

Northwest Undergrad Programs

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is the Christian Foundations Program only for people who want to go into full-time ministry?

We designed the program specifically to benefit young adults whether they are called to ministry or other careers. The Christian Foundations Program will help ground you in your faith and calling even as you pursue other career or education endeavors. Northwest is accredited by the Associate of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) and, as such, credits earned in our programs may be transferred to other institutions.

What does it mean that the Christian Foundations Program is a “competency-based theological education” program?

Competency-based theological education (CBTE) is an approach to learning that bases progression on demonstrated competence instead of just completed assignments. Think of it like a ministry apprenticeship program. You learn on the job, under the guidance of mentors. You pass outcomes (similar to courses) by developing and demonstrating competencies in defined areas of knowledge, skill, and character. This means you will achieve measurable, observable results in the holistic and integrated application of your studies instead of just completing classes and assignments.

It also means that the way the program is delivered is very different. You learn in your own ministry setting, guided by a 3-person mentor team. Your mentor team consists of a Northwest faculty academic mentor, a local ministry mentor from your church or ministry context, and a lead mentor to guide the team and support your success in the program. You attend weekly online seminars and receive instruction from a variety of faculty and subject matter experts, but your overall development and achievement of the program competencies is guided and assessed by the mentor team.

This allows for a very personalized approach to learning. You can focus on areas where further development is needed, and quickly demonstrate competence in areas where you already have aptitude and experience. For more information about Northwest’s CBTE model, see nbseminary.ca/cbte.

Are Northwest undergrad programs eligible for student aid?

Yes.

Do I need to travel to the campus for classes?

Northwest’s undergrad programs are based on an apprenticeship model, where you learn while you serve in your local church, camp, or other ministry organization. You can engage our programs from anywhere. While you’re always welcome to come and join seminars in person, they are delivered live

over Zoom from our fully equipped studio classroom, and travel is only required to attend to the two retreats hosted at the beginning and end of each year.

What do the weekly seminars look like?

You will participate in multiple online seminars throughout your program. These sessions are taught from our studio classroom in Langley, BC, and are conveniently accessible through Zoom. Throughout each term, you'll immerse yourself in two 90-minute seminars per week, led by the distinguished faculty at Northwest. Northwest's faculty members are renowned scholars in their academic disciplines and bring a wealth of knowledge coupled with valuable practical experience in ministry.

What's the difference between Northwest's Immerse undergrad and graduate programs?

Both the undergrad and graduate programs are designed using Northwest's competency-based theological education (CBTE) approach. However, the graduate-level programs are designed to equip students who have already completed a Bachelor degree and mature adults for vocational ministry, while the undergraduate programs are for young adults just beginning their educational journey, or mature adults who have never taken post-secondary education. While there are some similarities in how they operate, the two programs are designed for different audiences, have different expectations for students, and are taught in different ways to maximize student success. There is a stronger emphasis on mentor support and building community in the undergraduate programs, and students move together more sequentially through the program.

Do Christian Foundation Program students have to be involved in a church or other ministry setting to be in the program?

Yes. The apprenticeship model of learning assumes students are learning from experts and mentors while they practice applying new knowledge and skills on the job.

Northwest's mission is to come alongside the local church, missions agencies, and other Christian ministries to support them in leadership development. Therefore, Northwest requires all Immerse students to be involved and serving in their local church or ministry, and to have a mentor from that community that will walk alongside them as they engage the program. These ministry mentors will meet with and encourage the student and oversee their ministry.

Who can be a ministry mentor?

Ministry mentors must be current leaders in the student's church or other ministry context who have at least 5 years experience in ministry leadership, have the support of their church or organization to mentor student in the program, and can commit to mentor the student for the duration of the program.

What is expected of a ministry mentor?

Ministry mentors guide the student's development throughout the program, providing valuable insight and on-the-ground coaching as the student applies what they learn in context. They have access to the

student's online assignments and submission, but are not required to grade or interact with assignments. Ministry mentors will meet monthly with the rest of the student's mentor team to offer their insight and interaction.

Does Northwest find church or ministry placements for students?

No. Northwest requires every Immerse student to have a ministry mentor, and this mentor should be someone who knows the student and agrees to come alongside and invest in their development for the program duration. It is the responsibility of the student to come to the program with a ministry context, and someone to mentor them in it.

Do undergraduate students need to be on staff at their church?

Students do not need to be paid staff in their church or ministry context. However, they do need to have a context for practical application of what they are learning. Students should have a ministry role that requires at least 10 hours a week of their time.

What if I don't finish all the program outcomes by the end of May?

Don't worry, it happens. You have a couple of options. You can take a program extension from June to August at a reduced rate to complete any unfinished outcomes (\$1600), or if you can complete at least six outcomes, you can earn a Ministry Apprenticeship Certificate instead of the Certificate in Christian Foundations.

More information

You probably have other questions, and we'd love to talk to you about them. For more information, contact:

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