



Frequently Asked Questions

For Applicants:

Q. What is the purpose of MECCA Institute?

A. The purpose of making this is to expand progressive Islamic theology through education and research. MECCA Institute provides an alternative Islamic perspective that supports inclusive Muslims in communities that have been inundated with extremism and discontent. Graduates of MECCA Institute will help empower everyday Muslims.

Q. Who is MECCA Institute for?

A. MECCA Institute is for graduate-level students and professionals seeking to become future leaders in society through a structured program of progressive Islamic theology. By focusing on educating women, youth and the LGBT, through intrafaith and interfaith, MECCA Institute graduates, both young and old, may have a chance to be spiritual leaders in Muslim communities across the United States and the world.

Q. What does MECCA Institute look for in an applicant?

A. MECCA Institute's admissions department looks to filling each class with diverse students, inclusive of gender parity, racial diversity, diversity of sexual orientation, as well as Muslim intrafaith and non-Muslim interfaith backgrounds. The admissions department also considers each applicant's goals and how they will utilize this training in meeting their future aspirations.

We recognize that Muslims today, whether they are native or immigrants, have been inundated with extremism and discontent in

their Muslim communities. By focusing our scholarly work on Muslim women, youth, LGBTQ, and intrafaith, we can empower everyday Muslims, and over time shall be able to place educated people as spiritual leaders of Muslim communities across the United States and the world.

MECCA Institute's goal of inclusivity will also proffer interfaith opportunities for non-Muslims to have more nuanced understandings of Islam in the big picture kind of way. This means, we will be able to help non-Muslims, because of our diverse department studies that focus on various parts of the Muslim world, understand how global Islamic faith really is by creating a platform of alternative understandings. Therefore, we look forward to our graduates helping bridge those gaps that currently exist today.

Q. What programs does MECCA Institute have?

A. MECCA Institute's Chaplaincy Certificate Program provides students three different formulations of the traditional Muslim chaplain training: Pastoral Counseling, Muslim Leadership, and Interfaith Programming.

Pastoral Counseling – graduates would be certified to fulfill chaplain positions in public agencies, local, state and federal governments, hospitals, military, and mosques.

Muslim Leadership – graduates would be certified to fulfill general pastoral counseling roles, but also have the additional training in establishing and developing Muslim community centers.

Interfaith Programming – graduates would be certified to fulfill general pastoral counseling roles, but also have the additional training in establishing and developing interfaith and intrafaith programming with other faith communities.

Arabic Language Courses – students seeking an intensive Arabic language proficiency from Beginners I through Intermediate Level II

English TOEFL Courses – English language scores that are below IBT 85/100 and TOFL 550/600, international students must take intensive

English language courses to improve their English proficiency to attend classes.

Q. What is unique about MECCA Institute’s Chaplaincy program?

A. MECCA Institute’s Chaplaincy certificate program is unique due to its inclusive and progressive theological training in the Islamic faith. Besides its open-door policy to include men, women, LGBTQI, intrafaith and interfaith Muslims and non-Muslims in the student body, the certificate training program teaches Qur’anic ethics devoid of cultural ceremonial and traditional renderings upon which many Muslims use in determining what is and what is not Islam.

MECCA Institute’s faculty places great emphasis on Quran and Qur’anic interpretation based upon historical and intellectual evaluation of secondary sources. This means a thorough evaluation through intellectual review and discussion of the various traditional interpretations, as well as utilizing modern sciences in developing our understanding of Qur’anic ethics for contemporary and future times.

MECCA Institute recognizes that the dependence upon current renderings of Wahhabist and Salafist traditional teachings is the underpinning of Islamic theological basis that is causing major problems within Muslim states and Muslims living in secular societies. Therefore, MECCA Institute highlights the traditions of intellectual review and study, which was the foundation of major advancements of Islamic theological thought between the 8th and 12th centuries. By bringing forth these methodologies, updating them for the 21st century, MECCA Institute looks forward to educating current and future generations of Muslims living in modern nontraditional, multi-faith and secular societies.

Q. How long is the Chaplaincy program?

A. The chaplaincy program is a graduate-level certificate training. Students can take a two-year, full-time program (9 credits per semester), or a three-year part-time program (6 credit hours per semester). Total graduate credits is 36, plus up to 12 credits in Arabic Language study.

Q. How long will it take to earn my certificate?

A. Full-Time Study: Following a two-year, full-time study program, a student beginning in August 2017, and meets all academic requirements and standards established by MECCA Institute, can anticipate graduation June 2019.

Part-Time Study: A student beginning in August 2017, following our three-year, part-time program, and meets all academic requirements and standards established by MECCA Institute, can anticipate graduation in June 2020.

Q. What do graduates do with a certificate after graduation?

A. MECCA Institute graduates can look forward to working in institutions such as inclusive mosques, hospitals and hospice care facilities, as well as in governmental agencies and academic centers where they will find Muslims as part of their client base. Additionally, our graduates study Muslim leadership and interfaith programming can look forward to working in positions in both public and private religious and nonreligious organizations building public relations between Muslim communities and intrafaith/ interfaith religious institutions.

Individuals who already have graduate degrees will be able to utilize our training to enhance their professional credentials within their fields of endeavor. Therefore, areas of public policy, law, law enforcement, general and mental health care, and other areas where knowledge about the Islamic religion plays an important role in a professional's career.

Q. Is MECCA Institute accredited?

A. At this point, MECCA Institute is not accredited. We shall be applying for online accreditation in 2017 and anticipate online accreditation by 2019. MECCA Institute shall apply for Mid-Atlantic regional accreditation of theological schools, which is a five-year process, anticipating accreditation by 2022.

Q. Do I need to have a background in religious texts?

A. No, you do not need a background in religious texts. Our faculty expects that some of the students may have particular backgrounds in specific religious texts from a diversity of faiths. However, students must agree that they shall not demand that their particular prior

training must be the focus of interpretation of sacred texts that they are studying. As outlined in our Student Conduct Code, students will not be allowed to promote any particular religious dogma, nor shall they be allowed to utilize such dogma as a form of bullying or intimidating students. Should a student be found guilty of such action, disciplinary action would include an academic warning and with continued misbehavior of this nature, expulsion from the Institute for a period of time or completely may be warranted.

Q. Do I need to know Arabic?

A. No, you do not need to know Arabic. In order to graduate from the Chaplaincy certificate program, a student must obtain an intermediate level of reading proficiency in Arabic. MECCA Institute's language study department shall provide Arabic language courses for students starting from beginner's to intermediate level.

Q. What are the ages of MECCA Institute students?

A. The typical age of graduate student would be a person recently graduating from an undergraduate school, or a person may have several years to decades of life experiences. As our Chaplaincy program enhances a person's academic and professional training and skills, our student body will reflect age groups from their early 20s through the older, more mature senior individuals.

Q. Who is eligible?

A. MECCA Institute student body consists of individuals who have completed their bachelor's degree, or those who have already obtained a graduate degree.

Q. I am graduating from my undergraduate program this year, can I take part in the Chaplaincy program?

A. Yes, anyone who has graduated by June 2017 would be eligible to join the class of 2019, beginning in August 2017.

Q. I have not been in school for several years, am I still eligible?

A. Yes, we do not prevent older students who have been out of school from entering our graduate-level certificate program.

Q. Do you accept international students?

A. Yes, we do except international students. If an international student meets the English language and other prerequisites, we would anticipate they could obtain entry into our certificate program. Please see the TOEFL exam requirements below.

Q. I'm not a US citizen, but I live in the United States as a Resident, am I eligible for MECCA Institute?

A. Yes, non-US citizens are eligible to attend MECCA Institute's online chaplaincy certificate program. As courses are taught in English, international students would require a 85 on Oral and at least 550 on the TOEFL exam. MECCA Institute does offer an intensive English Language Course to assist students prepare for the rigors of our Chaplaincy program, and if deemed necessary, a student must take the one-year preparatory courses before entering the Chaplaincy program.

Q. What are the English Proficiency requirements at MECCA Institute?

A. Since proven English proficiency is required to ensure success in MECCA Institute's Chaplaincy program, the TOEFL exam is required for students whose native language is not English.

MECCA Institute's minimum TOEFL score for graduate admission is 85 or higher for the internet based test. Admission with funding requires higher exam scores (TOEFL score of 100 for internet based test). We will only accept official valid scores of exams sent by the test taking institution. Exams taken earlier than 2 years before submitting application are considered expired and are unacceptable.

An English proficiency test score is not required for students who submit official transcripts showing the successful completion (B or better average) of a bachelor's or graduate degree at a college or university in countries where English is the dominant language.

Q. What is the typical full-time, course load each semester?

A. Each full-time student will be expected to carry nine graduate credits each semester. If the student does not meet our prerequisite intermediate level of Arabic study, the student may take an additional

language course to meet that requirement each semester. This would mean a student would take between nine and 12 graduate hours each semester.

Q. Is there a part-time study option?

A. Yes, we do have a part-time study option. Our part-time students would take two courses (6 credits) per semester, and with summer session language study, completing our Chaplaincy Certificate Program within three years of study.

Q. How many students take part in the Chaplaincy program each year?

A. MECCA Institute has a limit of 50 first-year Chaplaincy program students during any calendar year. Our combined full-time and part-time programs will have a maximum of 100 participants during any calendar year.

Q. What is the cost of tuition?

A. The chaplaincy certificate full-time program is US \$11,000 per year, and our part-time program is US \$7,660 per year. Summer Session fees (\$4,160) is equivalent to one semester of part-time study. The English Language course is \$7,660 per year. Fees are inclusive of textbooks and training materials and other related student services fees.

Costs:	Fall	Spring	
Full-Time (9-12 Credits):	\$5,000	\$5,000	
Universal Services Fee: (Matriculation/Library)	\$ 500	\$ 500	
Total:	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$11,000

Costs:	Fall	Spring	
Part-Time (6 Crs.):	\$3,330	\$3,330	
Universal Services Fee: (Matriculation/Library)	\$ 500	\$ 500	
Total:	\$3,830	\$3,830	\$ 7,660

Costs:	Fall	Spring	
Arabic Course (6 Crs.):	\$3,330	\$3,330	

Universal Services Fee:	\$ 500	\$ 500	
Total:	\$3,830	\$3,830	\$ 7,660

Costs:	Summer I	Summer II	
Summer Courses:	\$1,930	\$1,930	
Universal Services Fee:	\$ 150	\$ 150	
(Matriculation/Library)			
Total:	\$2,080	\$2,080	\$ 4,160

Q. What sort of financial aid is available?

A. At this time, MECCA Institute is not certified to receive U.S. Federal student aid. Efforts are being made to locate nonrefundable grants to assist students with financial aid needs to assist them in covering their tuition costs.

Q. How much is your application fee?

MECCA Institute’s application fee are as follows:

<u>Fee Type</u>	<u>Online</u>	<u>Mail-In</u>
Domestic:	\$ 65.00	\$ 75.00
International:	\$150.00	\$185.00
Late Fee:	\$100.00	\$100.00

(Note: All Application Fees are Nonrefundable)

Q. Do you accept late applications?

A. MECCA Institute has a rolling admissions process; an individual may apply for all 2017 admissions beginning in mid-January through the beginning of June 2017. Admission determinations will be made within a 60-day time-period. Late applications received between June 1 and July 1, 2017 will be assessed an additional US \$100.00 late fee for the August 2019 class. Note: All application fees are nonrefundable.

Q. How long will it take after applying to MECCA Institute will I find out if I am accepted?

A. The admissions process begins with the submission of your online application and payment of your application fee. Once all documentation is received, a person should hear from our Admissions

Office within 60-days. After acceptance, other documentation may be required and must be submitted prior to the beginning of the Fall 2017 semester begins.

Q. Once I am accepted, how do I secure my place in the class?

A. Once granted admission to MECCA Institute, a student is required to confirm admission by the accept date in their admission letter. A full-time student will pay a 20-percent nonrefundable deposit of US \$2,200 to secure their admission. A part-time student will pay \$1,532. If admission is granted via late application, the student must pay in-full their tuition and fees by the date listed in their admission letter.

Q. How much should I budget for an academic year?

A. Budgeting for study and MECCA Institute would generally require a student to pay their tuition fees and expect that most, if not all, materials will be covered. From time to time, there may be additional textbooks that may be required, but that would differ depending upon the professor teaching the course. A student should budget for computer equipment and some software materials as needed. MECCA Institute shall attempt to cover to the best of its ability extraneous costs for access to online libraries and other academic sources deemed necessary by our faculty.

Q. How much do I need to spend on textbooks?

A. Most course materials will be included in the program. Money to purchase additional textbooks not covered in our course materials will be made known to students beforehand.

Q. Will I need a computer?

A. Yes, you will need a computer and access to high-speed broadband internet service. Although the student will be able to utilize their desktop, laptop, iPad or smart phone to access classes and study materials, preparation of student submissions of coursework would require access to a word processing program and other related software.

Q. When will the new semester begin?

A. The new semester begins in August 2017. Please see academic calendar in the orientation section.

Q. What types of teaching styles are used?

A. MECCA Institute professors will utilize a diversity of teaching methods ranging from a hybrid Socratic method to rote memorization for language courses. Our professors will look for our students to read, listen to, and view the diversity of materials important for the course they are taking, and to extrapolate from those materials and provide articulable responses based upon their intellectual review and assessment of the same. Of course, in the language courses, students will be expected to master at the intermediate level the oral, listening and written proficiency in Modern Standard Arabic (Fusha) for research.

Q. What kind of connection does the faculty have with students?

A. Although each founding member teaches their courses differently, a student can expect to have periodic interactions with their professor during their classroom sessions, teacher office hours, and appointments confirmed with the professor.

Q. What kind of education and experience do professors have?

A. MECCA Institute's faculty are all graduate level degree holders from a variety of domestic and international institutions of higher learning. This means that our professors, at minimum, have Master's or Ph.D. degrees. Our faculty also have, collectively, years of experience teaching online courses. For further information, you may review each professor's academic credentials listed in their bios.

Q. Who are the professors who teach at MECCA Institute?

A. See List of Professors Below:

Daayiee Abdullah – Induction Course
Mamadou Bocoum – Islamic History
Yarehk Hernandez - Theology
Farouk Peru - Quran
Nejmeh Habib - Arabic
Therisa Rogers – English as a Foreign Language

Q. When do I have to be online for classes?

A. Each semester a timetable will establish live course times, which will be several times a semester. Other time requirements for course

submissions are established by your Professor and outlined in each course's syllabi.

Q. What happens if I have a technical problem?

A. It is the policy of MECCA Institute to notify students in advance of any class cancellations, as well as provide makeup session times. Should there be technical difficulties, students will have information as to where they can locate technical assistance on our website.

Q. What is the class size?

A. We anticipate each class will have between 6 and 10 students.

Q. What is the student code of conduct?

A. Please see our student orientation materials.

For more information, visit:
[**http://MECCA-Institute.org/school**](http://MECCA-Institute.org/school)