



Ministry Training Frequently Asked Questions

How long have you been a school?

The Center for Sacred Studies has been incorporated as a non-profit since 2002; the Ministry School opened officially May 1, 2007 and graduated its first class in April of 2009.

Who is your credentialing body?

The state of California, who named us a 501c3 nonprofit religious institution.

Are you actually accredited and if so with whom?

Yes, a Certificate of Ordination from our school, which is recognized as a California 501c3 non-profit church, entitles our graduates to act as ministers. Graduates of this school have performed weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies. Usually some paperwork is required with your local or provincial licensing body as the final step in legally recognizing the ministerial function. We are currently working on Canadian recognition of our Ministers through affiliation with other organizations already recognized in the various provinces.

Exactly what title do we graduate with if going the ordained route?

Minister of Walking Prayer

Are there other requirements beyond this program that would be required to become ordained?

Complete all modules and reflection papers; attend both retreats; complete 2 breathworks per year; maintain monthly phone contact with mentor.

How many students sign up each year?

30-35, including full-time students and auditors.

Where do these students come from?

The majority of our students come from North America and Canada, however we do have some students from other countries.

Is there a way that I can speak with students who have graduated your program?

Yes - we can arrange for you to make contact with an alumni and/or current students and one or more will contact you.

During the retreat weeks...what exactly is taught?

Retreat weekends consist of breathworks, group bonding exercises, and the chance to reflect on and integrate the teachings up to that point. The second retreat weekend is graduation and ordination. The retreats are an important aspect of the training in that they provide the experiential component, and for this reason greatly enhance the alchemy of the shared process. *They are required, and unfortunately cannot be substituted if there are limitations with travel.*

Is there a general kind of estimate regarding time commitment?

The biggest time commitment is the reading. If you are an avid reader this may not be a consideration. The paper requirement is minimal. The papers are a response to the teaching in the monthly module and are intended to be short and reflective (500 words max). A few hours a week to absorb the teaching and reading. More time allows for deeper immersion.

When are the conference calls?

There are one to two one-hour group conference calls a month – they are typically scheduled on weeknights and generally on a Tuesday through Thursday of the week, at 6pm PT/7pm MT/8pm CT/9pm ET. They generally fall during the second and third week of the month. This is something to consider if you are overseas in Europe or other continents. (It may be middle of the night!) **It's a great way to feel connected to your classmates so you may want to shift your work schedules to be available for the calls.** However we record all the calls and upload them to our school site so you can listen to them when you are able.

Will there be book purchases?

A reading list is provided upon registration. In general there is one book assigned per month, and some instructors refer to the books as important to the teaching while others use them more loosely. Most of the books can be purchased on Amazon, and some can be found at your local libraries. **Do consider this again, if you are attending from another country as not all the books are in PDF or online reader formats.** Unfortunately we are not in a position to provide assistance with book purchases.

If one decides to audit the program, can they go back later and do further work and be ordained?

This is an option, but we've realized that those who are auditing miss out a lot on the integration of the teaching via the papers, interactions with mentors and the retreats. We have had a few students make this choice part-way through the program. The student who chooses to do this is then required to pay the difference in tuition fees to make this switch. Anyone considering auditing needs to have phone/Skype conversation with the Registrar to be sure they understand what will be different, especially students overseas.

Who are the mentors?

Our mentors are selected largely from members of the community who have been through our Ministry Training Program and are very eager to serve students as Mentors. They are matched up with the students based on location and professional/personal interests (as best as possible). Students connect with their mentors once a month for a 45-minute call. Mentors are there to support the student's process during the two-year training. It's a very important aspect of our program and greatly enriches the experience.

Are there any other fees other than tuition that I should be aware of?

As for tuition, the breathwork and retreats are at additional cost. The retreat fee for this year is \$650 and this includes **tuition, room, and board** for a Thursday eve to Monday morning retreat at Wildwood Retreat Center located in Guerneville, CA. Its about 2.5 hours outside the city of San Francisco, so there are expenses for travel to include. Breathworks average between \$150-\$200 for a day long workshop, and this cost depends on the facilitator, location and number of staff, participants etc. Depending on where you are located you may have to travel to attend a breathwork.

Are there scholarships for your program?

In 2013 we introduced our MTP Scholarship Program and have begun working with students to discuss various ways to offer access to students who would otherwise not be able to afford to attend. The MTP Scholarship Program Fund was created through the generosity of our community, comprised of students, alumni, and in-kind donors aligned with the mission of our training.

Students with interest in this are advised to contact us early in the calendar year, as there are a limited amount of awards granted. We have an application process that students are asked to complete to be considered.

Note: There can also be limitations with awards based on class size and current economic climate for the organization. We can assist in helping you look at ways to crowdfund and seek support through social networking to raise your tuition, as many of our students have had success with this.

Please contact the Registrar for more information.