

Introduction to Tyndale Seminary

Introduction

Tyndale Seminary, a division of Tyndale University College & Seminary, is a multi-denominational, evangelical Christian community offering graduate theological education aimed at equipping God's people for faithful and effective ministry in the Church and in the world.

Tyndale Seminary is Canada's largest seminary and is located in the multicultural, urban context of Canada's largest city, Toronto. It is heir to more than a century's commitment to Christian theological education with a view to the global mission of the Church. Accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in Canada and the United States (ATS), the Seminary's programs are grounded in a commitment to academic excellence, spiritual, and character formation, and the development of ministry skills for Christian leadership in its various forms. Our faculty and students come from a rich diversity of denominational and ethnocultural backgrounds.

The institutional mission statement is: "Tyndale is dedicated to the pursuit of truth, to excellence in teaching, learning, and research, for the enriching of mind, heart, and character, to serve the Church and the world for the glory of God."

The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in Church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour, and moral integrity and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.

A primary goal is to develop leaders for the Christian Church within both the Canadian and global contexts. Through our educational programs, the school endeavours to renew the Church and to strengthen its mission to the world by providing our students with the biblical and theological foundations, personal and professional development, and ministry skills needed for leadership in the 21st century.

Theological Identity

Tyndale is a multi-denominational, evangelical community of faith and learning. We stress the historic Christian faith of the Gospel as expressed in the creeds of the early Church, the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation, and the emphases of noted evangelical awakenings. Tyndale's *Statement of Faith* reflects the truths we consider of primary importance.

There are other matters of faith and practice that we consider as secondary. These relate to matters on which the biblical data does not appear conclusive or on which evangelicals have not reached a clear consensus. Thus, while affirming primary truths shared by evangelicals, we recognize the right of congregations and denominations to develop and teach their own distinctives. We help students relate positively to their heritage and to work wholeheartedly in the affiliations to which God calls them. We are committed to demonstrating, through a fair consideration of various options and with due sensitivity, how Christians should deal with divergent understandings. Every encouragement is given to exercise responsible freedom and to discuss such matters in keeping with God's Word and the guidance of his Spirit.

Theological Education: Missional Perspective

At Tyndale Seminary, theological education is grounded in a missional understanding of the Church. We view the Church as the people of God – gathered, reconciled, equipped and sent by God into the world, to witness to the Gospel in the power of the Spirit. Thus, we understand ministry as the obedient and faithful use of gifts on the part of the whole people of God. We see Christian scholarship, spiritual formation, and the practice of ministry as having a common focus in being properly oriented toward the expression of the Gospel for and in the world. Our approach to theological education provides the context within which we pursue the integration of our theological task in these three areas:

1. *Christian scholarship*, which aims to provide grounding in the Christian tradition of biblical/theological/historical reflection, engenders confidence in the Gospel, fosters spiritual vitality and animates creative and faithful ministry.
2. *Spiritual formation*, the continuing response to the reality of God's grace that shapes us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, and in the community of faith for the sake of the world.
3. *Preparation for the practice of ministry* in its varied forms that is shaped by biblical-theological convictions, operating with sound theological reflection, and expressed through the lives of people being shaped by the Gospel.

A key component of our educational mission is the community life of the Seminary. In an effort to overcome the individualism and fragmentation that characterizes contemporary culture, the Seminary worships regularly as a community, structures itself for small group interaction and pastoral care, plans regular social and academic events on campus, engages in retreats, and encourages an atmosphere of openness, caring, and sensitivity toward one another.

Theological Education: Canadian Perspective

While acknowledging the global character of the Church, Tyndale Seminary at the same time is particularly concerned about the Canadian context of ministry. In developing our faculty, we have formed a body of strong Canadian scholars. We also invite Christian scholars and leaders from across Canada to the campus for conferences and special courses.

Contemporary Canadian culture has undergone a vast shift in recent years. Concurrently, the cultural expression of Christianity has changed, with many signs of effective adaptation to changing Canadian life. We want to be involved in assisting Canadians in understanding our culture and in clothing the Gospel in contemporary forms.

Theological Education: Urban-Multicultural Perspective

Toronto is the largest city in Canada and has been called the most multicultural city in the world. Its many outstanding churches and church-related ministries offer excellent openings for practical ministry experiences. Its numerous ethnic communities give opportunities for cross-cultural learning. A number of students find part-time work in the area. Our community reflects the cosmopolitan nature of Toronto, with students from around the world. The multiculturalism of Toronto provides opportunities for internship in almost any ethnic context and is a singularly helpful environment for those planning cross-cultural ministry.

Faculty

Our faculty members are key players in fulfilling the Seminary's mission and its commitment to Christian scholarship, spiritual formation, and preparation for varied forms of ministry. The faculty reflects the diversity of the student body and includes men and women of many different denominations and ethnic backgrounds. Our visiting faculty come from around the globe to teach on a short-term basis.

Fundamental to any faculty appointment are the qualities of academic competence, teaching effectiveness, and spiritual maturity. The normative requirement for membership on the full-time faculty is an earned doctorate. Seminary faculty are engaged in ministry to the wider Christian and academic communities through their writing, lecturing, preaching, consulting, advising, and providing visionary leadership in a wide variety of associations. The Seminary encourages its faculty to think strategically, to act creatively, and to look for new possibilities, which leads them to extend our educational mission far beyond the confines of the classroom.

Statement on Women and Men in Ministry

Tyndale Seminary affirms that both men and women are created in the image of God, that they are equally recipients of the redemptive grace of God, and that the Spirit of God is conferred upon men and women alike.

The Seminary further recognizes that there are both men and women who sense a divine calling to professional ministry. Because the Seminary is not a church, nor does it represent a single denomination, it does not ordain or make the decision of who shall be ordained.

Students come to us from a variety of churches and denominations, some that ordain women and some that do not.

All academic programs at Tyndale Seminary are open to women and men.

Within the evangelical tradition of Christianity, differences of opinion exist regarding the roles of men and women. Discussions of such topics shall be conducted openly and sensitively. All persons shall be honoured and their principled convictions recognized. We value reasoned dialogue on these issues, which should be guided by Scripture, our supreme authority in matters of faith and practice.

While respecting divergent viewpoints and ecclesiastical traditions on the issue of the role of women within the Church's organizational structures, the faculty of Tyndale Seminary are fully committed to supporting women who sense God's calling into the full scope of ministry responsibilities, including the ordained ministries of the Church.

Innovative Course Scheduling

While Tyndale Seminary encourages students to study full-time if at all possible, it also provides innovative scheduling and delivery formats for those who are combining their studies with employment, ministry, and family commitments. In addition to a full range of semester-long, daytime classes, courses are also held in the evenings, on weekends, in intensive week-long formats, and online.

Fall semester (September – December)

January Intersession (one-week intensive courses offered in early January)

Winter semester (January – April)

Summer semester (May – August)

This scheduling allows students four different entry points for their academic programs and enables them to accelerate their progress toward completing degree programs through year-round study.

Affiliations and Associations

Association of Theological Schools (ATS)

Tyndale Seminary is a member of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). The degree programs offered by Tyndale Seminary are accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of ATS.

Canadian Chinese School of Theology at Tyndale Seminary (CCSTTS)

An agreement between Tyndale University College & Seminary and the Association of Canadian Chinese Theological Education (ACCTE) provides the opportunity for Mandarin-speaking students to take the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree at Tyndale Seminary in the Mandarin language. All courses in the Mandarin-language MDiv

are approved by Tyndale Seminary and taught by qualified professors. For further information, see the description in the program section of this Calendar, or contact the program assistant, Betty Poon: bpoon@tyndale.ca

Free Methodist Church of Canada

Tyndale Seminary students preparing for ministry and/or ordination within the Free Methodist Church of Canada may receive credit toward their degree program for completing the denominationally offered course, *The Heart of Canadian Methodism*, provided that they enroll simultaneously in a Directed Reading and Research (DRR) course at Tyndale Seminary. Supplemental course assignments will be required.

Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (CASC)

The Canadian Association for Spiritual Care (formerly CAPPE) is a national organization committed to the professional education, certification, and support of people involved in pastoral care and pastoral counselling. Tyndale Seminary students may take Supervised Pastoral Education (SPE) and clinical pastoral education (CPE) for credit toward their degree program, provided that the courses fit with their particular program of study.

The Institute for Worship Studies

Tyndale Seminary students preparing for worship and liturgical ministries may apply for a Letter of Permission to take eligible graduate courses from The Institute for Worship Studies of Jacksonville, Florida, for credit toward their degree program. Courses for transfer credit to Tyndale will be evaluated by the Registrar and must fit with the student's particular program of study. For further information on course offerings and application requirements, please consult the website of the Institute for Worship Studies, www.iwsfla.org.

Master's Pentecostal Seminary

Master's Pentecostal Seminary (MPS), affiliated with the Eastern Districts of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC), has an agreement with Tyndale Seminary that allows students preparing for ministry within a Pentecostal context to take a prescribed sequence of courses in Pentecostal studies as part of their degree program. Courses are offered throughout the year in a variety of formats, some on Tyndale's campus and others at Agincourt Pentecostal Church. While Pentecostal Studies courses are designed with Pentecostal students in mind, they are open to all eligible seminary students.

The Master of Theological Studies (MTS) degree in Pentecostal Studies is unique in North America. This two-year (18-course) degree allows students the opportunity to focus on Pentecostal studies within the broader context of evangelical thought. This program is not specifically designed to prepare persons for ordained ministry, but rather to provide Pentecostal pastors and lay leaders with an opportunity for intensive study in the Pentecostal tradition.

For further information, contact Dr. Van Johnson, Master's Pentecostal Seminary at: vjohnson@tyndale.ca.

North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAIITS)

An agreement between Tyndale University College and Seminary and the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAIITS) provides the opportunity for indigenous students, or those preparing to work in indigenous contexts, to take the Master of Theological Studies (MTS) degree at Tyndale Seminary. The MTS Indigenous Studies program is designed and taught by qualified, primarily indigenous instructors, using indigenous methodologies within a contemporary context. For further information, see the description in the program section of this Calendar, or contact office@naiits.com.

Centres and Resources

Tyndale Open Learning Centre

The Tyndale Open Learning Centre fosters the development of Canadian Christian leaders in congregational contexts, Christian organizations, the marketplace, and the public sector. The Centre directs its attention to the community at large, bringing together strategically placed leaders who are committed to advancing the mission of God in their particular spheres of influence. The Centre is also mandated to conduct research that articulates a biblical perspective on leadership issues and to disseminate leadership resources to the Christian community and broader public.

For further information regarding the Tyndale Open Learning Centre, contact the Executive Director, Peter Dickens, at pdickens@tyndale.ca.

Hudson Taylor Centre for Chinese Ministries

The mandate of the Hudson Taylor Centre at Tyndale Seminary is to advance Chinese Ministries in North America and the world. The Centre seeks to:

1. facilitate the interchange of insights and concerns between the academy and the Church,
2. conduct and promote scholarly research in Chinese ministries,
3. apply and implement research results into frontline ministry,
4. encourage timely response in the scholarly community to issues encountered by churches,
5. provide forums for dialogue and consultation related to Chinese ministries,
6. offer professional development, training, seminars, and workshops.

The Hudson Taylor Centre, named after pioneering missionary to China and the founder of the China Inland Mission (now Overseas Missionary Fellowship), is currently undertaking several projects within the Chinese Church context, including Mandarin ministries, English ministries, Biblical interpretation in the postmodern context, strategies and directions for the 21st century church, pastoral counselling, family ministries, evangelism, and church planting. For more information, contact Nelly Chau, administrator, Hudson Taylor Centre for Chinese Ministries. Phone 416.226.6620 ext. 2223; fax 416.226.9464; email thtc@tyndale.ca.

Tyndale Intercultural Ministries (TIM) Centre

The mandate of the TIM Centre is to network, train, research, and equip. The TIM Centre offers seminars, workshops, inter-mission consultation, training partnerships, and networking opportunities for churches, mission agencies, and individuals interested in intercultural ministry. For further information about the TIM Centre, please contact the director, Robert Cousins, at **tim@tyndale.ca**.