

Theology

What Can I Do With This Major? • Career Pathways

University of St. Thomas

Theology at St. Thomas invites graduates into one of humanity's oldest and most enduring intellectual traditions — the systematic study of God, faith, scripture, ethics, and religious experience. This degree develops exceptional capacities for critical thinking, ethical reasoning, textual interpretation, and humanistic communication. Theology graduates pursue meaningful careers in ministry, education, healthcare, nonprofit leadership, law, and any field where questions of meaning, ethics, and human dignity are central.

CONVENTIONAL CAREER TRACKS

All roles below are accessible with a bachelor's degree and 0–2 years of experience (internships count).

Track	What you'll do	Sample Job Titles (BS)
Ministry & Pastoral Work	Serve faith communities through pastoral care, sacramental ministry, religious education, and spiritual direction.	■ Campus Ministry Coordinator ■ Youth Minister ■ Pastoral Associate ■ Director of Religious Education ■ Retreat Director ■ Chaplain (with CPE)
Catholic & Faith-Based Education	Teach theology, scripture, ethics, and religious studies in Catholic schools, universities, and formation programs.	■ Theology Teacher (Catholic school) ■ Religious Education Director ■ Faith Formation Coordinator ■ RCIA Director ■ University Ministry Staff ■ Catholic School Administrator
Chaplaincy & Spiritual Care	Provide spiritual care and pastoral presence in hospitals, prisons, the military, universities, and hospice settings.	■ Hospital Chaplain (with CPE) ■ Prison / Correctional Chaplain ■ Military Chaplain (with ordination) ■ Hospice Chaplain ■ University Chaplain ■ Corporate Chaplain
Nonprofit & Social Services	Apply theological commitments to justice and service in mission-driven organizations.	■ Nonprofit Program Coordinator ■ Social Services Case Manager ■ Development Associate ■ Community Outreach Specialist ■ Advocacy Coordinator ■ Catholic Charities Program Manager
Communications & Publishing	Write, edit, and produce theological, ethical, and spiritual content for Catholic and broader audiences.	■ Religious Publisher Editor ■ Catholic Media Writer ■ Communications Coordinator ■ Grant Writer ■ Social Media Manager (faith org) ■ Podcast / Media Producer

NON-CONVENTIONAL & EMERGING TRACKS

Paths that sit at unexpected intersections — often less competitive and equally rewarding.

Emerging Area	Roles You Might Not Expect
Bioethics & Healthcare Ethics	Clinical Bioethicist (with M.A.) • Hospital Ethics Committee Coordinator • Palliative Care Ethics Consultant • Healthcare Policy Analyst • Spiritual Care Coordinator

Law & Public Policy	Policy Analyst • Religious Liberty Attorney (J.D. track) • Legislative Aide (faith & values) • Human Rights Analyst • Nonprofit Advocacy Director • Legal Aid Coordinator
International Development & Peacebuilding	International NGO Program Coordinator • Catholic Relief Services Associate • Peacebuilding Specialist • Human Trafficking Prevention Coordinator • Mission Integration Director
Corporate Culture & Ethics	Ethics & Compliance Analyst • Corporate Social Responsibility Manager • Values-Based Leadership Consultant • DEI Program Coordinator • Organizational Culture Specialist

WHERE A GRADUATE DEGREE TAKES YOU

A graduate degree meaningfully expands your ceiling and opens leadership, research, and specialized roles.

M.Div. (Master of Divinity)	Ordained Minister, Pastor, Chaplain, Campus Minister, Seminary Faculty — the professional degree for pastoral leadership.	Required for ordination in most Christian traditions; the M.Div. is a three-year graduate degree covering scripture, pastoral care, ethics, and theology.
M.A. Theology / Religious Studies	University Theology Instructor, Religious Education Director, Pastoral Leader, Think Tank Researcher.	The academic graduate degree for those who want to teach, research, or lead educational programs in theology without pursuing ordination.
Ph.D. Theology / Religious Studies	University Professor, Department Chair, Seminary Faculty, Research Scholar, Public Theologian.	Required for tenure-track academic positions in theology — competitive programs at Catholic University, Notre Dame, Fordham, and Boston College.
M.A. Bioethics / J.D.	Clinical Bioethicist, Healthcare Ethics Director, Religious Liberty Attorney, Public Interest Counsel.	Theology + bioethics or law is a powerful combination for those who want to engage complex ethical questions in healthcare, policy, or legal contexts.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- Pursue Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) units — they are required for chaplaincy and highly valued by hospitals, hospices, and military programs.
- Pair Theology with philosophy, social work, or education to strengthen your positioning for careers outside direct ministry.
- UST's Catholic identity and connections to the Archdiocese, Catholic Charities, and local faith communities are genuine career assets — leverage them.
- Develop strong writing and public speaking skills — theology is fundamentally a communicative discipline, and clear expression of complex ideas is your core competency.
- Consider the intersection of theology and bioethics — Catholic health systems (Ascension, CommonSpirit, CHI) actively recruit people with theological formation for ethics roles.
- Graduate school is a natural next step for many theology graduates — explore funded M.Div. and Ph.D. programs and connect with UST faculty mentors early.

This guide reflects current workforce trends and is updated annually. Job titles may vary by employer, industry, and market. Visit the UST Career Development Center for personalized advising and employer connections.