

ALLIANCE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Preparing Christian Leaders for Ministry

ATS Student Handbook

2024

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PREFACE

Welcome to the MINTS version of global theological distance education. As a student, you will be a part of God's call to spread the Gospel to your local area, your region and to the "ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). You will be joining thousands of other Christians throughout the world in this holy effort! This handbook is meant to inform you of how to register, take classes and serve via your local MINTS Center. May God bless you and use you as you study to "show yourself approved" (2 Timothy 2:15)!

Part 1: REGISTRATION (from MINTS Catalog)

Speak with a local Study Center Coordinator, an Associate Academic Dean, or the Academic Dean of MINTS about which MINTS educational program is suitable for you.

If you qualify for the study program, complete and submit documentation (see below) to the appropriate Study Center Coordinator or Country Coordinator:

- 1. Provide national identification, photo (if not part of ID)
- 2. Gather all documented formal, non-formal education, and any ministerial experience reports and submit with application for co-validation consideration.
- 3. Write out testimony (No more than 2 pages detailing your life before Christ, how you trusted in Christ and life since trusting in Christ)
- 4. Download copies of the Academic and Pastoral reference forms (found on www.MINTS.edu -> Study at MINTS -> Application) and deliver and collect the completed references from the appropriate persons.
- 5. Fill out the MINTS Registration form (found on www.MINTS.edu -> Study at MINTS -> Application)

Once your have submitted all application material to the study center, the local Study Center Coordinator will share it with the national Country Coordinator who will pass it along to the Regional Dean and International Academic Dean. Wait for the response from a representative of MINTS. If there is no response within 2 weeks, email MINTS.

Registration should be completed as soon as possible but NO LATER THAN by the time you finish your fifth MINTS course.

Part 2: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (from MINTS Catalog)

The Certificate in Theological Studies (CTS)

Designed either for non-degree seeking students who want to study academically at the Bachelor level or for those who need a school certificate in order to begin the Bachelor program. This program consists of **30 academic hours**: 10 courses in Biblical Studies, Theological Studies, Ministerial Studies, Church History and Missions Studies, and Liberal Arts, or a combination of these, from the Bachelor's degree program.

Bachelor Level Programs

Associate of Arts in Theological Studies (AATS)

Students seeking the AATS degree, will have a 12-year elementary-secondary degree and must

fulfill **60 academic hours** by completing the following:

•	Biblical Studies	6 courses (18 hours)
•	Theological Studies	3 courses (9 hours)
•	Ministerial Studies	3 courses (9 hours)
•	Church History and Missions	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Liberal Arts	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Electives	4 courses (12 hours)

Note: Adult students who are unable to complete the secondary school degree can enroll in the certificate program and upon successfully completing 10 courses enter into the AATS. The certificate program requirements will be completed with AATS standards.

Bachelor of Arts in Theological Studies (BATS)

Students seeking the BATS degree must fulfill **120 academic hours** by completing the following:

•	Biblical Studies	12 courses (36 hours)
•	Theological Studies	6 courses (18 hours)
•	Ministerial Studies	6 courses (18 hours)
•	Church History and Missions	4 courses (12 hours)
•	Liberal Arts	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Electives	10 courses (30 hours)

Also, students seeking the BATS degree, may present a 60 credit AATS degree and complete 60 academic hours.

Majors may be declared in Biblical Studies, Theological Studies, Ministerial Studies, Church History, Prison Ministry, Counseling, Missions, Christian Education and Liberal Arts when ten courses are passed in those majors.

Master Level Programs

The Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS)

Students seeking the MATS degree, will present a 120 credit Bachelor's degree and must fulfill **60 academic hours** by completing the following:

•	Biblical Studies	6 courses (18 hours)
•	Theological Studies	3 courses (9 hours)
•	Ministerial Studies	3 courses (9 hours)
•	Church History and Missions	3 courses (9 hours)
•	Liberal Arts or Electives	4 courses (12 hours)
•	Master's Thesis	1 course (3 hours)

All the students will write a Master Thesis that consists of writing a commentary on a book of the Bible. The guidelines are in the document; *How to Write a MINTS Course*. The thesis will be no shorter than 75 pages and no longer than 125 pages. Each nation has their program of Project 66. The student asks local his local coordinator to consult with the Coordinator of Project 66 as to the Bible book to write a course on at the Master level. The choosing of one's Bible book is coordinated with a master list that is available on writing the Academic Dean. The thesis can

count as a Bible course or as a Liberal Arts course. At the Doctoral level the local Coordinator and student consult with Coordinator of Doctoral program and Coordinator of Project 66.

The Master of Christian Education (MCE)

Students seeking the MCE degree must fulfill **60 academic hours** by completing the following:

•	Biblical Studies	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Theological Studies	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Ministerial Studies	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Church History and Missions	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Liberal Arts	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Christian Education	9 courses (27 hours)
•	Master's Thesis	1 course (3 hours)

The student's master thesis will be a commentary on a book of the Bible. The commentary may be written to suit a specific student audience.

The Master of Divinity (MDiv)

Students seeking the MDiv degree must fulfill **105 academic hours** by completing the following:

•	Biblical Studies	12 courses (36 hours)
•	Theological Studies	6 courses (18 hours)
•	Ministerial Studies	6 courses (18 hours)
•	Church History and Missions	4 courses (12 hours)
•	Liberal Arts	2 courses (6 hours)
•	Electives	5 courses (15 hours)

Core courses will take up 90 hours (a total of 30 courses listed above by area). 15 hours (a total of 5 courses) will be electives.

There is only one thesis for the MATS and MDiv

The MDiv program can include the MATS coursework plus 15 hours of practical projects as well as Greek and Hebrew studies.

MDiv and Doctoral Programs

See the MINTS Catalog for more information about these programs.

Part 3: TRANSFER OF CREDITS (from MINTS Catalog)

Transfer of credits is also called *co-validation*. The International Academic Dean will consider academic credits from other educational institutions. The recognition of MINTS courses in other educational institutions is normally the responsibility of each institution's Academic Dean.

Students should submit academic transcripts and documentation of professional training and/or ministerial service. Based on this documentation, the International Academic Dean will approve transfer equivalencies for courses and practicum.

An academic credit is assigned to an educational activity that has been evaluated by an educational institution. For MINTS, one academic credit is 25-30 hours of evaluated educational

activity.

Co-Validation of Formal Educational Training

MINTS accepts all bachelor level courses regardless of subject matter.

Co-Validation of Non-Formal Educational Training Experiences

One credit for 30 hours of training in a ministry the student is practicing and being supervised. A written certification will indicate the number of hours, the name of the ministry giving the training, the signature of the trainer, and the date. The maximum amount of credits is 12.

For every three credits given, the student will write an essay on the contents of educational experience (3 pages).

Co-Validation for Ministerial Experience

- One credit for each year of full time ministry (2,000 hours per year) for a maximum of **three** credits (AATS) or **six** credits (BATS).
- A letter of confirmation of ministry including the ministry time frame must be signed by the authority supervising the ministry and sent to the Academic Dean.
- An essay of approximately 10 pages must be written detailing experiences and reflecting on lessons learned from the years of ministry.

The International Academic Dean approves the educational training experience credits.

Transfer Credit Documentation Summary

The below table shows the degree program, the maximum number of transfer credits allowed, the MINTS courses needed if maximum transfer occurs and the total credits required for the program:

Program	Maximum Transfer Credits Allowed	MINTS Courses (minimum) Needed	Total Credits Required for MINTS Degree
Certificate in Theological Studies (CTS)	0	30	30
Associate of Arts in Theological Studies (AATS)	30	30	60
Bachelor of Arts in Theological Studies (BATS)	90	30	120
Master of Arts in Theological Studies (MATS)	30 in Theology: OR up to 15 in Liberal Arts and the rest in Theology	30	60

Program	Maximum Transfer Credits Allowed	MINTS Courses (minimum) Needed	Total Credits Required for MINTS Degree
Master of Divinity (MDiv)	52 in Theology	53	105
Doctor in Ministry (DMin)	0	30	5 courses
PhD in Theological Studies (PhD)	0	3 projects	3 projects

Part 4: ACADEMICS

Academic Requirements (from MINTS Catalog)

To register for academic credit, the following time requirements apply: one academic credit constitutes 25-30 hours of academic work including lectures, assignments, and/or project work.

For every three-hour course, the following tasks will be completed for Bachelor and Master levels:

- Minimum of 15 hours of class time or interaction time in on-line courses and correspondence courses.
- 15 hours of homework outside of class that is reported on in class
- Reading: 300 pages for BA, 600 pages for MA; book report, class presentation
- Essay or Project: 7-10 pages for BA, 12-15 pages for MA
- An examination on the course content.

Assignments

Students' course progress will be evaluated through graded assignments. All final exams must state clearly at the top of the examination what tools or materials may be used in the exam. Reexamination may be permitted at the discretion of the course instructor.

Students may complete assignments and take exams in appropriate languages. The professor will announce the language choices at the beginning of the course and the student will indicate his or her preference.

Grading

Grading Scale		
A+	4.0	97-100
A	4.0	93-96
A-	3.7	90-92
B+	3.3	87-89
В	3.0	83-86
B-	2.7	80-82
C+	2.3	77-79

С	2.0	73-76
C-	1.7	70-72
D+	1.3	67-69
D	1.0	63-66
D-	0.7	60-62
F		59 and under

Required courses in which a student receives an "F" must be retaken in order to fulfill graduation requirements. To improve a course grade by no more than 15%, the course may be retaken.

The final due date for all course assignments is at the discretion of the local Study Center. Guidelines for final due date may include; the last examination day of each trimester; work turned in after the trimester deadline penalized one percentage point per week up to 20% at the discretion of the professor; course assignments more than three months late will not be accepted.

All deadlines are set by Local Study Center Coordinator.

Only a professor, in consultation with the **Regional Academic Dean** can change a student's grade.

Concerns

Students may appeal to the professor concerning the grade given for the course. If the student's concern persists after discussion, both the student and the professor will consult with the Vice-President of Academic Affairs. Following the consultation, the professor will issue the final grade.

The following process will be used to deal with unresolved grievances involving MINTS students, faculty and staff:

- Should a grievance arise, first approach the other individual(s) involved to attempt to resolve the situation in accordance with Matthew 18:15.
- If no resolution is reached, discuss the situation with the Vice-President of Academic Affairs. The Vice-President of Academic Affairs will assist the student in formulating a plan to resolve the problem. The Vice-President of Academic Affairs will submit a written report of the plan to the President once the matter has been adopted by the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and reported to the President.
- If no resolution is reached, or if the student is not satisfied with the mediation of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, the student is encouraged to speak with the President and then the board.

Transcript Requests (from MINTS Catalog)

Transcript requests are made through the Associate Academic Dean associated with the local study center. The Associate Academic Dean will ask the MINTS office to print the student's official transcript.

Academic Responsibility

Each Christian has the right to study theology at his academic level, be that the certificate, bachelor, master, or doctoral level. MINTS is willing to offer a theological education at all levels where there are 8 students and a coordinator who meet the MINTS' academic and administrative requirements.

The students who initiate a course of study for a degree have the right to finish that degree. If the SC ceases to function, MINTS will become responsible to help the student finish the degree. The conditions for finishing the degree will be agreed upon by MINTS and the student.

Part 5: STUDENT CONDUCT (from MINTS Catalog)

Academic Ethics

MINTS students should submit original academic work for their assignments, essays and exams. All ideas and communications from sources other than the students must be documented. (See: MLA Style Citations.) Failure of a student to heed faculty warnings may result in the expulsion of the student from the course and the MINTS program.

All MINTS board members, professors, staff, and students will treat each other in a decent, respectful, and orderly manner. Unchanged immoral behavior as defined by the Ten Commandments and Christian Ethics may result in expulsion from the MINTS program.

Students, staff, professors, board members and supporters of the MINTS program may appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Education Committee concerning academic and moral ethical responsibilities.

Class Conduct

All classes will begin with prayer.

Class attendance is required. 80% attendance is required for classes. Less than 80% attendance may result in a failing grade. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the professor in case of absence and to make arrangements for all necessary work.

The professor, after consulting with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, has the authority to cancel and/or reschedule class.

Part 6: WRITING GUIDELINES

Introduction

An essay is a literary form that analyzes a specific topic to inform, explain, persuade, defend an opinion, or stir interest. It is not casual or informal but written in a more serious style, formal and academic. It is not fiction or comedy. Neither is it poetry, but prose. It should make a contribution to the reader in terms of new concepts or information.

Guidelines

The following ten guidelines will help you write and edit an essay.

Decide on a unique and specific idea.

An essay should express the idea of you, the author, instead of simply repeating the ideas of others. It is not simply a research report, but personal reflection. Of course, you may consider the ideas of others, but you should utilize these ideas to support your own point, or maybe to make a contrast with your view.

The author of an essay should have something in mind that he wants to communicate, and he should focus on one main point. For example, the essay could have the purpose of convincing

the reader that Christ is sufficient for our salvation, or that Augustine was the most important theologian of his time, or that Genesis 3 explains all the problems of humanity. The different parts of the essay present evidence and arguments that either support the central idea, illustrate the idea, or show contrasting views. However, the content of the different parts of the essay should not stray away from the main point of the essay.

Do careful research.

The student should reflect on the topic that he or she wishes to study and begin reading and collecting information and quotes. He should write down the bibliographical data for each quote or idea, including author, title, place of publication, publishing company, and year. Use cards, a notebook, or even better, write notes in a computer word processor. Afterwards, organize the notes into groups according to topic. You should begin focusing on what you consider important and discard things that are not related to your topic, even though they may be interesting. Concentrate on a few ideas that are related to the central them of the essay.

Write an appropriate title.

The title of the essay should clearly communicate the main theme. It should not be too *general*, but rather point to a specific topic. For example, if you want to write about the physical consequences of the Fall in Genesis 3, the title should *not* be, "Man's Problem," or "Genesis 3," but "The Physical Consequences of the Fall According to Genesis 3." Neither should the title be too *specific*, pointing only to one aspect of the essay. For example, if the author wishes to write about all the physical consequences of the Fall, the title should *not* be "Why Women Give Birth in Pain" but rather as mentioned before, "The Physical Consequences of the Fall According to Genesis 3."

Organize your ideas in a good outline.

An essay should have at least three main sections: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. The introduction stirs interest in the essay and explains what it is about. The body is the main development of the theme, and normally has several subdivisions. The conclusion summarizes the argument of the essay and shows what the author considers to be most important.

If the essay is well organized, the ideas are easy to follow. The writer should imagine that he is dialoguing with the reader, anticipating his questions, and presenting answers. The reader should be able to follow the thread of thought even with a quick glance at the introduction, the titles of the sections, and the conclusion.

There are various ways to organize an essay. The writer should decide how to organize it and be consistent with the plan. Some methods are as follows:

- If the purpose of the essay is to inform about something historical, it may be organized in chronological order.
- If the purpose is to analyze a philosophical concept, the writer may want to first give the historical background, then explain how the concept is expressed in our day, then give a biblical analysis of the thought.
- If the author wishes to persuade the reader of his point of view of some issue, he may use logical order, first presenting a premise, then a second premise, and the logical conclusion.
- If the purpose is to arouse interest in a cause, he may present different dimensions of the

- problem in order of increasing seriousness.
- Some people like to use illustrations to demonstrate a truth, organizing them to point toward the central idea, like the hands of a clock that meet in the center.
- If the author wants to present a new idea, he may first show how it is similar to other ideas, then One might analyze an event, showing first the causes, then the effects.
- New information may be presented by giving definitions and classifications.

Make a good outline to assure good organization. The body of the essay (all but the introduction and conclusion) normally has at least two main divisions, each with at least two subdivisions. If there is only one subdivision, it is not really a subdivision but the main point. The main divisions should contain ideas that are equal in importance, but distinct in content. The subdivisions should contain ideas that are subordinate to the main division, and equal in importance among each other.

Write coherent paragraphs.

- A paragraph is the key unit of the essay. Review each paragraph to make sure that:
- All the sentences of the paragraph deal with the same subject.
- The paragraph normally has from 3-10 sentences. If there is only one sentence, it should become part of another paragraph, or other sentences can be added to complete it.
- The central idea of the paragraph is expressed in the first or last sentence (normally).
- The other sentences contribute to the point of the paragraph, supporting, showing contrast, or giving illustrations.
- The paragraph is well organized. The paragraphs may follow any of the same organization styles that were mentioned in point 4 regarding the essay as whole.
- The sentences are clearly readable. Long sentences should be divided into two or more sentences. Avoid incomplete sentences without a main verb.
- Transition words and phrases are included when there is a change in thought (such as "however," "furthermore," and "on the other hand.") The reader needs to see the relationship between different points. Try reading the paragraph aloud. If it is not smooth, you probably need to modify it.

Do not hesitate to eliminate sentences that are not related to the main theme of the paragraph. They might belong better in another paragraph, they might be material for a whole new paragraph, or they might be completely unnecessary.

Use footnotes or parenthetical citations properly

You must indicate all sources of ideas with footnotes, even if it is not a direct quote. You may use one of the two possible formats. However, you must be consistent within the essay, always using the same format.

MLA Manual of Style (Modern Language Association)

This style puts the minimum information in parentheses and takes advantage of the full information given in the bibliography at the back of the book, article, or essay. Take as an example the following book listed in the bibliography:

Marcuse, Sybyl. A Survey of Musical Instruments. New York: Harper, 1975.

Within the text, only the author's name and the page number are necessary. For example, if the

quote is taken from page 197, after the quote within the essay there should be a parenthesis as follows:

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(Marcuse 197)
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If there is more than one book by the same author, a short version of the title should be included, as follows:

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(Marcuse, Survey 197)
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If the author's name is mentioned within the essay, only the page number is necessary:

(197)

Chicago Manual of Style

This style gives more information in the notes. You should put a number in the text, after the quote or information used, in superscript, as seen here⁸¹. Then at the bottom of the page, insert the footnote. (The footnotes may also be put at the end of each chapter, or at the end of the book MLA Style, but we prefer them at the bottom of the page.)

If you do *not* have full information in the bibliography, use the following pattern:

81. Author [first name, then last name], *Title of the book* [in italics] (city of publication: publishing company, year) [between parentheses, with a colon between city and publisher, then a coma before the year, just as it appears here], page or pages cited.

Here is an example:

81. Federico García Lorca, Bodas de Sangre (Barcelona: Ayma, S.A., 1971), 95.

On the other hand, if you *do* have full information in the bibliography, you may simply put the author, title, and page number. The reader can find the rest of the information in the bibliography at the back.

Here is an example:

81. Federico García Lorca, Bodas de Sangre, 95.

Include a bibliography.

At the end of the essay, you should include a bibliography, listing all the books, articles, and websites that you used for the essay. The format for the bibliography is slightly different from the footnote. The last name goes first in this case. There are no parentheses and no page numbers. The author's last name should not be indented, but if the entry uses more than one line, the other lines are all indented.

Note the punctuation in the following examples.

García Lorca, Federico. Bodas de Sangre. Barcelona: Ayma, S.A., 1971.

Marcuse, Sybyl. A Survey of Musical Instruments. New York: Harper, 1975.

Use the following sources for other help with editing and style:

MLA Style (Modern Language Association)

Joseph Gibaldi, ed., *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1999. (Look for the latest edition).

NOTE: This is the official guideline for MINTS in English.

Some websites contain portions of the MLS standards:

https://style.mla.org

http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/cite5.html

http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04 c08 o.html

The Chicago Manual of Style. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press.)

See online Manual: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html

See the following website for information about this book and about electronic

resources: http://www.docstyles.com/cmsguide.htm

See also the following website for exercises to improve your grammar and writing style: http://go.hrw.com/hhb/

You may also use the following books for reference:

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, latest edition.

Kirszner, Laurie G., and Mandell, Stephen, *The Holt Handbook*. Philadelphia: Harcourt Brace

See Appendix A for form used for essay evaluation

Essay Format

HOW TO WRITE AN ESSAY OR TERM PAPER

Written communication is very important for our academic development. The style that MINTS uses is:

1. TITLE PAGE

2. TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. BODY

There are two basic numbering styles: Classic numbering and Anthropological numbering.

4. REFERENCE NOTES

Book: (outside of body) Author, *Title*, page.

(within the body) (Autor, *Title*, page)

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Book: Author. Title. City: Publisher, date.

Article: Author. "Title," Magazine. volume. date. page.

Conclusion to Writing Guidelines

There are many ways to write a good essay, and creativity is welcome. However, there are certain guidelines that help you communicate better. Probably the greatest challenge is to make your writing clear and easy to understand. It should be pleasant to read, and not hard work. Read your essay over and over until you are satisfied. The more you work on it, the easier it will be to understand. Have a friend or family member read your essay before you present it. Also, read the essay aloud to see if the sentences communicate what you want to say and how you want to say it. Your essay should be so good that others want to publish it!

Appendix A: MINTS ESSAY EVALUATION FORM

Name of Student:	
Course:	Study Center:
Title of Essay:	Level of Study:
Date: Instructor:	Grade:
(20 points for each major category; 4 points for each sub-category)	Commentary of Instructor
1. CONTENT – points 1.1 Identification of theme 1.2 Development of theme 1.3 Conclusion of theme 1.4 Educational Content 1.5 Theological Content	Content:
2. STYLE – points 2.1 Title page - 2.2 Table of contents - 2.3 Titles - 2.4 Reference - 2.5 Presentation in general –	Style:
3. GRAMMAR – points 3.1 Grammar in general - 3.2 Vocabulary - 3.3 Structure of paragraphs - 3.4 Structure of sentences - 3.5 Punctuation -	Grammar:
4. VERIFICATION – points 4.1 Argumentation - 4.2 Use of Sources - 4.3 Quotes - 4.4 Reference notes - 4.5 Bibliography –	Verification:
5. APPLICATION – points 5.1 Relevance for today - 5.2 Relevance for the Christian life - 5.3 Identification of real problems - 5.4 Presentation of solutions - 5.5 Motivation for future study -	Application:

Appendix B: Statement on ACCREDITATION (from MINTS Catalog)

In the United States, accreditation is a voluntary, non-governmental process of review and evaluation to assure that schools, educational institutions, and the program meets or exceeds the industry standard. The accrediting bodies are private groups that agree on common standards between them. The accreditation process requires an educational institution or program to meet certain defined standards or criteria as set forth by the accrediting body; *CHEA Council for Higher Education Accreditation*.

MINTS uses the academic standards and practices required by the main CHEA accrediting organizations and has incorporated them as our educational standards even though we are not registered with CHEA. MINTS is not accredited by the US Government (CHEA) recognized accrediting companies, as CHEA requires 50% of students must be based in the United States. Almost all MINTS students are outside of the United States. In addition, a CHEA accreditation would increase the students' costs without increasing the quality of the education

MINTS is a unique global theological Education Institution, and the MINTS model fit in with any of the US based Seminary models. Although MINTS standards meet or exceed most all these non-governmental models our missionary seminary model does not fit the normal US accreditation requirements which include the need to invest in buildings, fixed libraries, and that all students must spend time in the USA.

With over 4500 students, MINTS is one of the largest seminaries in North America and the world. Our aim is to train men for excellence in church leadership and the true test of our training is our own graduates and their contribution to the church of Christ. Our graduates are our best accreditation.

A MINTS degree does not qualify you to be a minister. We do not ordain men for the ministry. We educate men to be better ministers and church leaders.

Will my Degree be Accepted in other Educational institutions, in the Church, or in the workplace?

MINTS trains men for church leadership, and so we cannot promise a local employer will accept the degree. If you are seeking a MINTS degree for specific licensing, employment, or additional educational purposes, we advise you to first check with the association, governmental agency, employer, or specific educational institution to determine the acceptability of the program. MINTS students desire to use their degrees to gain better employment they must contact the potential employer to see if it will assist. We cannot guarantee that acceptability of transfer credits to any public or private educational institution.