WOMEN

at Westminster Seminary California

For Christ, His Gospel, & His Church
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WSC believes that there are many opportunities for seminary-trained women to serve in Christ’s church, the academy, missions, counseling, in the home, and beyond.

We at Westminster Seminary California (WSC) are excited that you are thinking about pursuing a seminary education. WSC believes that there are many opportunities for seminary-trained women to serve in Christ’s church, the academy, missions, counseling, in the home, and beyond. WSC does not presume to pigeonhole women into one specific course of study. We know that you have many diverse interests, and we want you to study, explore, and employ God’s word to serve in a variety of capacities. WSC is committed to supporting women who want to attend seminary by making substantial financial aid available for qualified applicants and by providing an encouraging environment in which to learn.

In the following pages we have provided profiles and contributions from a number of our former women graduates so you can see what it is like to study at WSC. The featured graduates recount the numerous ways in which they have personally benefited from their educations and the different ways they are putting their WSC degrees to use. If you are interested in knowing more about WSC, read this book and contact us. We would love to talk with you!

W. Robert Godfrey
President
Westminster Seminary California
WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO ATTEND WSC?

My original reason for attending seminary was because I love God’s Word. Yet the more I studied it, the more burning questions I had. I wanted to be able to teach and counsel others, but I felt lacking in my knowledge. Therefore, I chose to attend seminary to develop a robust, working understanding of the Scriptures to equip me for Christian service. I wasn’t certain where my degree would lead, but I was confident a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies would provide a solid foundation for sharing God’s Word in order to serve the Church. During the season leading up to seminary, my family began listening to Dr. Michael Horton on the White Horse Inn podcasts, which frequently led to discussions of theological issues around the dinner table. I started to read books by Westminster’s professors and tentatively research seminary options, but I withheld from moving any further toward a decision. I wasn’t sure if, as a female, there was a place for me at seminary. Finally, one day during my break at work, I entered our soundproof radio studio and dialed Westminster’s phone number. My hands were shaking as I said, “Hi, my name is Joanna, and I’m interested in coming to seminary. Do you accept women at your school?” Beginning with that first conversation over the phone, I was overwhelmed by the positive response of the WSC community. Every point of contact, from that initial phone call to their gracious acceptance of my late application, made it clear that there was never a question in their minds that it is important for women to be theologically trained in order to serve the Church in a variety of capacities.

HOW DID YOUR EDUCATION AT WSC PREPARE YOU TO WORK AT A CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTER?

You’d think that understanding the Gospel would be a prerequisite for attending seminary. However, with every class lecture and conversation, I realized all the ways in which my tendency is to make the Gospel about Jesus AND something else. Tears streamed down my face many times during class as professors unfolded Christ shining forth in both the Old and New Testament. Because I started to understand the Gospel, I learned how to clearly communicate it to others. The good news of Jesus is what women need to hear as they decide whether or not to follow the lies of the culture or choose to embrace the truth about life inside the womb. During one counseling session with a client who remained undecided about what to do with her pregnancy, the conversation turned to spiritual matters. She looked me in the eye and said with exasperation, “I don’t even understand myself. It’s like the things I don’t want to do, I just don’t!” I grabbed a Bible and opened it to Romans 7. I told her she was in good company with me, everyone else in the world, and specifically a guy named Paul. As I started to read, her jaw dropped and she just said, “Wow, that sounds just like me! What are you reading?” When I told her it was the Bible, she was shocked. From there, I shared with her the truth about ourselves as sinners and the glorious good news of Jesus Christ. My training at Westminster equipped me with the tools to have this type of conversation.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PROSPECTIVE WOMEN STUDENTS CONSIDERING SEMINARY?

When I was making the decision, I tried to picture my life twenty years from now. I asked myself, “Would I regret it if I didn’t take this risk and miss out on three years of concentrated study of God’s Word at the best seminary in the United States?” I knew I would, so I packed up my car and drove across the country from Chicago to California. Don’t let fears of handling the academic load, providing for yourself financially, or specifically using your degree after graduation keep you from doing this. I speak from experience: God is faithful. And going to Westminster is entirely worth the risk.
AMY CARMICHAEL

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO ATTEND WSC?
I had considered going to seminary since I was in high school, but it took me many years after that to admit that I really did like theology and to realize that advanced theological training would be valuable no matter what I did in life. I wanted to attend a Reformed seminary that offered many courses in the Biblical languages, and with the help of the Minnie Gresham Machen scholarship, WSC was the most affordable for me.

WHAT PARTICULAR TRUTHS OR EXPERIENCES THAT YOU GAINED FROM WSC DO YOU FIND MOST VALUABLE NOW?
I am so grateful that I do not have to depend on my own law-keeping or atonement for sin, but can rest securely in Christ’s righteousness. Beyond that, I’m glad I was able to study the Biblical languages for two years and grow in my appreciation of my Reformed theological heritage. The other great benefit was having female friends who would talk about theology with me (and still do).

HOW DID YOUR EDUCATION AT WSC PREPARE YOU TO GET A PHD?
The best preparation for getting a PhD was having to write a thesis, since I was in the historical theology track. As one of my friends put it, “If you hate writing your thesis, then a PhD isn’t for you.” In addition to the preparation in research and writing gained through my thesis, I benefited from the many courses on Reformed scholasticism, which opened up several side areas of research for me and provided conversation topics when I first met my husband. I’m also grateful for the support and advice of my WSC professors as I applied to graduate programs in historical theology.

DO YOU HAVE AN UNFORGETTABLE MEMORY FROM YOUR TIME AT WSC?
It’s hard to decide between Dr. Estelle’s screaming monkey in Hebrew class, late nights in the library writing papers with friends, and the amazing cooking of my roommates.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PROSPECTIVE WOMEN STUDENTS CONSIDERING SEMINARY?
Theology isn’t just for pastors. It’s for every Christian as they interact with friends, family, and co-workers. You don’t need a special calling to women’s ministry to benefit from seminary. You just have to be someone who is eager to learn more about Christ, his Gospel, and his church.

EDUCATION
MAHT, 2012

CURRENT ENDEAVORS
Ph.D. student in St. Louis, Missouri
Why did you choose to attend WSC?

After a few years of doing campus ministry right out of college, I began to realize that I needed more training. I had spent the last few years leading bible studies and found that what I most enjoyed was when the theology that I loved began to intersect the details of the student’s lives. I would get glimpses of what this might look like but knew I didn’t have a deep enough foundation to really do it well. I went to WSC to lay that foundation.

What particular truths or experiences that you gained from WSC do you find most important and valuable now?

One thing that really grew in me during my time at WSC was a commitment to and love for the church. As I began to think about counseling, those influences have played a significant role in how I’ve set up my practice and my philosophy about working alongside of pastors and elders as I counsel folks in their churches.

How did your education at WSC prepare you for your present responsibilities?

The two things that stick out to me the most are learning how to study Scripture well and building a solid theological foundation. I’m so thankful for the tools I was given through studying the languages and learning how to exegesis passages. I believe I have a richer understanding of how to use Scripture wisely and see the effects of that in my counsel-

ing. I don’t often think specifically about the theology that I learned in seminary but it is the groundwork for how I think about humanity, suffering, sin, and change. These are categories I think about every day. As I counsel people, the way I understand the role of the Holy Spirit and the nature of the work of Christ runs through everything I do with them. I think of it as the foundation for what I’m standing on but also as an anchor. As a counselor it’s important to be creative in the ways you rivet truth to the details of people’s lives. But in order to be creative you also need to have a strong understanding of the categories you’re working in so you continue to be faithful to what you’re trying to communicate. I believe this is what I got at WSC.

How did your training with CCEF (Christian Counseling and Education Foundation) complement your WSC education?

While WSC was building a theological framework for me, the CCEF coursework helped me to begin to think about the applications of those truths. Take a course like Doctrine of God, for example. The truth that God is unchangeable cer-
tainly means something in the midst of our suffering, but the actual application of that truth to someone in the middle of a crisis can be tricky. WSC taught me the depth and richness of the theology and CCEF began to teach me how to skillfully bring those truths to bear in the lives of those I counsel.

Do you have an unforgettable memory from your time at WSC?

Most of my unforgettable memories involve friendships I made while at WSC—great conversations over meals, the shared anguish of paper writing, theological discussion in the bookstore.

What advice would you give to prospective students considering seminary, especially those who want to go into counseling?

Two things come to mind. First, find a place where you can practice breaking down what you’re learning into everyday language. Maybe work with a youth group and learn how to communicate what you learned in class that day in a way that’s meaningful to their lives. Second, after you have a few courses under your belt, see if you can start counseling un-
der the supervision of your pastor.

Education

MABS, 2010

Current Endeavors

Independent Associate Counselor at Impact Biblical Counseling
Why should women study theology, particularly women who believe that the offices of the church are appointed to men? What do we need to know about the Mosaic economy, supralapsarianism, and covenant theology? If preaching isn’t an option, what do we suppose we do after we’ve finished spending all that money and reading all those books?

We read in Genesis that God created our first parents male and female, and he blessed them and named them (Gen. 5:2). Both sexes were created, carefully, thoughtfully and intentionally, with a common purpose, specific, unique gifts and particular roles. The Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us that the primary purpose for human existence is to glory God forever, and in so doing, find our greatest and deepest joy, satisfaction, and contentment. We glorify God by fulfilling his law in Christ, and loving our neighbor. The law is the expression of God’s holiness and perfect character, and if we really want to know him—to know who he is, what he’s like, and what his will for our lives is—then we must look at who he has shown himself to be in the law, and what he has done for us in the gospels. It’s in the pages of Holy Scripture that we find where we came from, who we are, and where we’re going, by having our eyes lifted upward from our sinful, tired, angry, broken hearts, and turned to our Creator, Savior, and Redeemer.

In a culture that encourages women to define themselves by their titles, social standing, and looks, it’s easy for us to become focused on temporal callings and circumstances. Because the material and relational (right?) it’s something I’m entirely compatible with—daily labor under the delusion that I’ll be better if I go ‘somewhere else’ and ‘find something new’—but I’m comforted in the knowledge that I don’t struggle alone, and that the day is surely coming when I will finally see the fulfillment of all I hope for.

T
oday launches a new series on the Westminster blog that addresses many interesting questions asked of our female students by those unfamiliar with the Westminster tradition of enrolling women in the Biblical Studies, Historical Theology, and Theological Studies programs: “Are you training to be a nun?” “Did you go to seminary to find a husband?” “Do you ever have to wait in line at the women’s restroom? Never?!! Lucky!”

Before coming to seminary, I knew I would be in a unique position getting a graduate degree, Reformed theological education as a female. In fact, I was asked every question listed above. Yet the question people asked me the most was what I would ‘do’ with my knowledge after graduation. Often when people would inquire, they were aware of my stance regarding women’s ordination and the fact that I was not becoming a pastor. Some even saw my time at seminary as a frivolous waste since I was pouring three years of my life into a master’s degree that would not enable me to climb the next rung of the career ladder. Yet the more I studied at Westminster, the more I realized that there are many intangible ways in which being theologically trained affects every part of my life as the knowledge of God and his Scriptures provides a comprehensive framework in which to view everything from being stuck in traffic to watching a beloved grandfather die.

My conversations with fellow female students, graduates, and those women connected with the seminary confirmed for me that although not every woman can or should attend seminary, it is every Christian’s call, whether male or female, to know what she believes and why she believes it. When women take the call to study God’s Word seriously, he uses them in powerful ways.

I have interviewed ten women who are serving God all over the world, from Japan to Germany and from California to Pennsylvania. Their stories will appear on this blog on Wednesdays over the next several weeks. Some of them have seminary degrees, some of them don’t, but every one of their stories showcases women in their various roles in the home, church, mission field and academy. They are proving everything from being stuck in traffic to watching a beloved grandfather die.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN YOU’RE DONE WITH SEMINARY?  BY BROOKE VENTURA

S o, what will you do when you’re done with seminary? This innocent question has rendered many a female student by her titles, social standing, and looks, it’s easy for us to be afraid to ask. We (men and women) show forth the likeness of our Creator, by whom and for whom we were made, and as such possess a dignity and worth that transcends any earthly calling. Whether we joyfully or grudgingly serve our families, employers, and dreams, on Sunday morning, we put all things aside in order to worship our Father, through our Savior, by the Holy Spirit—whatever our callings may be, we are, and always will be, worshippers of the Trinity God. This is who we are, and what we’re made for. Ladies should study theology because in so doing, they develop, refine, and deepen their understanding of what it means to be an image-bearer created for worship. The fact that we were created (not arbitrarily, spontaneously generated) and created for something and someone (not blindly groping through life, trying to create meaning in a meaning-less world) is simple to grasp, but difficult to comprehend. Sin clouds our hearts, temptation distracts our minds, and the Enemy is ever-ready to suggest that our happiness, fulfillment, and potential would be better realized if only we could find the right man, the right job, or the right mission.

My theological training showed me that my happiness, fulfillment, and potential are already secured for me, in the finished work of Christ—the image that I bear is daily being renewed in him, by the Holy Spirit, and my joy and satisfaction are secured in the worship of the Father, in communion with my fellow saints. This isn’t something I completely understand, and it’s something I’m often forgetful with—I daily labor under the delusion that I’ll be better if I go ‘somewhere else’ and ‘find something new’—but I’m comforted in the knowledge that I don’t struggle alone, and that the day is surely coming when I will finally see the fulfillment of all I hope for.

Brooke Ventura is the associate editor of Modern Reformation magazine. She and her family live in Ontario, Canada, where her husband serves as a pastoral intern at Living Water United Reformed Church.
women in theology

DEMONOLOGY 101
by eowyn stoddard

After a few months on “our” mission field, a post-communist, atheist region, my family and I were reeling from the shock. No, not culture-shock, though there was plenty of that. It was the shock of coming face to face with demonic forces beyond our comprehension.

Numerous strange events had transpired: liters of urine poured into our stroller, blood splattered on our apartment door, a small hole had been drilled into our front door indicating a planned break-in (the hole is used to insert a small probe camera), much sickness, poor sleep for us, and even sensing an evil presence in our room.

At first we thought we were imagining things, but the horrific climax was the nightmares that tormented our two-year old son. For many months he had wake up screaming bloody murder and we could not settle him back down easily. At two and a half, he was finally able to verbalize what he had been dreaming about for the past few months. One of his most vivid dreams was about a woman with black hair and red eyes who wore only a bra and black pants and would anger him a basket of rotten fruit and force him to eat. His nightmare was x-rated, not a typical toddler-being-chased-by-a-bear dream.

Satan was not playing fair. Now the shock turned to an horror that seemed more real than any nightmare. Satan attacked the very foundation of our family. He attacked the basic trust my son had in me, in his father, in his God. He made a liar of me. From his first year, my boy learned to sleep peacefully. The next morning after sleeping in another room, we prayed at my son’s bedroom window for a whole night. That morning I asked him, “Did you have a nightmare last night?” His answer was flabbergasting: “Yes, but this time the woman was outside my window and she couldn’t come in.” Sometimes in Reformed, highly rational circles, we fail to see when God is giving us a glimpse into the supernatural world. But this time, we saw it! God, in his sovereignty, was ministering to my little boy and comforting him in ways I could not.

Because we were so overwhelmed with our situation, we called our teammates to come pray with us. While he was asleep in another room, we prayed at my son’s bedroom window, that God would not allow any evil to enter into his room and that he would sleep peacefully. The next morning, I asked him, “Did you have a nightmare last night?” His answer was flabbergasting: “Yes, but this time the woman was outside my window and she couldn’t come in.” Sometimes in Reformed, highly rational circles, we fail to see when God is giving us a glimpse into the supernatural world. But this time, we saw it! God, in his sovereignty, was ministering to my little boy and comforting him in ways I could not.

We were given a sneaky peek into how He uses the prayers of his people to accomplish his will. How that comforted and ministered to my son and me. It gave us a small glimpse into the supernatural world. But this time, we saw it! God, in his sovereignty, was ministering to my little boy and comforting him in ways I could not.

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As a Christian mother, I longed to see my son grow up and be allowed to play with us (though that is what it felt like at the time). It was only then, that I came to realize the depth of God’s love for his children. Satan’s attack against my son was a direct attack against God the Father. My son did not belong to Satan. He belonged to the Father. God was watching over him and his minions. Satan is not allowed to play with us (though that is what it felt like at the time). He is only permitted to do what God has decreed and his doom is sure.

As parents, we were so overwhelmed with our situation, we called our teamates to come pray with us. While he was asleep in another room, we prayed at my son’s bedroom window, that God would not allow any evil to enter into his room and that he would sleep peacefully. The next morning, I asked him, “Did you have a nightmare last night?” His answer was flabbergasting: “Yes, but this time the woman was outside my window and she couldn’t come in.” Sometimes in Reformed, highly rational circles, we fail to see when God is giving us a glimpse into the supernatural world. But this time, we saw it! God, in his sovereignty, was ministering to my little boy and comforting him in ways I could not.

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A Pastor’s Wife
by Elizabeth Kao Holmlund

I did not go to seminary to marry a pastor. In fact, I was pretty scared of the possibility of some sincere, Bible-loving, M.Div. student sweeping me off my feet and whisking me away to some church plant in the wilds of New Hampshire. I’d seen enough of the messiness of church life to know that I just never wanted to be a pastor’s wife and I never wanted to have to raise pastor’s kids.

I was right to be afraid. Eleven years after graduating from WSC, I find myself here: married to a church planter (who did indeed sweep me off my feet sometime towards the end of my first year), raising our four children, hunkered down waiting for the onslaught of New England winter and/or the next ministry crisis, whichever comes first. My life has turned out exactly as I feared.

I was also wrong to be afraid. Because while marriage and motherhood both require more daily dying to self than I had ever imagined, I have learned that if I stay married and do not give in to Satan’s temptation to hate my husband, he will remain my husband. I have learned that if I stay married and do not give in to Satan’s temptation to hate my husband, he will remain my husband.

But in my pastor-husband’s life, there is a special office that he holds. I am right to be afraid. Eleven years after graduating from WSC, I find myself here: married to a church planter (who did indeed sweep me off my feet sometime towards the end of my first year), raising our four children, hunkered down waiting for the onslaught of New England winter and/or the next ministry crisis, whichever comes first. My life has turned out exactly as I feared.

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Sometimes, though, I wonder if my husband’s life would be easier if I did not have formal theological training. It would certainly spare both of us the awkwardness, especially in the early years, of not knowing how much I should speak up during Bible study or Sunday school for fear of being perceived as challenging him, especially if I happen to know more about a particular matter of interpretation. After WSC, my husband did further graduate work in church history. I did mine in Old Testament—the Psalms. Which one do you think comes up more often in a Bible study?

But more often, I am glad and we are glad to have done so much of our theological training together. Yes, I can be an occasional sounding board for him on matters of biblical interpretation or theological nuance, but more importantly, I think he trusts me because of it. He trusts me to be able to rightly divide God’s word as I teach it to our children and help them apply it to their lives. And to be able to give biblical counsel to women in our church when they seek it, whether formally or informally (more often the latter). He possibly even trusts me to give biblical counsel to him, even unsolicited, which can be a pretty rare and precious commodity for a church planter. I am grateful that in the church, there is no special office of pastor’s wife. That is true and, boy, am I glad. But in my pastor-husband’s life, there is a special office of wife. And my seminary training helps me to fill that office in a unique way, for which I am grateful.

Eowyn Stoddard (MABS ’97) was born in Liverpool and raised in France. After studying German at Wellesley College, she received a Masters in theology at Westminster Seminary California where she met her husband, David. In 2001 they moved to Berlin where they have been involved in church-planting until now. They have 5 children ranging from 17-9.

Elizabeth Kao Holmlund (M.A.B.S. 2002) is married to Dave Holmlund, an OPC church planter, and mother to Zechariah (7), Ezra (6), Evangeline (3), and Benjamin (1). They live in the wilds of New Hampshire. 3 alongsides my husband, I have the chance to watch a local body of Christ add hands and feet and ears and there were none before.”

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“Alongside my husband, I have the chance to watch a local body of Christ add hands and feet and ears and there were none before.”
While I was in seminary, an opportunity arose for me to serve in South Asia for a summer. My denominational missions organization was involved with training men to pastor church plants in rural villages. They quickly learned that most of the members of these small congregations are women, and because of cultural stigmas, the women were not encouraged to study, learn, and grow in their faith. The organization invited me to do some research on how we could teach and encourage these women. Coming from a South Asian background, I was thrilled about the opportunity to use my education in a way that impacted my heart.

As I prepared to go overseas that summer, my professors supported and encouraged me in ways I did not expect. Many gave me opportunities to pursue further studies about cultures abroad have helped me understand a truth that crosses all cultures: All Christians, including women, will benefit from the study of theology, no matter how formal. But if you all those around her. I know many people disparaged my desire to attend Westminster, especially because, as a woman, I was not going to go into the ordained ministry. Yet I have used my education every day in my counseling work. Not a day goes by where I do not thank God for allowing me to attend such a wonderful seminary and learn such deep truths of the Bible from an amazing faculty.

However, my training at Westminster also provided an important aspect of my counseling with this young woman. The professors at Westminster helped me see the whole picture of the Bible. We aren’t to look at each individual book as a separate entity, given with a separate purpose. Instead, we are to look at the Bible as one story, the story of God’s interactions with man and His redemption found in Jesus. I was able to show this young woman how her story, albeit difficult at the moment, could fit into the story of God and His redemption. Even though she was suffering, God’s children are called to suffer, with the ultimate suffering found in Jesus’ life and death. Because He suffered for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope for us, our suffering has an end date and hope.
THE JOY OF BEING INSIGNIFICANT

I thought it unfavorable for a woman to be theologically trained, especially going as far as gaining a master’s degree for it. I had a purpose for choosing to be trained at WSC. I wished to translate theological books into the Japanese language in order that more valuable and updated publications may be introduced to Japanese believers. When I was just about to finish my study at Westminster in 2011, I was full of hope for how God would use me back home in Japan. My church had created a position for me to work as a full-time staff member because of my skills in translation and newly gained perspective on theology. But what was something I expected? I suppose not many WSC graduates go back to a “non-Reformed” church after graduation, but that was my situation.

Although my home church so generously supported me during my study and was happy to have me back, the knowledge I gained was not really welcomed. They wanted a full-time laborer, not a “reformer.” I struggled with not having the opportunity to make even a small use of my experience at seminary and having no voice in theological disagreements. If I were a man, this might have been different. Moreover, the church was going through a rough time at the time I went back home. At around the same time, God even closed the door for translation work also.

I had a purpose for choosing to be trained at WSC. I wished it’s done, the latter comes naturally. God initially created a woman to be a helper of a man. I suppose I used to have a desire to be significant, in church, in a translation career, and any other roles I might be given. But now I am discovering to be content and joyful when I remain unseen. Having said that, I of course wish to share the knowledge I gained at seminary, and still want to pursue a translation career if the opportunity arises. Yet until that time, God confirms to me daily the value of theological study and knowing the Lord in such depth. Teaching children the truth of the gospel, to glorify God firm to me daily the value of theological study and knowing the Lord in such depth. Teaching children the truth of the gospel, to glorify God and enjoy him to the fullest.

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Aidan told me at bedtime, “Mom, this girl must be going to school since kindergarten, a decision that my husband and I made. I wanted to forgive the little girl and show God’s love to her. I explained that Aidan was from the Sermon on the Mount. I introduced to Japanese believers. When I was just about to graduate if the opportunity arises. Yet until that time, God confirms to me daily the value of theological study and knowing the Lord in such depth. Teaching children the truth of the gospel, to glorify God and enjoy him to the fullest.

PARENTING AND THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

A girl told me today that she wanted to stab me with a pen and watch the blood come out.” My mouth dropped and my eyes filled with tears. “What?” I exclaimed, horrified. “Yes Mom, I tried to help two girls who were arguing and one of the girls said that to me.”

Our then seven-year-old son had been attending public school since kindergarten, a decision that my husband and I made. I wanted to forgive the little girl and show God’s love to her. I explained that Aidan was from the Sermon on the Mount. I introduced to Japanese believers. When I was just about to graduate if the opportunity arises. Yet until that time, God confirms to me daily the value of theological study and knowing the Lord in such depth. Teaching children the truth of the gospel, to glorify God and enjoy him to the fullest.

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I encourage women to study the Bible like a scholar hungry for the truth. Why do we immediately reflex and study ‘women’s’ subjects like child-rearing and being a godly spouse? Why don’t we study the Bible and learn its doctrines like the men? Justification, sanctification, theology proper, ecclesiology? Once we learn the deep truths of the Bible, then we’re better prepared to address any and all issues, including those specific to women.

Sue Harris
Church Resourcing Department, Mission to the World
Presbyterian Church of America

What will I do with a Seminary Degree?

This is a big question for many women students. Some come in knowing exactly what they want to do, and some figure it out over time. It’s always exciting to see what God does when women desire to faithfully study his word. Our female graduates have used their WSC degrees to give them biblical and theological foundations for pursuing law and Ph.D. degrees, missions work in a variety of capacities, counseling certifications, and teaching at primary, secondary and college levels. For others, the benefits have enriched their service in the local church, prepared them to lead Bible studies and women’s ministries, and to be better equipped to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Can I get an MDiv degree?

The purpose of our Master of Divinity program is to educate and prepare men for official, ordained ministries of instruction and leadership in the church as pastors, evangelists, and teachers. Because the seminary board and faculty believe the criteria set down in Scripture limits the candidacy for official teaching and leadership ministry in the church to qualified men, we only admit men to our Master of Divinity program. However, because God bestows on women as well as men gifts and calling to serve in non-ordained ministries, WSC’s Master of Arts programs admit both women and men.

As students prepare for both ecclesiastical and secular vocations, we believe there is no better foundation than a thorough knowledge of God’s Word. In the M.A.B.S. program, the study of Scripture is founded upon an understanding of the biblical languages, Greek and Hebrew, equipping graduates with the tools to study the Bible in the language of its authors, thus enhancing their ability to properly exegze and apply the Word of God.

Degree Requirements

- 26 Units Biblical Studies
- 2 Units Church History
- 2 Units Historical Theol.
- 10 Units Systematics & Apologetics
- 1 Unit Practical Theology
- 10 Units Elective
- 51 Units Total Degree Units

72 Total Units Including Propaedeutic

In the M.A.H.T. program, students are equipped with a historically-minded approach to evaluate current events of today in relation to all that has come before. Through this program, WSC endeavors to serve the church by training students to give an honest and coherent account of the past as well as to relate significant issues of historical theology to contemporary intellectual and cultural movements.

Degree Requirements

- 2 Units Biblical Studies
- 10 Units Church History
- 20 Units Historical Theol.
- 13 Units Systematics & Apologetics
- 1 Unit Practical Theology
- 9 Units Elective
- 55 Units Total Degree Units

72 Total Units Including Propaedeutic

1 Units required in Hebrew, Greek, and writing are not included in the degree units as they are considered propaedeutic.
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR WOMEN

“I’M ALWAYS EXCITED TO SEE MEN AND WOMEN PURSUING A GREATER KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WORD SO THEY’RE BETTER EQUIPPED TO SERVE THE CHURCH.”

J. V. FESKO
Academic Dean, Professor of Systematic Theology and Historical Theology

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THE MINNIE GRESHAM MACHEN SCHOLARSHIP

WSC has a scholarship specifically for women students. The Minnie Gresham Machen Scholarship was established to encourage and enable talented women to take advantage of advanced theological education at Westminster Seminary California in order to equip them to answer God’s calling in the home, the academy, and the church.

The scholarship is named to honor the memory and legacy of Minnie Gresham Machen, a woman who was valiant for the truth of the Reformed faith throughout her life. She profoundly influenced her son, J. Gresham Machen, during his formative training with the richness of Scripture and the confessional tradition of the Reformed faith.

The Minnie Gresham Machen Scholarship will provide tuition aid up to full tuition (depending upon need) for up to three years of study to one or more recipient each year who meets the following criteria:

➢ A female admitted to an MA program at WSC
➢ A member in good standing of a Bible-believing church
➢ Shows evidence of high academic achievement (3.5 GPA typically required for renewal)
➢ Demonstrates financial need through the WSC application for financial aid

PRESIDENTIAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

The Presidential Merit Scholarship is awarded to students based upon prior academic performance and the potential for future leadership in both ordained and non-ordained vocations. This scholarship is renewable on an annual basis for students enrolled in a minimum of 12 units per semester who maintain minimum 3.0 GPA.

WSC GRANT

This need-based grant is awarded on an annual basis and applied equally each semester towards tuition. If the student’s financial situation changes during the year (up or down), a recalculation of the grant may be done. Provisional awards are made on a rolling basis after the FAFSA and WSC Application for Financial Aid are received.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GRANT

Each year, grants from the International Student Financial Aid Fund are available to international students who are committed to ministry in their own country after studying at Westminster. Students receiving these grants must pursue full-time studies in one of WSC’s degree programs. Because these grants never exceed the amount of tuition, the student’s living expenses must be supplied from other sources.

Requirements: WSC Application for Financial Aid, 250-500 word essay on why the student wishes to study at WSC, and how she plans to use their theological and biblical education after graduation.

For more information on financial aid & scholarships, visit: wscal.edu/admissions/financial-aid/scholarships-grants-and-academic-awards
Each year WSC invites accomplished women who have contributed in a significant way to the church or the theological academy to speak on our campus. WSC believes that women play an important role in the life of the church and have made valuable churchly and academic contributions. Also, given that at least half of the church’s population consists of women, we want our students to understand and be familiar with the concerns of and contributions made by women. In years past we have had Dr. Jennifer McNutt, Associate Professor of Theology and History of Christianity at Wheaton College lecture on her book, Calvin Meets Voltaire: The Clergy of Geneva During the Age of Enlightenment, 1685-1798 (Ashgate, 2014), and Dr. Annette Aubert, Lecturer in Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia), lecture on her book, The German Roots of Nineteenth-Century American Theology (Oxford, 2013). WSC’s desire is to showcase the contributions of women for the benefit, edification, and inspiration of our seminary community.

“We want our students to understand and be familiar with the concerns of and contributions made by women.”

Dr. Annette Aubert
Adjunct professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA

Dr. Jennifer McNutt
Associate Professor of Theology and History of Christianity at Wheaton College
As you consider seminary studies, please know that our admissions staff is happy to serve as a resource to you and to answer your specific questions. We would love to meet you and hope that you will consider a campus visit in the near future. If you would like to receive our viewbook by mail or have questions about becoming a student at Westminster Seminary California that have not been answered on our website, please contact the Office of Admissions. We are here to serve you and look forward to hearing from you soon!

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KERRI ANN CRUSE
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LEARN MORE ABOUT WOMEN AT WSC
wscal.edu/admissions/discover-wsc/women-at-westminster

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Vimeo.com/wscal

WE’D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU