a sample. Our advisors work with each student individually to craft a course of study that meets all requirements.

Suggested Course of Study

First Year

First Semester

Math elective	3
Engl 1130 Freshman Comp	3
Speech 1010 Public Speaking	2
Phil 1130 Intro. to Philosophy	3
Lab. Science elective	5
	16

Second Semester

Engl 1230 Freshman Comp	3
Foreign Language elective	4
Phil 2530 Ethics	3
Social Science elective	3
Humanities elective	3
	16

Second Year

First Semester

Phil 2330 Origins of Western Phil.	3
Lab. Science elective	4
Foreign Language elective	4
Phil 2130 Peace Studies	3
Engl Literature course	3
	17

Second Semester

Phil 2430 Phil. in the Mod. World	3
Social Science elective	3
Foreign Language elective	4
Phil 2230 Contemp. World-Views	3
Minor or other elective	3
PE 1000 Physical Education	1
	17

Third Year

First Semester

Phil 3330 Ontology and Ethics	3
Art Art History	3
Social Science elective	3
WoSt 1130 Intro. to Women's Stu.	3
Minor or other elective	3
PE Elective	1
	16

Second Semester

Phil 4430 Seminar in Philosophy	3
Phil 3730 Continental Philosophy	3
OR	
Phil 3530 Philosophy's Feminist Future	3
Foreign Language elective	4
Phil 2730 Intro. to Old Testament	
OR	
Phil 2830 Intro. to New Testament	3
Minor or other elective	3
	16

Fourth Year

First Semester

Phil 3230 Philosophy of Religion	3
Phil 2930 Major Traditions in Eastern Religions	3
Minor or other electives	9
	15

Second Semester

Phil 4430 Seminar in Philosophy	3
Phil 3830 Existentialism	3
Mus History of Music	3
Minor or other electives	6
	15

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, color, handicap, sex, sexual orientation, developmental disability, national origin, ancestry, marital status, arrest record or conviction record.