



Metro Atlanta Seminary

Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Program Overview

1. What is the primary goal of the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling program?

The MAS MABC program seeks to prepare biblically grounded, spiritually mature counselors who can minister to hurting individuals, families, and communities with the truth of God's Word. Students learn to integrate sound theology with compassionate care in order to serve effectively within the local church and community.

2. How does the MABC program differ from a professional counseling or psychology degree?

The MABC is a ministry-focused degree rather than a state-licensure track. It emphasizes Scripture as the ultimate authority for understanding and addressing the issues of life, forming a distinctly biblical and theological approach to counseling. While it does not lead to state licensure, **graduates are eligible to pursue board certification as Christian Counselors through the [Georgia Board for Christian Counselors](#)**, affirming their preparation for ministry-based counseling roles within the church and Christian organizations.

3. Is the program designed for those already serving in ministry or for those preparing to enter ministry?

The program is primarily designed for men and women who are called to counsel or already engaged in lay counseling or other ministry within a local church or faith-based setting. It builds upon existing experience by providing deeper biblical, theological, and practical training for those currently serving and seeking to strengthen their effectiveness in counseling and discipleship ministries.

4. What kinds of roles or ministries can graduates of the program pursue?

Graduates will be equipped to serve as Board Certified Christian Counselors (via the [Georgia Board for Christian Counselors](#)), pastoral care leaders, small group mentors, or discipleship coordinators within churches and Christian ministries. Some also may use their training in other nonprofit or community-based ministry contexts.

5. How does the program integrate biblical, theological, and counseling studies?

Students complete coursework that blends Biblical authority and theological depth with practical application. Each counseling course draws directly from Scripture and is complemented by the MAS core curriculum in biblical and theological studies.

6. What practicum or supervised ministry experiences are included in the MABC program?

The program includes a **structured field experience practicum** that allows students to apply biblical counseling principles in real ministry contexts under supervision. Students gain hands-on experience through **mentored counseling sessions, case studies, and ministry-based assignments**, all designed to develop discernment, humility, and skill in caring for others biblically. The practicum integrates closely with coursework, providing a vital bridge between theological study and real-world application.

Admissions and Eligibility

1. Who is best suited to apply for the MABC program?

Applicants should be mature Christian believers who demonstrate spiritual depth, godly character, and a clear sense of calling to ministry.

2. Are there academic prerequisites or prior degrees required for admission?

Applicants are generally expected to hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. However, exceptions may be considered for seasoned, spiritually mature believers who demonstrate significant ministry experience and proven effectiveness in lay counseling or related pastoral care roles. Such applicants will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure readiness for graduate-level study and ministry formation.

3. What information will I need to provide as part of the application process?

Applicants will need to submit to the following:

- a. MAS Application, including:
 - i. Personal Testimony
 - ii. 3 relevant references
 - iii. Transcripts of prior study (if applicable)
- b. As part of the application process, we also invite each applicant to participate in a personal conversation with members of our admissions team. This conversation is designed to be a time of mutual discernment – an opportunity to discuss your calling, preparation, and expectations, and to explore together whether the MAS MABC is the right next step in your formation and ministry.

4. What kind of ministry or lay counseling experience is expected before applying?

Candidates should have substantial prior experience providing care, encouragement, or discipleship within a faith-based setting – such as lay counseling, mentoring, small group leadership, or pastoral visitation.

5. How does MAS assess spiritual maturity and ministry calling during the admissions process?

Spiritual maturity is assessed through personal conversations, individual testimony, theological understanding, pastoral references, and the applicant's record of faithful service and involvement in a local church.

Program Structure and Format

1. How long does it take to complete the MABC program?

The program is designed to be completed in three years of study, allowing students to balance coursework with ongoing ministry and life responsibilities.

2. What is the expected course load and pacing for students?

Students typically take two courses per 8-week term, maintaining steady progress through both counseling and core theological courses.

3. Please explain more about the Practicum requirements.

In year 3, the Practicum consists of offsite, practical field experience in various counseling situations. The students will be offered counseling opportunities at pre-selected locations. The students will arrange counseling supervision and sessions at the specific location they select. Each session should be documented, and the compiled documentation will be submitted as part of the final course assessment. The Practicum requires 200 hours of face-to-face field experience, 35 hours of onsite supervision, and approximately 40 hours dedicated to documentation.

4. Can the program be completed while maintaining full-time employment or ministry involvement?

Yes. The program's structure and pacing are designed with working adults and active ministry leaders in mind.

5. Are the courses offered in person, online, or in a hybrid format?

Courses are delivered in a structured, cohort-based format that includes in-person instruction and opportunities for mentoring and peer interaction. An online option is available for remote students to attend live classes (via Zoom). In addition, there are 5 self-paced, pre-recorded courses (mini-terms) that students will take separately from the scheduled live classes. While the schedule for these mini-terms is up to the student, we recommend that those be completed during the first two years of the program.

6. Is the program cohort-based, and what are the advantages of that structure?

Yes. Students progress through the program together, fostering a strong sense of community, accountability, and mutual encouragement throughout their studies.

Financial and Administrative Details

1. Is financial aid or tuition assistance available for MABC students?

MAS offers limited tuition assistance for students with unique circumstances to help make theological education accessible to those who qualify.

2. Are MAS core courses transferable to other MAS programs or degrees?

Yes. Core theological courses completed within the MABC program may be applied toward other eligible MAS degree programs. Students who have previously completed MAS core theology courses as an enrolled student will not be required to repeat them.

Application Process

1. What materials and references are required as part of the application?

Applicants should complete the MAS online application, submit transcripts, personal statements, individual testimony, a pastoral reference letter from their senior pastor or another member of the church's pastoral staff, and two additional personal references. In addition, applicants will undergo a personal interview, which will focus on their own spiritual journey and their understanding (and application) of key theological concepts (doctrine of God, inspiration of Scripture, the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the fall of man, common grace, regeneration, faith, repentance, justification, adoption, sanctification, etc.)

2. When is the application deadline for the next MABC cohort?

The application period for the August 2026 cohort will be open from February 15-June 30, 2026. MAS has a limited number of student openings, so early submission is encouraged to allow time for all aspects of the application process to be completed.

Considering the MABC Program?

Encouragement and answers for those exploring a new season of ministry preparation

1. I haven't been in school for many years – will I be able to handle the coursework?

Yes. The program is designed with adult learners in mind. Faculty and staff provide guidance, resources, and mentoring to help returning students succeed academically while maintaining balance with life and ministry responsibilities.

2. How much writing and reading is involved, and how does MAS support students who are returning to academic study?

Coursework includes readings from Scripture, theological texts, and practical counseling resources, along with reflective writing assignments and case studies. MAS provides orientation, academic coaching, and peer support to help students adjust to graduate-level study. In addition, each student will have an assigned mentor, who will encourage them in their endeavors and assess their spiritual and intellectual development monthly. Our mentors also offer advice on (1) student workload, balancing and integrating family and personal time with seminary, (2) suggestions for managing practicum, and (3) spiritual growth and development, including personal worship, devotional reading, quality of prayer life, and corporate worship involvement.

3. I don't have formal theological training. Will that put me at a disadvantage in the program?

Not at all. The MABC program integrates the MAS core curriculum in biblical and theological studies, ensuring all students develop a strong foundation, regardless of prior formal training. Those with previous coursework may find some content familiar, while new students receive guidance and support to grow confidently.

4. How does the program foster community and relationships among students?

The program is **cohort-based**, meaning students progress through courses together. This structure encourages accountability, peer encouragement, and lasting relationships. Cohort learning, mentoring, and practical exercises create a supportive environment where students learn from one another.

5. Is there mentoring or spiritual guidance available throughout the program?

Yes. Students are paired with experienced faculty and ministry mentors who provide guidance in both academic and practical counseling contexts. Mentoring is a key component of the program, helping students grow spiritually, pastorally, and professionally.

6. Will I be able to balance coursework with my current ministry, family, and personal commitments?

Absolutely. The program is designed for adults actively serving in ministry or managing personal responsibilities. The part-time pace, structured schedule, and cohort support make it possible to integrate study with life and ministry commitments.

7. I feel called to help others but don't see myself as a "professional counselor." Is this program still a good fit for me?

Yes. The MABC equips individuals for **biblical, ministry-based counseling**, and a Georgia Christian Counselor certification, should the student be called into professional Biblical counseling. However, many students enter the program with a heart for service, not a desire for clinical practice. Your focus on caring for others in the church and community is exactly the kind of calling this program supports.

8. What kind of spiritual and personal growth can I expect through the MABC program?

Our counseling students often report significant growth in **biblical understanding, spiritual maturity, pastoral discernment, and relational skills**, allowing them to speak helpful truth into the lives of others. The program challenges and encourages students to rely on the Holy Spirit while developing wisdom, empathy, and confidence in counseling.

9. Are students required to have strong computer or technology skills?

Basic computer literacy is helpful, but the program is designed to support students at all levels. Faculty provide guidance for accessing course materials, submitting assignments, and participating in any online components.

10. What encouragement would you offer someone who feels called to biblical counseling but is hesitant to take this step?

Remember that God equips those He calls. The MABC program is intentionally supportive, designed for adults at all stages of life who want to grow in service to others. Your experience, faith, and heart for ministry are valuable, and this program is a space to develop those gifts in a structured, encouraging environment.