



Advanced Standing Policy & Application

General Guidelines Regarding Advanced Standing

Advanced Standing (AS) is a means for waiving or modifying degree program requirements in light of the student's overall educational background.

Normally AS is reserved for students with directly-related undergraduate degrees from accredited universities or Bible colleges. Applications for AS will only be accepted from students who have completed an undergraduate degree or who have been granted undergraduate equivalency.

Where previous coursework is considered as a basis for Advanced Standing (and especially for AS *with Credit*), a student's earlier courses should have been completed within 10 years of the application for AS, and within 5 years for studies in the biblical languages.¹

Undergraduate credits are not accounted as equivalent to graduate credits, and cannot be "transferred" into graduate programs. Because undergraduate outcomes and workloads differ from those at the graduate level, it is customary to require at least two 3-credit undergraduate courses as a basis for Advanced Standing for one 3-credit graduate course. There are two groups of exceptions to this rule: (a) biblical languages courses, which can be counted on a one-for-one basis; and (b) linguistics courses which have been taken in accordance with a syllabus prepared for classes consisting of both undergrad and graduate students, which can be counted on a one-for-one basis when combined with additional course-related work as defined by the MLE Program Chair. Undergraduate credits must be third year courses or higher to be considered, and can be counted only toward 500-level seminary courses.

Advanced Standing without Credit

Advanced Standing without Credit (AS/nc) is the process by which a student seeks to have certain program requirements waived because of prior learning, allowing other more advanced courses to be substituted. No reduction to the overall number of required credits for the program is implied.

Decisions on AS/nc are normally made by the Program Chair. **Students seeking AS/nc should forward a request for the course substitution to the Program Chair in writing, using the "Degree Exception to Graduation Requirements" form appended on the last page of this document.** This request should include a brief statement of rationale, with information on prior coursework and other

¹ For biblical language studies older than 5 years but less than 10 years, Advanced Standing requirements could be satisfied by demonstration of proficiency, or by the student's attendance of a Greek/Hebrew refresher seminar at ACTS.

learning that supports the substitution, and an explanation of the benefits the substitution will bring to the student's degree program. On approval, the Program Chair will provide a written authorization for the course substitution for the student's academic file.

Decisions regarding substitution of required courses in degree programs should be based on clear evidence including undergraduate transcripts and grades minimally at a B level. Requests for AS/nc should be made early in the student's program whenever possible, preferably within 6 months of the date on the letter of acceptance.

Advanced Standing with Credit

Advanced Standing with Credit (AS/C) is the process by which students have their non-graduate prior learning experiences evaluated in selected disciplines for the purpose of receiving specific exemptions to the requirements of their degree programs, *with a corresponding reduction in required credits for graduation*. It is a way of acknowledging that some students enter seminary with an extensive background in theological study that overlaps to some degree with what is covered in the seminary program, in a manner that would not be true of the typical seminary student.

A student may apply for AS/C for the following degree programs only: Master of Arts in Christian Studies (MACS), Master of Divinity (MDV), and Master of Applied Linguistics and Exegesis (MLE).

To grant AS/C, ACTS must ascertain that the student has the knowledge, competence and skills that normally would be provided by the specific ACTS courses in the degree to which they have been admitted. Students should only consider applying for AS/C if in their prior education they have had significant exposure to a certain discipline (i.e. an undergraduate major in Bible, or Christian Education, or Missions) or significant, sustained, documented experience in and reflection upon a certain subject because of employment or ministry related circumstances. The student must have received a grade of B or higher in courses taken previously that are proposed as a basis for AS/C.

Decisions on AS/C are made by the Program Committee in consultation with the Office of the Registrar. In all cases application for AS/C must be received within 6 months of the date on the letter of acceptance. Normally all decisions about AS/C should be made by the end of the first semester of enrolment.

Where AS/C is granted, the corresponding credits will be transcribed with a Pass/Fail grade and will not be considered in the calculation of grade point average.

Advanced Standing with Credit cannot be used to reduce the minimal 30 semester hours of ACTS courses required within an ACTS degree for graduation.

Courses Eligible for Advanced Standing with Credit by Degree Program *

Program	Course Name	Course Hours
MACS, MDV,	BIB 500 Introduction to Biblical Studies**	2
MACS, MDV, MLE	BIB 505 Biblical Hermeneutics	3
MACS, MDV, MLE	BNT 501 Introductory NT Greek I	3
MACS, MDV, MLE	BNT 502 Introductory NT Greek II	3
MACS, MDV, MLE	BOT 501 Elementary Hebrew I	3
MACS, MDV, MLE	BOT 502 Elementary Hebrew II	3
MACS, MDV	CAP 560 Challenges to Christianity	3
MACS, MDV	HIS 540 History of Christianity I	3
MACS, MDV	HIS 541 History of Christianity II	3
MLE	Any LIN course for which the student has taken the equivalent course as an undergrad, has received a grade of B or better, and has successfully served as Teaching Assistant for that course or has completed additional learning activities (as approved by the Academic Advisor).	
MACS, MDV	THS 540 Introduction to Theology	2

* Advanced standing is not available for Christian Leadership Development (CLD) courses, RES 500 (Research Strategies), or THS 571 (Believers' Church Theology).

** For BIB 500, the student must demonstrate that the prior learning has covered both OT and NT studies.

Maximum Semester Hours Available for Advanced Standing with Credit by Program

Program	Maximum Hours available for Advanced Standing with Credit
Master of Arts in Christian Studies	12 hours
Master of Divinity	14 hours
Master of Applied Linguistics and Exegesis	12 hours

Application Process for Advanced Standing with Credit

- Students must apply in writing, forwarding the application form (below) to the office of the ACTS Academic Dean or directly to the relevant degree Program Chair. The application must be submitted before the end of the student's first semester of studies. Applications cannot be processed until all required documentation is submitted.
- The Program Committee will process the application. Once a determination has been made, the decision will be communicated to the Office of the Registrar and posted to the student's academic record, and communicated to the student.
- Should the student wish to contest a decision concerning AS/C, an appeal can be made to the ACTS Academic Success Committee according to Academic Success Policy using the ACTS Academic Appeal Form.

The following documentation should accompany applications for AS/C

- A copy of the student's undergraduate transcript.** Students must have received a mark of "B" or higher for a course to be eligible for Advanced Standing review.
- Syllabi from the upper level courses² that provide overlapping content coverage with the ACTS graduate course.**
- A copy of the syllabus of the ACTS course** for which Advanced Standing is being requested. ACTS syllabi can be downloaded from the ACTS website (www.actsseminaries.com).
- A cover letter** explaining exactly how the student's prior learning experiences (undergraduate studies) adequately cover the content of the related ACTS graduate courses.

² If a syllabus cannot be provided, an interview with an ACTS faculty member or some other mechanism (e.g., written work) can be substituted to indicate learning competence.



Advanced Standing with Credit Application Form

Name (print): _____

ACTS Student ID: _____

Date: _____

Undergraduate Degree: _____

Major: _____

Name of Undergraduate Institution: _____

Eligible Graduate Courses for Advanced Standing with Credit			Upper Level Undergraduate Courses with Applicable Outcomes		
Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours	Course Number	Course Name	Credit Hours

* Have you included a copy of your undergraduate transcript, the syllabi of your undergraduate courses, syllabi of the ACTS courses, and a cover letter? Submit completed application to the ACTS Academic Dean's Office c/o actsreception@twu.ca, (7600 Glover Rd. Langley, BC. V2Y 1Y1. Fax – 604.513.2096).

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date Received: _____	Office Use Only Processed by: _____
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EXCEPTION TO GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

PROCEDURE:

1. Complete the information in Section A and B.
2. Obtain the signature of the Program Chair of the degree program involved.
3. Return completed form to the Office of the Registrar.

SECTION A

Name _____ ID# _____ Email _____

Degree Program, Major/Concentration affected by this exception _____

SECTION B

Course(s) involved in requested exception

Replace this required course:	With:	Comments/Rationale

SECTION C

Approval for the above noted exception to graduation requirements is:

granted

not granted for the following reasons(s) _____

_____ Dated _____

ACTS Program Chair

PLEASE FORWARD COMPLETED DOCUMENT TO THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR



09/15

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR



ACTS
SEMINARIES

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