



**Michigan School of
Missional Formation**

**KAIROS - A Faith Journey
A Master of Arts Program
to Prepare Laity to Serve as
Deacons & Ministry Assistants**

Michigan School of Missional Formation / Kairos University Program

Program Purpose

The Michigan School of Missional Formation – *Kairos Program* is an accredited Master of Arts degree in association with Kairos University that provides thorough and ongoing theological training from an LCMS perspective for laity to serve more effectively in congregational ministry under the supervision of an Ordained Pastor. The program also provides initial theological training for laymen preparing to enter the LCMS Specific Ministry Pastor track toward ordination.

Kairos

Kairos University has developed a unique educational platform called the Kairos Project - Kairos University. The term *kairos* comes from the Greek language, bearing the meaning; fitting season, opportunity, the proper time, as opposed to *chronos*, which refers to chronological time such as hour, day, week, year. Greg Henson, president of Sioux Falls Seminary, explains how these definitions of time have influenced SFS' unique way of approaching education.

“For many years, the primary method of theological education has been based on the “chronos” understanding of time. Students progress chronologically through a specific set of courses over a certain number of years and, provided they pass the courses, receive a degree at the end.”

“Our vision is to create a system of theological education that shifts the focus from chronos to kairos. In this system, students are fully engaged, and learning is more effective because it’s built around moments in time that naturally encourage integrated learning. In addition, students are held accountable to specific outcomes rather than to the chronological progression through a set of courses. As students are engaged in learning, life, and ministry, a team of mentors walks alongside them, providing encouragement and assistance.”

(Kairos: Shifting the Focus of Theological Education - Kairos University)

In this chart see how a conventional academic program compares with the Kairos path.

Conventional Academic Program compared to Kairos Path	
Conventional Academic Program	Kairos Path
Courses Stand Alone	Courses Integrated within the Outcomes
Student Evaluated by Instructor	Student Evaluated by Mentor Team
School Sets the Cadence	Student Works at His/Her Own Pace
School Directed	Student Directed
Requirements – Set by the School	Requirements – Flexible to Meet the Student's Needs
Tuition Assessed per Class	Tuition Assessed Monthly
Mainly Academic in Nature with Some Practical Application	Healthy Blend of Academics and Practical Application (Like an Internship)
Regularly Meet with Cohorts in Class Sessions	- Student Needs to Seek Out Individuals with Whom to Discuss Course Work - Gatherings Sponsored by the Michigan District

Mentor Team:

- + Faculty Mentor
- + Vocational Mentor
- + Personal Mentor

Mentor Team

On your Kairos journey you will have a mentor team to walk with you. Your mentor team provides important insight and perspective, helping you to be aware of your impact within your ministry context. While your mentors are concerned with every aspect of your journey, each one has a specific focus. Your Faculty Mentor focuses on Content, that is, the more academic side of things. Your Vocational Mentor focuses on Craft, which can be characterized as how do you perform in your ministry context. And your Personal Mentor focuses on Character, how you live what you are learning.

Outcome:

Something that follows as a result or consequence of an action taken.

Outcome-based Courses and Assessments Fully Integrated into Life and Vocation

The Kairos educational journey is oriented toward outcomes, and the courses serve to help the student achieve these outcomes. For the Master of Arts degree there are seven outcomes:

- + *Christian Spirituality* – Articulate how your life in Christ exhibits the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit as formed in your Christian community and devoted to the glory of God the Father.
- + *Biblical Literacy* – Demonstrate skillful, in-depth Biblical study, and awareness of interpretive frameworks.
- + *Contextual Project* – Demonstrate effective cultural exegesis through empathetic reflection on worldviews in a particular academic area of Biblical, theological, and/or anthropological study.
- + *Reflection in Community I* – Demonstrate competence in the integration of content, character, and craft specific to your vocational context.
- + *Christian Theology* – Articulate a coherent Christian theological understanding that informs your ministry.
- + *Culture and History* – Demonstrate appreciation and critical awareness of your own and other Christian traditions.
- + *Mentored Life* – Articulate and engage your vocation in a mentored life, intentional Christian community, and whole-life stewardship

Within each Outcome the courses required for Deacons and Ministry Assistants are associated with each Outcome in the following ways:

- + *Christian Spirituality*: Doctrine II; Urban Deacon and/or Outreach
- + *Biblical Literacy*: Old Testament I & II; New Testament; Greek I & II; Homiletics and/or Teaching the Faith
- + *Contextual Project*: Outreach; Homiletics; Lutheran Worship
- + *Reflection on Community I*: Doctrine I, Doctrine II, Old Testament Survey, New Testament Survey
- + *Christian Theology*: Doctrine I & II; Teaching the Faith
- + *Church History*: Church History; Office of the Ministry, Lutheran Worship
- + *Mentored Life*: Teaching the Faith; Leadership; Christian Caregiving

Master Assessment:

Evaluation and evidence that an Outcome has been achieved.

Master Assessments – Evaluation and Evidence

Evaluating that an Outcome has been completed comes from the student's Mentor Team in the form of a master assessment. A Master Assessment is where the student provides evidence of what they have learned along with how they've practiced it, and your Mentor Team, along with you, assesses how well the established goals were achieved. The Master Assessment path looks like this:

1. *Suggested Master Assessment:* For each Outcome, the Michigan School of Missional Formation suggests assessments that will demonstrate a student's mastery of an Outcome. Typical master assessments are writing Bible Studies, doctrinal essay, developing and engaging in a project related to pastoral care, sermons, a demographic report, and many more as they relate to a typical ministry context.
2. *Student-Suggested Master Assessment:* As you, the student, progress in your studies and become more involved in your ministry context, you will come up with ideas that are unique to your path. Then, working with your Mentor Team, you can customize what you will be doing to demonstrate mastery of an Outcome.
3. *Actual Master Assessment:* This is where you do what you have committed to do.
4. *Master Assessment:* Your Mentor Team will evaluate the documentation you submitted. Then you will meet with your mentor team where you, as a group, will have a conversation about what you have learned (Content), how it has affected you (Character), and how you've demonstrated the skills and practices that you learned in your vocational context (Craft).
5. *Master Assessment Rubric:* Finally, you and each of your Mentor Team members submit an evaluation of your competency in the Outcome being assessed, to your Faculty Mentor. He, in turn, combines the evaluations and submits them to Kairos University earning your credits.

Taking the Reins



Kairos is not just student centered, it is student directed. You now have a mentor team to walk with you and the Kairos team to support you, but you must own your educational journey. These final steps will help you take the reins.

Making it Work for You

Yes, you are the student, but Kairos is student centered, and your mentor team meetings should be as well. You will want to work with your mentors to ensure the meetings work for you. Address any concerns early on, and don't be afraid to make sure your team is aware of both your needs and preferences around how your meetings work.

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