

VOCATION AND LEADERSHIP

YDS enables students to prepare for the lay or ordained ministries of Christian churches. As part of that preparation, YDS offers an integrated program in vocation and leadership to every Master of Divinity degree student. The program accommodates the student's needs and expectations for the degree as well as Yale's requirements. Support for this integrated focus within the context of the degree includes the help of academic advisers, the associate dean for ministerial and social leadership, and the director of professional formation and/or the director of supervised ministries.

The M.Div. is a professional degree, required by many Christian denominations for ordained ministry. Utilizing the YDS faculty and staff as well as the resources of the broader Yale University academic community, M.Div. students engage in a three-year program of intellectual discovery and personal formation. The M.Div. degree prepares students for their denominational ordination process in a program that is theologically informed, professionally competent, academically rigorous, and oriented to the life of the church. Yale provides all of the course work required for most denominational ordination requirements and also offers the context and broad system of support for this journey of the mind and spirit. The degree also prepares students who are not ordination-bound for a wide range of careers in professional ministry, justice work, and the work of nonprofit service. Assessment of progress is offered throughout the academic program so that students in the M.Div. program can move forward, with broad institutional support, into the work that is most appropriate for their interests, their gifts, and their hopes.

In addition to academic work, ministry studies include possibilities for regular worship with the YDS community at Marquand Chapel, at Berkeley Center, at Andover Newton at Yale, and in a wide range of denominational and other settings. The Annand Program for Spiritual Formation, sponsored by Berkeley Divinity School and open to all students, encourages learning the fundamentals of prayer and Christian discipleship from seasoned clergy and lay teachers. The YDS Internship Program offers rich opportunities for professional growth within congregational ministry and nonprofit settings.

In all aspects of formation for vocation and leadership, consideration of issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and the broad scope of social justice concerns is of central importance.