

Academic Policies

Academic Honesty

Registration at IGSM requires adherence to the graduate school's standards of academic integrity. These standards may be intuitively understood, and cannot in any case be listed exhaustively, the following examples represent some basic types of behavior that are unacceptable:

1. Cheating: allowing another person to do one's work and submitting that work under one's own name.
2. Plagiarism: submitting material that in part or whole is not entirely one's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source.
3. Fabrication: falsifying or inventing any information, data, or citation.

IGSM policy holds that academic dishonesty may result in the student receiving an "F" for the course, dismissal from the course, or possibly being dismissed from the school.

Due Process and Student Rights

In all cases involving academic dishonesty, the student charged or suspected shall, at a minimum, be accorded the following rights:

1. Prompt investigation of all charges of academic dishonesty, to be conducted, insofar as possible, in a manner that prevents public disclosure of the student's identity.
2. Reasonable written notice of the facts and evidence underlying the charge of academic dishonesty and of the principle(s) of academic integrity said to have been violated.
3. Reasonable written notice of the procedure by which the accuracy of the charge will be determined.
4. Reasonable time, if requested, within which to prepare a response to the charge.
5. A hearing or meeting at which the student involved may be heard and the accuracy of the charge determined.
6. Review of any adverse initial determination, if requested, by the Academic Affairs Committee.

Academic Probation

A student may be placed on academic probation for several reasons including, but not limited to a failure to maintain the minimum grade standard for course work

A student placed on academic probation will be allowed to enroll in courses under the following conditions:

1. The minimum grade standard is maintained for all completed courses.
2. All academic course work is completed on time.

The length of time a student is required to stay on academic probation will be determined by IGSM.

- If the conditions of academic probation are not met, the student will be suspended for a period of three months. After the period of suspension, a student may re-enroll in courses under an

academic probation status. Upon suspension for a second time, the student will be dismissed from the school and may not re-apply for admission for one year.

Admission Requirements

Admission to IGSM is based on a selection process conducted by IGSM. We review each application thoroughly to determine the applicant's qualifications as well as compatibility of the school programs to the applicant's educational goals. The applicant will be informed of IGSM's actions within two weeks after all required application materials have been received.

Based on the school's commitment to Christian principles and foundations, applicants must be Christian believers. Application and admission is a three-step process.

1. Apply online or request an Application Form from IGSM.
2. Complete the application process.

Online application includes complete instructions and an e-mail option for forwarding references. The applicant must submit:

- Letters of recommendation from three persons not related to the applicant who know the applicant well, preferably businessmen, elders, ministers or professors.
- A letter of approval and promise of support from the applicant's current employer.
- Transcripts from all previous colleges, universities, or seminaries.
- A picture (a close-up of head and shoulders) should be mailed to IGSM. The photograph will be used for purposes of identification only.
- Indicate approval of the IGSM doctrinal statement along with the Mission and Vision Statements, stating any personal objections to any of the items.

If you order by mail or phone, fill out the form, request references and transcripts, and return materials to IGSM.

Upon receipt of all necessary documentation, IGSM will notify each applicant as to their academic status with IGSM. A letter of acceptance will be mailed to all those who are accepted along with an evaluation of any transfer credits so the student will know his/her requirements for graduation.

3. Enroll in class and purchase materials.
 - Register by phone with a credit card or through the mail by completing an enrollment form and enclosing a check or money order.

Specific admission requirements may be found listed under each degree or certificate program described in the Academic Programs section of this catalog.

Standard Student Admission Status

Students who have met all the admission requirements for a specific degree or certificate program are admitted to the school with all the rights and privileges associated with a normal student admission status.

Special Student Admission Status

The standard prerequisite for graduate degree programs is an accredited baccalaureate degree or other accredited graduate degree specified under the individual degree requirements described in this catalog. However, the school allows a limited number of students to enter degree programs without all necessary prerequisites under a category entitled Special Student Status.

Non-Degree Student Admission Status

A small percentage of the student body may be composed of those who desire to enroll in courses for academic credit but are not currently working toward the completion of a degree or certificate program. Students who are unsure of their academic goals may enroll under this category. The student is expected to meet the same requirements for course work as those involved in the Advanced Certificate programs.

Audit Admission Status

As classroom space allows, a limited number of students may audit courses on a non-credit basis. These students are not required to fulfill all the assignments for a particular course, for example, they may omit certain project assignments, however it is recommended that they complete at least 25% of the reading assignments to get maximum value out of the discussions and interaction that take place during the class.

Application Deadlines

Undergraduate and Certificate Applications

Undergraduate and Certificate level applications should be submitted no less than eight weeks before the first course for which the student desires to register. This allows time for them to get the syllabus for the class and complete the reading assignments if they are attending one of the extension site classes. It also allows IGSM to ensure that there are enough students registered to conduct the class. A course registration deposit is required (see Financial Information).

Graduate Degree Applications

Graduate level applications should be submitted no less than eight weeks before the first course for which the student desires to register. The official beginning date for each course will be eight weeks before the on-campus or Internet portion of the course. A syllabus and reading list is available three months prior to each course and will be mailed out to students after IGSM receives a course registration deposit (see Financial Information). To allow sufficient time for reading assignments, the student should submit application and registration materials as early as possible. Upon receipt of the application, a student is allowed to take one course before officially being accepted into a specific degree program.

Audit Policy

Auditing students and spouses of students can register for courses eight weeks before the on-site portion of a course begins, pending space availability. (See financial section for current tuition fees).

Auditors are expected to read at least 25% of the required reading for the course in order to participate in class discussions. They will not be required to do the course project or the reading reports nor will they receive a grade. All auditors must be approved for course enrollment by IGSM.

Class Formats

Classes are offered in two basic formats:

- Intensive formats at extension sites throughout North America—In this format, students do their required reading before attending class for five consecutive days. After the on-site class students will do a written project that applies the information in the class to their unique setting.
- Classes offered online via the Internet—In these classes the students will also have reading requirements for each class. However, the instruction will be delivered via the Internet with specific times for interaction with the faculty member responsible for the class. Written projects will also be required for these classes. Those students choosing to take any of the Internet classes will need to have the necessary computer hardware and software to facilitate the classes as well as knowledge of how to use those resources. Students choosing to take classes via the Internet are allowed to take up to 50% of their degree requirement using this option.

The approximate time requirements for each format is as follows:

Intensive on-site format

- Reading assignment—approximately 33-75 hours per class depending on the number of credit hours the student is taking. For a 2 credit class students must read at least 800 pages, for 3 credits a minimum of 1,300 pages and for 4 credits a minimum of 2,000 pages. All reading is done prior to attending the class and written reading reports are required. You will receive a form showing a suggested format for these book reports.
- Class attendance—35 hours from Mon. 12:30 PM to Friday noon.
- Written project—approximately 45-90 hours each class depending on the number of credit hours the student is taking. For a 2 credit class students must submit a project of at least 10 pages, for 3 credits a project of at least 20 pages, and for 4 credits a project of at least 30 pages. All projects must be completed within two months of the completion of the on-site class.

Online format

- Reading assignment—approximately 33-75 hours depending on which program student is involved in. Reading can be done prior to Internet portion of the class or on a schedule set by the faculty member during the Internet portion of the class.
- Class attendance—13 weeks. Each week there will be one text-based portion of approximately 90 minutes to be done at the student's own pace plus some brief written assignments related to the readings for the week. In addition there will be simultaneous chat sessions with the instructor scheduled periodically during the class. These chat sessions are required and all students as well as the instructor will be online at the same time for these sessions. Thus, the total is approximately 39 hours.
- Written project—approximately 45-90 hours depending on which program student is involved in. All projects must be completed within two months of the completion of the Internet class.

Schedule of proposed classes

At present over 85 different courses are planned to be offered in the first few years. Additional classes will be offered as appropriate adjunct faculty become available. You will receive a complete

listing of all the classes with a brief description of each. Classes are broken into eleven basic categories or departments.

- BL Bible
- CP Church Planting
- HM Hispanic Ministry
- LD Church Leadership Development
- MM Marketplace Ministry
- MN Missions
- PM Practical Ministry
- RS Research Studies
- TH Theology
- UM Urban Ministry
- YM Youth Ministry

Extension site classes are scheduled depending on the number of students registered. Courses are assigned at the different extension sites based on the number of students attending that site, so that as many different courses as possible are offered somewhere in the U.S. and Canada each year. Students are welcome to attend any of the extension sites.

Internet classes are scheduled by semesters and attempt to balance the offerings as much as possible over a five year cycle.

Reading Assignments

Students will receive a syllabus of required readings when they sign up for a class. Depending on how many semester credit hours they are enrolled for, there are different levels of reading assignments required. Students receive both a list of required books and a list of recommended books. These book lists provide the latest and best information available regarding the subject studied. Normally students take approximately two months to complete the reading assignments. Written reports are required for each book and a Reading Verification form is filled out when the student attends the class. With the exception of the student's first class it is expected that all the required reading will be completed prior to attending the class.

Class Attendance

On-site classes begin on Monday afternoon at 12:30 and finish on Fridays at 12:30 P.M. Class days finish at 4:30 P.M. except on Friday. Including the lunch hours, which serve as directed discussion times, a student has 35 hours of contact time per class. Attendance is required at all class sessions. Class sessions include a variety of formats including lecture, question and answer sessions, small group discussion, multi-media presentations, case studies, etc.

Internet classes are scheduled during three semesters of 13 weeks each. Students are required to complete a text-based portion of approximately 75 minutes each week and participate in a scheduled simultaneous discussion group time with instructor and fellow students. Attendance and participation is required for all discussion group times.

Class Projects

At the conclusion of each class students are required to complete a written project that integrates the material from the course with a specific area of need or interest for the student in their own ministry setting.

Course projects are due no later than eight (8) weeks after the last day of the on-site portion of a course or eight weeks after the last Internet class. Course projects are to be sent directly to IGSM unless directed otherwise by school administration.

Students who request projects be mailed back to them must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope large enough for its contents. Otherwise, graded projects will be kept on file at IGSM.

The number of pages for these projects varies depending on the number of semester credit hours the student is taking. Class projects are graded by the instructor and returned to the students if they desire.

These projects help bridge the normal gap between instruction and implementation. By wrestling with the concepts from the class and applying them to a particular issue or problem in a current ministry setting, a student has the opportunity for genuine integration of the content with the necessary practical implementation.

Late or Incomplete Work

If projects are not submitted by the due date, a temporary grade of “I” (Incomplete) will be recorded in the student’s file. Project extensions must be requested through IGSM. Approved extensions are granted for one month (30 days) and the student’s account is charged a late fee. Under extenuating circumstances, with approval from IGSM, longer extensions may be granted in one month increments with payment of the appropriate fees. If all work for a course is not submitted by the extension deadline, the “I” grade will be converted to a grade of “F” (Failing).

Thesis and Dissertation

Students in the Master of Theological Studies program are required as the last course in their studies to complete a Master’s Thesis. The format for this thesis follows standard academic requirements, however the subject for the Thesis is expected to be something that is very practical and applicable by the student in their current ministry.

Students in the Doctor of Ministry program are required to complete a Doctoral Dissertation. The style and focus is similar to those completing the Master’s Thesis, although the requirements are more extensive.

Credit Hour Definitions

A semester hour at the graduate level is defined as 45 hours of academic work consisting of classroom instruction, reading assignments and independent project work. Thus, for a four credit class the expectation is that the student will spend approximately 180 hours completing the assignments and attending the classes whether on-site or through the Internet.

Grading

Grading Factors

Project grades are submitted by the instructor to IGSM approximately two months after the course project due date. Grade cards are then immediately mailed to students. Final grades are typically based on the following criteria.

1. 25% for class attendance, participation and class assignments
2. 25% for reading assignments
3. 50% for course projects

Grade Changes

Credit for graduate level courses requires a minimum grade of “B-.” Students receiving less than a “B-” grade have usually submitted a project that is below required graduate level standards. A one-time opportunity to have a grade changed will be offered to a student who must then re-submit the sub-standard project within 30 days of receiving the final grade. After the re-submission of the project, the grade may be changed at the discretion of the course instructor if warranted by an improved project.

Students are also allowed to retake a course where they have received a “F” (Failing) grade. The grade received the second time will then replace the original “F” grade.

Students who require more than one grade change using these procedures will be placed on academic probation.

Grade Numerical Values

Grades have been assigned the following numerical values for the purpose of computing grade points and grade point averages.

	B+/3.34	C+/2.34	F/0
A/4.00	B/3.00	C/2.00	I (incomplete)/0
A-/3.67	B-/2.67	C-/1.67	W (withdraw)/0

Grades of “I” and “W” are not included when calculating grade point averages.

Grade Points

Grade points are calculated by multiplying the grade numerical value by the number of credit hours for a class. Plus and minus grades are used in the grade point calculation.

Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by dividing the total grade points by the total accumulated credit hours.

Life-Learning Credits/Directed Study Credits

Students may earn up to 8 units maximum through independent studies. Students must obtain the services of existing faculty for supervision or propose another qualified course advisor from outside the institution. Independent Study courses come in one and two-unit size increments. A typical graduate course is four credits and therefore students who do Independent Study will need to consider a combination of Independent Study units to provide course credit equivalency.

Credit may not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to the student's matriculation into the graduate degree program.

The time limit for completion of any Independent Study course is 90 days (3 months) from the time the course contract is signed by the student. This means the course paper or project must be done (as well as reading, research, etc.) no later than 3 months after signing up for Independent Study.

Independent Study Procedures

Students must propose an Independent Study advisor who will evaluate the student's work and assign a grade at the end of the course of study. The advisor will also sign a contract with IGSM and is paid an advisor fee.

Students who sign up for independent study must fill out appropriate IGSM forms, sign a contract with the school, and pay all required fees. Tuition will be calculated at the current rate of tuition per credit. Policies for independent study work include the following:

	<u>One Unit</u>	<u>Two Units</u>
Approx. Hrs. of Work	45 hours	90 hours
1.	For the purpose of Independent Study credit, project papers are calculated at a rate of one page of text equals three clock hours of academic work.	
2.	Hours accrued for attendance of seminars and conferences equals five clock hours per day of attendance (applied toward reading and research only).	
3.	For reading, 1 hour equals 30 pages.	
4.	For listening, 1 hour equals 1 hour of listening (cassette tape, video, etc.).	

Mentoring Requirements

It is our firm conviction that mentoring relationships are essential for personal growth, as they help to take the learning activities from the classroom into the field. Today, many pastors are relatively isolated from the help they need and could receive from others around them. One of the requirements at IGSM is the establishment of key mentoring relationships. A reporting system on the progress of these mentoring relationships is required annually as part of the curriculum.

Students are allowed to select their own mentors, but it is strongly recommended that they select someone who is in a position they see themselves in during the next five to ten years. A contract is developed between the student and the mentor and is part of the application process. Annual evaluation reports from the mentor are required.

It is not required that the mentor be in such close geographical proximity that the student could physically meet with them, however, it is recommended since face-to-face contact is much warmer and generally more effective than a phone call. Students are required to schedule at least one meeting quarterly with their mentor. The purpose of the meeting is threefold: (1) discussion of where you are personally (emotional state, family, ministry, personal spiritual disciplines, etc.), (2) discussion of experience and academic progress at IGSM, (3) plans for next quarter (personally and professionally)—these plans should specifically address areas of concern identified in first question.

Once you have selected a mentor an official contract will be mailed from IGSM.

Mentors are required to fill out an annual evaluation and return it to IGSM.

Pre-Registration

Students already admitted to the school are asked to fill out a pre-registration form that indicates that classes they intend to take during the next year. There is no fee required with this registration, but it helps IGSM do a better job of scheduling its course offerings. A registration deposit (see Financial Information) is required eight weeks prior to the on-campus or Internet portion of the class in order to be officially registered.

Readmission of Former Students

A student who has interrupted attendance and wishes to return, must apply for readmission through IGSM. If the student has attended any other schools during the absence, arrangements must be made for an official transcript (showing good standing) to be sent from each institution to IGSM. The following procedures are necessary for readmission.

1. Complete a new application form and submit it with the required fee.
2. Submit a one to two-page statement describing ministry experience during the inactive status and reasons for the interrupted attendance.
3. Submit a reference letter if requested to do so.

Student Status

Active Status

Active status is maintained by completing a minimum of eight semester credit hours or more each year. Active status will be maintained for one year during the writing of thesis and dissertation projects.

Full-time Status

Each course module is considered to be 15 weeks in length. To be classified as full-time for financial aid purposes for other programs, a graduate student must satisfy one of the following conditions.

1. The student is enrolled for at least four semester credit hours per 15 week term.
2. The student is enrolled for at least four semester credit hours per 15 week term for research and composition of a thesis or dissertation. Although the thesis or dissertation project may require additional time for completion, financial aid is provided for only one 15 week course.

Inactive Status

An inactive status will result when a student fails to complete at least 8 semester credit hours per academic year without a formal Leave of Absence notification (see below).

Leave of Absence

Students may request in writing a formal Leave of Absence for up to two years from his or her degree program. This Leave of Absence will not affect one's active status. The request must be sent to IGSM for approval.

Transfer of Credits

Transfer credit may be granted for course work taken at other accredited institutions when such work is deemed equivalent to courses offered at IGSM. Generally, only partial credit can be give for

academic work taken at a non-accredited institution. Requests for acceptance of transferred credits must be obtained from IGSM. Credit hours earned in other academic programs that resulted in the award of a specific degree may not be transferred for credit. Under-graduate credit is generally unacceptable as graduate level transfer credit. Transfer credit does not occur automatically, but must be requested in writing at the time of admission.

Transfer of credit from one institution to another normally involves at least three considerations:

1. The educational quality of the institution from which the student transfers.
2. The comparability of the nature, content, and level of credit earned to that offered by IGSM.
3. The appropriateness and applicability of the credit earned to the programs offered by IGSM, in light of the student's educational goals.

As a general rule, credit hours may be transferred into certificate or degree programs from other accredited equivalent programs as follows:

- One-half of total degree credit hours required (grades no less than "B")

Credit for Experience-Based Learning

IGSM is committed to the position of the Distance Education and Training Council (USA) on "Transfer and Equivalent Credit" which includes the following provision:

Credit may be given for adequately validated experiential equivalent learning of a postsecondary nature. Examples are: credit for business experience, university level equivalency tests, achievement in a related profession, military training or other post-secondary level equivalent experience. For no student, however, may the credit given for experiential learning exceed 15 credits.

The amount of credit for experiential learning will be determined based upon a review of student's Prior Learning Portfolio. Forms and instructions for the completion of your Prior Learning Portfolio can be obtained from the IGSM office. The fee for credit for experience-based learning is the same as the academic charge for taking a course.

It should be understood, however, the total of any transfer credits and experience-based credits cannot exceed one-half of the total degree credit.

For graduate students no credit can be given for work completed prior to admission to IGSM.

Withdrawal from A Course

After registering for a course, students may withdraw from a course by notifying IGSM. The following policies will apply in the case of withdrawals.

1. When a notice of withdrawal is submitted before or within the 8 weeks reading portion of a course, a grade will not be filed (i.e. anytime before the on-site or Internet portion of the course).
2. When a notice of withdrawal is submitted after the 8th week but before the 15th week of a course, a grade of "W" (Withdrawal) will be filed on the student's transcript (i.e. during or after the on-site portion of the course but before the due date of the course project).
3. When a notice of withdrawal from a course is not submitted by the end of the 15th week (the course project due date), a grade of "F" (Failing) will be recorded on the student's transcript unless an extension has been granted.

Withdrawal from the School

Formal withdrawal from an academic program will consist of a notice of withdrawal sent to IGSM.