

# ADMISSIONS POLICY

MIRL 2024-2025



BOSTON  
ISLAMIC  
SEMINARY

## Application Process

- Applications for admissions should be submitted online at <https://www.bostonislamicseminary.org/mirl-application/>
- Electronic transcripts or other application materials can be emailed to [mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org](mailto:mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org). Please make sure all applicants' names are in all emailed documents, not just in the body of the email.
- Referees must submit their letters of recommendation online. Once the applicant submits his/her application, a recommendation form will be sent to each listed referee at the email address provided by the applicant. Please be sure your referees are aware of this process and that they add [mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org](mailto:mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org) to their 'safe senders' list. Once a referee submits their form, it will be automatically added to your application.
- Applications are considered incomplete until all materials are submitted. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Application accounts created or started but not submitted by the deadline of the program will be deleted prior to the start of the new application cycle. Application data and any associated supplemental materials are not retained.

## ADMISSION

### General Requirements

Applicants who meet the BIS admission requirements and have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution of higher education will be considered. Admission requirements are based on academic qualifications that indicate that students have the potential for success during the entire course of study.

### International Students Policy

At this time, the Boston Islamic Seminary does not have the capacity to consider applicants from outside the USA, Canada, or the UK.

### Immunization Law

The State of Massachusetts requires that students **under the age of 30** who plan to enroll in a graduate program or pursue studies on a full-time, in-person basis show proof of vaccination against Covid, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella. Additionally, students who plan on

living on-campus must receive the meningococcal (meningitis) vaccination. Students studying entirely online do not need to submit proof of vaccination.

## Criteria for Admission

Applicants to the Master of Islamic Religious Leadership (MIRL) program must show evidence of their ability to pursue advanced study and research in Islamic Studies and Leadership by meeting the following admissions criteria:

- **Bachelor's degree** from an accredited college or university, with a minimum GPA of 3.0.  
**Qur'anic Memorization:** Ability to recite at least one-thirtieth (i.e., one juz') of the Qur'ān from memory.
- **Foundational Islamic Knowledge:** foundational knowledge of the Sciences of the Qur'an and Hadith, and the fundamentals of Fiqh, Aqida and Tazkiya; familiarity with basic Islamic concepts, both linguistically and theoretically. (See the Admissions Retreat section below for evaluation information.)
- **Arabic:** Ability to read and write in Arabic at an intermediate level. (See the Admissions Retreat section below for evaluation information.)

*Applicants who were subject to disciplinary action or non-academic dismissal at a prior university/college might not be considered for admission.*

### Required Application Submissions:

- **Completed Online Admissions Application**, available online at <https://www.bostonislamicseminary.org/mirl-application/>
- **Application fee** of \$50.
- **Four letters of recommendation:** two from an accredited academic program and two from a mosque, Islamic center, or other such organization in the U.S. Applicants are asked to provide the name and email address for each of the recommenders during the application process. Once the application is submitted, an email will be generated to the applicant's recommenders directing them to fill out the electronic recommendation form. References should be from individuals who are qualified, through direct experience with the applicant's academic or professional work, to comment on the applicant's ability to undertake graduate study in Islamic Leadership.
- **Current Résumé/CV** detailing the applicant's professional experience and community involvement.

- **Official transcripts from all previous undergraduate and graduate programs, excluding BIS courses.** The Office of Admissions already holds internal transcripts of its current students. If transfer credit shows on the degree transcript, the applicant must also request a transcript from the original credit-awarding institution. A transcript is official when it comes directly from the institution. If an applicant is submitting an official transcript, it must be in a sealed envelope from the institution indicating that it is an official document. If the envelope has been opened prior to arriving at the Office of Admissions, it is no longer considered an official transcript. Institutions that send electronic transcripts should send them directly to the Office of Admissions at [mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org](mailto:mirl@bostonislamicseminary.org).
  - For degrees awarded outside of the United States, BIS requires official college transcript evaluations from one of the following [agencies](#). Evaluations done by the selected agency must be course-by-course evaluations and provide verification that the degree the applicant holds is equivalent to a bachelor's degree from the United States.
- **An essay or goal statement** addressing the applicant's reasons for pursuing the Islamic Religious Leadership degree, intended future goals, etc. In approximately 700 words, the applicant should describe what they perceive are some of the biggest challenges being faced by American Muslims today and how they understand leadership in today's context.

### Additional Submissions

- Any *ijazat* or certifications from an Islamic Institute.

### Admissions Interview:

Applicants may be contacted by the Admissions Committee for a remote interview ~~at some time~~ during the application review process.

### Evaluation of Qualifications:

Written and oral evaluations may be administered to assess:

- Basic competencies in the core Islamic sciences, including Qur'an, Prophetic Traditions (Hadith), Prophetic Biography (Sira), Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) and Islamic Spirituality (Tazkiya)
- Intermediate level in Classical Arabic
- Quranic recitation and memorization level

### Submission of Application:

Upon receipt of the electronic application, the Office of Admissions sends all applicants an email containing the link to their application form, which can be revisited until completion. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all supporting materials arrive at the Office of Admissions and are postmarked by the application deadline.

- **Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications as soon as possible, rather than waiting until the deadline..** Submitting the application at the deadline means an applicant may not have the ability to check on their application and determine what Admissions has received or what is still missing. Applicants are encouraged to submit an online application early and to send supporting documentation to complete the application prior to the admissions deadline.

## **ADMISSION DATES AND DEADLINES**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit the admission application and all required documentation as early as possible. Applicants are reminded that all documents required to complete the admission process must be submitted to the Admissions Committee by the appropriate deadlines, and applications will not be accepted after the published application deadline.

A comprehensive listing of admission application deadlines can be found on The BIS website at: <https://www.bostonislamicseminary.org/apply-for-mirl/>

### **Dates and Deadlines**

*The following dates and deadlines reflect the 2024-2025 application cycle. Please note that dates and deadlines may vary slightly per academic year.*

<b>November 15, 2023</b>	<b>Admissions Officially Open</b>
<b>February 15, 2024</b>	<b>Review Period Begins</b>
<b>April 15, 2024</b>	<b>Scholarship Consideration Deadline</b> - Students who wish to be considered for scholarships must ensure that their applications (along with the completed scholarship form) are submitted by this deadline.
<b>May 4, 2024 (Saturday)</b>	<b>Admissions Placement Test</b> - Applicants are to take an online placement test to assess their knowledge and skills relevant to the MIRL degree.

<b>May 7 - June 23, 2024</b>	<b>Admission Interviews Conducted</b> - Qualified applicants may be invited for an admission interview as part of the selection process.
<b>July 30, 2024</b>	<b>Admissions Close</b>

For orientation and additional dates, please consult our [academic calendar](#)

## Notification of Decisions

Applicants who have submitted a complete application by February 15 will be notified of decisions on a rolling basis, once their application has been reviewed and an interview (if deemed appropriate) concluded. Official notification is by email.

## Responding to Offers

Responses to offers of admission must be made online as indicated in the instructions contained in the offer letter sent to the student. Applicants can secure their spot by submitting a \$500 non-refundable enrollment fee. The deadline to submit the deposit is June 30, 2024. When the student enrolls in classes, the enrollment fee will be applied as a discount against the tuition and other fees.

**If the enrollment fee is not received on or before June 30, 2024, the offer of admission may be rescinded, with or without notice to the applicant.**

## Deferred Admissions

Requests for deferred admission will be considered only after an offer of admission has been accepted and the enrollment fee paid. Requests for deferral must be submitted electronically through the Populi system. An admissions deferral may be requested for a maximum of one academic year.

## Reapplication Policy

Previous applicants to the Seminary and applicants who declined a previous offer of admission must submit a new application, following the regular application instructions above, and must participate in all admissions-related activities (e.g., interview, retreat, etc.).

## Provisional Admissions

In some instances, provisional admission may be granted to a student who does not meet the established requirements or standards, provided there is sufficient evidence to show that the student is capable of doing satisfactory graduate work. Students who meet most but not all prerequisites of the Master's program may be granted provisional admissions. Such students should plan to complete any coursework they may be missing prior to joining the program. If needed, admissions for provisionally accepted students may be deferred to allow time for them to complete the required coursework. If the MIRL program determines that the student has not met the conditions of admission, the student may be withdrawn from the program.

## Scholarships

Boston Islamic Seminary is committed to delivering the best educational experience to its students. The Seminary views its financial aid and scholarship program as an investment in students and their futures, and thus will make an effort to support all admitted students who demonstrate financial need. Boston Islamic Seminary does not participate in federal or state-sponsored grant or loan programs.

BIS offers several **partial scholarships** for students in the MIRL program. Awards are based on demonstrated academic and leadership merit, in conjunction with financial need, as determined by the MIRL scholarship committee. Master of Islamic Religious Leadership applicants who wish to be considered for scholarship should submit the [2024-2025 Scholarship Application](#) at the same time as they submit the application for admission to the MIRL program.

## Verification of Credentials

It is the policy of the Seminary to verify all credentials in support of an application. All transcripts, recommendations, publications, and supplemental materials may be traced to their source in order to confirm their authenticity. Written materials submitted by an applicant may be subject to review for the purpose of identifying plagiarism.

## Degree Confirmation

The Seminary reserves the right to request evidence of the award of any degree referenced during the application process.



## Return of Application Materials

It is the policy of the Seminary that materials (including transcripts, portfolios, and other items) that were provided in support of an application are neither returned nor forwarded to a third party.

## TRANSFER ADMISSION

1. A transfer applicant, for the purposes of this document, is defined as a student who is already pursuing a Master's degree (or higher) at an eligible non-BIS institution, having successfully completed at least one graduate-level course at that institution, in a field of study similar to or overlapping with BIS's MIRL program, and who wishes to transfer into BIS's MIRL program.
  - 'Similar to or overlapping with BIS's MIRL program' includes the fields of Islamic Studies, Chaplaincy, Counseling, and Leadership. Other fields of study are acceptable at the discretion of the Admissions Committee.
  - 'Eligible institutions' include all regionally accredited institutions of higher education in the US. Nationally-accredited institutions, non-accredited institutions, and non-US institutions are subject to approval by the Admissions Committee.
2. Transfer applicants fill out the same MIRL application form as regular applicants, and are subject to the same procedures and requirements, except that the regular application deadline does not apply to them. Rather, transfer applications are accepted on a rolling basis — for Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters — pending the availability of vacancies in the MIRL program. Transfer applicants may specify their preferred start date, but the Admissions Committee reserves the right to offer a postponed start date if the application was submitted at a date that is too close (according to the judgment of the Admission Committee) to the requested start date.
3. Transfer applicants may fill out the BIS Scholarship application, but if they do so after the deadline for the academic year, then there is no guarantee that they will receive an award, as scholarship funds may have been exhausted by that time.
4. Transfer applicants are not guaranteed transfer credit for all or any courses completed at their current institution. If they are offered admission and they accept (by paying the enrollment fee), then they will have to petition for transfer credit according to the standard policy for transfer credits.

## Transfer of Credit

1. Enrolled students may petition for transfer credit from another eligible institution, to earn exemption from some MIRL courses.



- Eligible institution' includes all regionally accredited institutions of higher education in the US. Nationally-accredited institutions, non-accredited institutions, and non-US institutions are subject to approval by the Admissions Committee.
- 2. A maximum of 32 credit hours with a minimum grade of 'B' may be considered for transfer credit evaluation.
  - Transfer credit for courses taken at eligible institutions will normally only be approved if the course content is sufficiently similar to the content of a MIRL course.
  - In other words, elective transfer credit will normally not be awarded. However, the Academic Committee reserves the right to award elective transfer credit for at most one course, such credit being used towards the distinction graduation requirement.
- 3. Transfer applicants must submit an official transcript, as well as a course syllabus for all courses for which transfer credit is being sought.
  - For transcripts in any language other than English or Arabic, a certified translation must be provided in addition to the official transcript.
- 4. Grades earned in courses accepted for transfer will not be calculated as part of the GPA at the seminary. However, the credits earned will count toward the total number of credits required for graduation.

Applicants who apply for transfer credit may be required to take an oral and/or written examination to judge their competency in the relevant subject(s).

MASTERS OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

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PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION *of*  
AMERICAN MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS

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