

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY  
Advanced Pastoral Studies

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

Effective 2024

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Redlands**  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

SAN FRANCISCO  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**Doctor of Ministry**  
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*This handbook and the policies included here are a supplement to the University of Redlands catalog.*

## **Welcome to the Doctor of Ministry Program**

The Doctor of Ministry degree is a unique endeavor, bringing together practitioners in ministry as a community of scholars to engage in serious academic study and research to answer their own questions and at the same time, contribute to the work of the larger church through their exploration and innovation in the dissertation/project. It is our hope that you will find your participation in the Doctor of Ministry Program engaging, challenging, stimulating and spiritually renewing—in the classroom and your research, and through the relationships you build with colleagues, faculty and staff.

This Student Handbook is designed to provide information to help you get started and to navigate your way through the program. It supplements the University of Redlands Catalog with information, resources, policies and requirements specific to the DMin program. It is intended to be a primary source for you to find basic information about the DMin program. For general information about institution-wide policies please refer to the University of Redlands catalog, available through the UOR website.

As a graduate school of the University of Redlands, SFTS embraces the University's commitment to diversity and non-discrimination. The University of Redlands prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The notice of nondiscrimination is located on the University's Title IX webpage, [here](#).

## **DOCTOR OF MINISTRY (DMIN)**

Established in 1970, the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree offered by San Francisco Theological Seminary (SFTS) is a graduate theological degree providing religious professionals an opportunity to enrich their professional skills, nurture personal growth and equip themselves for new and innovative practices in ministry in a collaborative ecumenical and interfaith community of scholars. Since 2019, SFTS is part of the Graduate School of Theology of the University of Redlands.

As a mid-career degree, the DMin is normally undertaken after the completion of a Master of Divinity (MDiv), or equivalent, and after at least three years in professional ministry. The curriculum is designed for working students currently engaged in the active practice of ministry, focusing on contextual, interdisciplinary research and innovation in the practice of ministry. As a practical doctoral degree, each student's research is centered on the challenges within their own practice of ministry. The heart of each student's dissertation/project (D/P) research is their field project— designed and implemented in their own context of ministry to address a problem, challenge, need or opportunity with creative and innovative responses

### **DMIN DEGREE REQUIREMENTS & PROGRAM OPTIONS**

The Doctor of Ministry degree requires

- six resource<sup>1</sup> seminars (3 units each) – two foundational seminars and four electives,
- two program seminars (the D/P Orientation Seminar and D/P Proposal Seminar),
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval
- DMin Supervision I (Proposal) and Supervision II (Dissertation/ Project) and
- the completion of an approved Dissertation/Project.<sup>2</sup>

Most courses are offered in a hybrid format that includes one-week intensive in-person class modules during the months of June (Summer Session) and January (Intersession).

A limited number of elective courses may also be offered online or in person in the Fall and Spring semesters. A student can normally complete the required coursework in 18 months to two years, depending on the number of seminars undertaken each year.

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<sup>1</sup> “Resource seminar” includes all 3-unit, tuition bearing courses.

<sup>2</sup> Note: the words “course” and “seminar” are used interchangeably.

## COURSEWORK

The coursework requirements include a combination of required foundational seminars and electives chosen by the student based on research interests, as well as orientation seminars.

Students will take:

Two orientation courses

- DM-6014: Dissertation/Project Orientation Seminar (1.5 units, tuition free)
- DM-6001: Dissertation/Project Proposal Seminar (1.5 units, tuition free)

Two foundational courses

- DM-6017: Pastor as Person<sup>3</sup>
- DM-6039: Theology, Culture & Mission

AND

Four 3-unit (tuition bearing) **Elective Seminars** selected from:

- Traditional DMin electives (Summer and January intensives)
- Special Reading Courses (SRC)
- Elevated (Multi-level) Masters courses

On completion of all required coursework students will register for **DMin Supervision**, denoting *post-coursework active student status*, using the following course titles:

DM-6010 DMin Supervision I – D/P Proposal and

DM-6013 DMin Supervision II - Dissertation/Project

**Elective Seminars:** In addition to traditional (specific areas of interest) DMin electives offered in Summer or January Intensive sessions offered in, students may work directly with SFTS faculty with two options. Special Reading Courses are personalized courses created as an independent study of a topic specific to the student's project interest with the guidance of SFTS faculty. Students may also review regular Masters level course offerings and work with SFTS faculty to elevate that course to the doctoral level by adding additional course requirements.

## DMIN SUPERVISION

Students who have completed the required coursework are considered to be at the DMin Supervision phase of the DMin program while they are researching and preparing their Topic and Design Proposals, implementing their D/P project and completing the final manuscript. Students must register every Fall/Spring semester until they are approved for graduation in one of the following course listings, as appropriate:

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<sup>3</sup> May be waived for students with 4 units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) verified by ACPE official transcript.

- DMin Supervision I (DM6010): Proposal
- DMin Supervision II (DM6013): Dissertation/Project

## **CANDIDACY**

When a student begins a graduate program, they are not yet a candidate for a graduate degree. Advancement-to-candidacy in the DMin program signifies that the student has

- completed their required coursework,
- has an approved Topic Proposal and an approved dissertation/project advisor,
- and is ready to move forward to complete the Design Proposal and IRB review of the project in preparation for the dissertation/project phase for the DMin degree.

## **DISSERTATION/PROJECT (D/P)**

The Dissertation/Project is the post-coursework signature assignment for the DMin degree. It gives the student the opportunity to explore one aspect of their practice of ministry in depth, engaging both social and theological analysis. The D/P can be thought of as a combination of a research dissertation and a practical project relevant to the student's particular practice of ministry.

The sequence for development of the D/P is (typically) as follows:

- Draft Problem/Opportunity Statement
- Topic Proposal and D/P advisor approval
- Advance to Candidacy
- Design Proposal, submitted to APS Committee for approval
- Project implementation and Manuscript

### ***Dissertation/Project Guide:***

The *D/P Guide* outlines the requirements and processes necessary to complete the Topic Proposal, Design Proposal and D/P project and manuscript. It includes templates, samples, and guidance for completion of each step of the D/P process.

### **D/P Forum**

Graduating Candidates present their research to the DMin community in an online panel with an informal questions and answer period. Designed to meet ATS Standards requiring an oral presentation to allow Candidates to demonstrate the expertise gained through their research, the D/P Forum provides an opportunity for DMin community-wide conversation and learning, led by each year's graduating class. D/P Forums will typically be scheduled in late April and early May, after candidates have been approved for graduation.

## DMIN PROGRAM TRADITIONAL AREAS OF INTEREST

The interdisciplinary and contextual focus of the DMin degree enables students to explore their own leadership style and ministry context, develop skills for critical reflection on ministry-based issues, explore current research in the social sciences, and engage in critical theological reflection to seek creative responses to the challenges of ministry today.

The Executive Leadership course offerings are designed to enhance the multi-faceted intelligence (emotional, sociological, biblical, and theological) and leadership skills required in congregational, denominational or other faith-based ministries. Focused on the unique dynamics of leadership in communities of faith, these courses explore current theory in adaptive leadership, organizational change, and spiritual discernment and visioning.

- Adaptive Action Leadership
- Gospel and Global Media Culture
- Culturally Attentive Conflict Ministry

The Pastor as Spiritual Leader courses are offered in conjunction with the Program in Christian Spirituality, and are designed to assist religious professionals with pastoral responsibility for congregations, chaplaincies, and other ministries in expanding their understanding and competence to serve as spiritual leaders in their settings. These courses will integrate prayer, contemplative listening, discernment, and biblical and theological reflection to nourish transformative pastoral leadership and spiritual formation of themselves and their communities.

- Contemplative Listening
- Prayer and Discernment in Pastoral Ministry
- Spiritual Formation for Spiritual Practice

The Pastoral Care and Counseling courses are designed for professionals who serve or plan to serve in a context of specialized ministry such as chaplain, pastoral care specialist, pastoral counselor, or pastors with a special focus on pastoral care. While rooted in the Christian tradition, these courses are open to religious professionals across the spectrum of spiritual traditions. *Please note that some courses may have a one-unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) pre-requisite.*

- How People Change: Theology and Theory of Spiritual Care and Counseling
- Dynamics of Trauma, Loss and Grief
- Interfaith/Intercultural Spiritual Care and Counseling

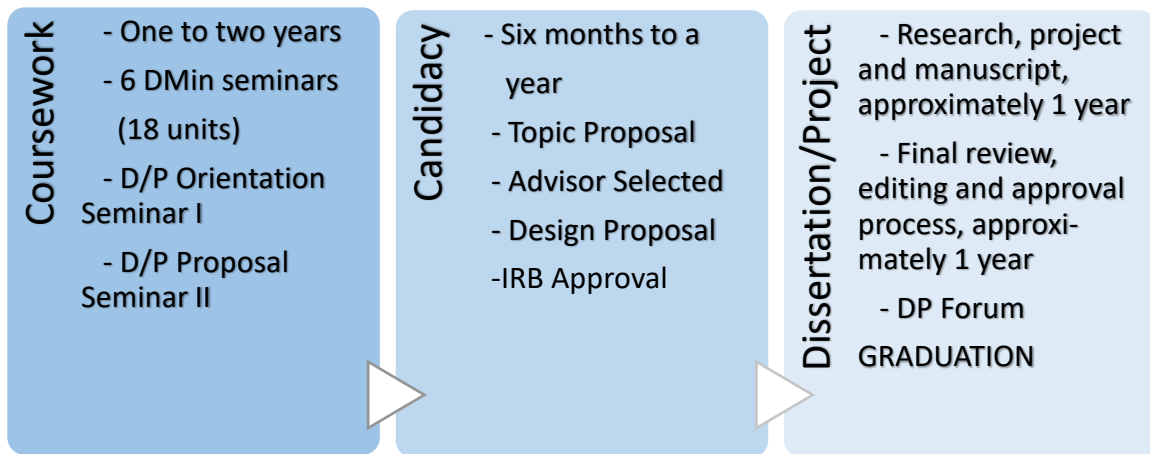
Chaplaincy/Spiritual Care Research Literacy courses are designed for Clinical Pastoral Educators, Board Certified Chaplains, and those seeking professional chaplaincy vocations. These courses integrate critical theological discourse with pastoral practice using an informed research method of inquiry. Chaplains and spiritual care providers will develop and master rigorous data collection methodologies appropriate for their ministry setting.

- Research Methods 1: Action Research and Evidence-Based Research Methods
- Research Methods 2: Quantitative vs Qualitative Research Methods
- The Politics of Research: Ethical, Epistemological, and Ontological Issues



## COURSE PLANNING AND TIMELINES

### Doctor of Ministry Degree Timeline



The Doctor of Ministry degree is designed for students to complete all degree requirements in 5 years. The graphic above is designed to show estimated timeframes for each stage of the process to graduation. Students who complete coursework in 12 – 15 months may take longer to complete the proposal stage. Students who complete coursework over a 2-year period or longer should begin developing their proposal prior to completion of the last course(s) in order to stay within the 5-year timeline.

### **Planning Your Timeline**

The DMin Course schedule allows for flexibility in the pacing of your coursework. Students may opt to move through the coursework stage quickly, completing the required coursework in a 15-month period. Students who take longer to complete coursework should plan to move through the proposal/Candidacy stage in a shorter period of time in order to stay within the 5-year timeframe. The following models demonstrate what the timeline for coursework might look like.

### **Fast Track**

#### **Year 1: Summer Session**

##### Required Foundational Seminars

- Dissertation/Project Orientation Seminar
- Pastor as Person
- Theology, Culture and Mission

**(Fast Track continued)**

**Fall and Winter Intersession**

- 2 Elective seminars: SRC, elevated-Masters course, traditional

**Year 2: Spring and Summer Session**

- 2 Resource seminars: SRC, elevated-Masters course, traditional
- D/P Seminar: Proposal

**Standard – Option 1**

**Year 1: Summer Session**

**Required Foundational Seminars**

- Dissertation/Project Orientation Seminar
- Pastor as Person
- Theology, Culture and Mission

**Fall and Winter Intersession**

- 1 Elective Seminar: SRC, elevated-Masters course, traditional

**Year 2: Spring and Summer Session**

- 2 Elective seminars: SRC, elevated-Masters course, traditional

**Fall and Winter Intersession**

- 1 Elective Seminar – SRC, elevated-Masters course, traditional
- D/P Seminar: Proposal

**FINAL REVIEW TIMELINE FOR MAY GRADUATION<sup>4</sup>**

**September** Submit completed manuscript to advisor for review and approval for submission

**October** Submit *Notice of Intent to Submit D/P*, with *Updated Bibliography*, if needed, to the Dean's Office, [marin-aps@redlands.edu](mailto:marin-aps@redlands.edu). Edit D/P as directed by your advisor.

**Nov/Dec** Submit completed manuscript to APS Office, including signature page with Advisor's signature, or other confirmation of approval from your advisor. This copy goes to 2 anonymous outside readers for review. You will also request your advisor to send their critique to the APS Office.

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<sup>4</sup> See *D/P Guide* for more detailed information.

**Feb/Mar** APS Committee, using advisor and readers' comments, makes decision:

- Approval
- Approve with Minor Changes
- Approve with Specified Changes
- Major Changes

Manuscripts requiring minor or specified changes are returned to the Director for final review. Manuscripts requiring major changes must be resubmitted to the APS Committee. They go to a third reader for review and critique, then to the APS Committee for a vote. This process may delay graduation.

**Mar/April** Complete any final editing and/or revisions, resubmit for final approval;

**May** D/P Forums scheduled in late April and early May.

Submit 2 archival copies of your manuscript, with Advisor signature.

Commencement

## COURSE REGISTRATION, TECHNOLOGY AND STUDENT ACCOUNTS<sup>5</sup>

### Technology

Students are expected to have access to the internet in order to access student email and student services, as well as to enable full participation in DMin courses. While on-campus, Wi-Fi is available in select areas *e.g.* library, Scott Hall, Holy Grounds, Baird Hall.

### Student email

Use of student email accounts is required for all university official communications, including course instructors and staff and faculty of the DMin program. Once admitted, new students will be assigned a *MyRedlands* login (which is the assigned student email address) and temporary password by the Registrar's Office or IT (tech) department. It is the student's responsibility to keep their account active and to check their email on a regular basis.

### Canvas

Canvas is an online classroom platform that allows access to course materials such as syllabi and assignments, online discussions, grades, etc. Many of our DMin faculty use Canvas to teach or supplement their teaching. Canvas can be accessed through your *MyRedlands* student account.

### Registration

All active DMin students are required to register through their student account at [my.redlands.edu](http://my.redlands.edu), in Self-Service (Student Planning). Self-Service allows the student to review upcoming course offerings, build a graduation plan with an advisor, register for classes, view unofficial transcripts and track their progress towards degree completion.

For more information about MyRedlands/Self-Service, including how to access it, basic features, and tutorial videos, please refer to our helpful Self-Service Student Planning Guide at [Self-Service \(Student Planning\) Guide | University of Redlands](#). After watching the videos, students who need further assistance with using Self-Service should contact the Registrar's Office at 909-748-8019 or [registrar@redlands.edu](mailto:registrar@redlands.edu).

Students will be notified of upcoming open enrollment dates. Registration periods are also listed in the Academic Calendar, available online through the Office of the Registrar. A late fee will be charged for registration transactions after general registrations periods have closed.

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<sup>5</sup> Access information and description of the platform come from the official email issued by the Registrar's Office.

Students who are post-coursework must register each Fall and Spring, in order to maintain active status, in one of the DMin Supervision courses until they are approved for graduation (see **APS Policies**, below).

- **Active Status:** Students are expected to maintain active continuous enrollment. Failure to do so may move the student to inactive status and require the student to petition for reinstatement to the program. Students who do not register for two consecutive terms may be moved to inactive status or administrative withdrawal from the University. Full-time enrollment for DMin students is defined as 6 units per semester or term.
- **Blocks:** Access to registration may be blocked by the Student Financial Services (SFS) Office for fees in arrears, by the Registrar or APS office for lack of satisfactory academic progress and/or by the Office of International Student Services for visa issues.
- **Tuition:** Tuition fees are automatically generated and payable on the first day of class. Students may pay tuition or set-up a payment plan online in MyRedlands/Student Financial Services.

### **PROGRAM COSTS<sup>6</sup>**

Courses (3 units) -	\$ 2112 per course (\$704/unit) <i>(Applies to all 3-unit foundational and elective seminars.)</i>
DMin Supervision -	\$671 per semester, (DM-6010, DM-6013)
Auditor -	\$400 <i>(Applies to DMin students who have completed all required coursework and want to audit courses that support their research interests)</i>
Continuing Education	\$780 per course <i>(Applies to select DMin courses open to continuing education enrollment.)</i>
Student Fees	\$100 graduation fee \$100 student services fee per semester for students living on campus (Business Office) \$100 Wellness Fee per academic year

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<sup>6</sup> Effective July 1, 2024, click [here](#) to view webpage

## On-Campus Accommodations

### Residential Housing

DMin students are eligible for year-round student housing on campus in accordance with SFTS and University policy.

### Lodging

Short term dormitory-style lodging is available for students attending Intensive DMin Summer and Intersession intensive classes, and other events, at a per night rate. A link to make your reservation is normally included in the registration notice for Summer and Intersession. For additional information contact events Services at [marin-events@redlands.edu](mailto:marin-events@redlands.edu).

## Course List

### Foundational Seminars

Each of the seminars listed below is a required course.

#### DM-6014 *Dissertation/Project (D/P) Orientation Seminar*

The Dissertation/Project (D/P) is the signature assignment in one's Doctor of Ministry studies. The D/P Orientation Seminar introduces students to the expectations of the DMin program, library resources and the requirements for the Dissertation/Project from Topic and Design Proposals to research, project implementation and final manuscript. Incoming students should take this course in their first term. (1.5 units, tuition-free)

#### DM-6001 *Dissertation/Project (D/P) Proposal Seminar*

The D/P Proposal Seminar is designed for students who have completed their course work and are ready to prepare their Topic and/or Design Proposal. We will review the requirements for Candidacy and the D/P process from proposal to final review of the D/P manuscript. Students will prepare a draft proposal for presentation and receive feedback from their peers. The course objective is completion of a final Topic Proposal for approval by the Director, in preparation for work on the D/P Design Proposal. Requisites: DM-6014; a minimum of 5 DMin resource seminars or permission of instructor. (1.5 units, tuition-free)

#### DM-6017 *Pastor as Person*

Engages students' experiences as spiritual leaders—their unique personal traits, relationships, talents and limitations as they confront the expectations, tensions and complex realities that accompany the practice of ministry. Students will reflect on personal and professional issues with ministry peers. The course focuses on themes of calling, spiritual leadership, and awareness of self in multiple contexts. We examine the sociocultural and religious/theological systems in which our understandings of self and

the world are embedded. Recognizing the wisdom, challenges, and possibilities each carries into ministry, students enter a conversation about spiritual leadership from their own unique location.

#### DM-6039 *Theology, Culture and Mission*<sup>7</sup>

Engages students in exploring a contextual approach to theological reflection and ministry by examining the interface between culture and mission, the issues and challenges of understanding their own social location, and the possibilities and limits of understanding their ministry setting in terms of its structural dynamics. Students will explore the emergence of contextual theologies as a way of examining how theology is shaped by socio-historical context and human experience. Students will explore the pastoral/praxis circle as a method of pastoral planning, examine various methods of social analysis, and engage both in social analysis and theological reflection on their ministry setting or a subset of it.

### **DMin Supervision**

DMin supervision is reserved for students who have completed their required coursework. Students at this stage must register each Fall and spring semester with the appropriate course number, depending on their status.

#### DM-6010 *DMin Supervision I: Proposal*

Students at the D/P proposal-writing stage (working on new or revised D/P Topic and/or D/P Design proposals) are registered in DM-6010. Even though this course does not involve scheduled class meetings *per se*, a Moodle site for this course is planned so that students can seek/share ideas and feedback from one another as well as access suggested resources.

#### DM-6013 *DMin Supervision II Dissertation/Project*

Students who have received APS Committee approval of their topic and design proposals and are now at the research/project and writing stage are registered in DM-6013. As with DM-6010, a Moodle site for this course is planned so that students can seek/share ideas and feedback from one another as well as access suggested resources.

### **Traditional Electives**

#### DM-6023 *Leading Adaptive Action in Communities of Faith*

What does adaptive action look like in communities of faith? Identifying the differences between technical and adaptive challenges only goes so far. This course will support the framing of effective community adaptive action, nourish students' personal resources for navigating systemic change, and draw on the deep theological resources of specific congregations. Students will work with case studies, explore various "art of hosting" techniques for open source change, and engage in a variety of contemplative practices to sustain their faith in the midst of dynamic change.

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<sup>7</sup> Requirement to take DM-6039 Theology, Culture & Mission as Foundational seminar, effective Fall 2018. Students entering the program prior to January 2019 may be exempt from this requirement if they have taken DM-6018 Theology of Ministry and DM-6019 Cultural Milieu and church Mission.

DM-6051 *Culturally Attentive Conflict Ministry*

What does contextually wise and effective ministerial leadership look like in times of change and conflict in communities of faith? In this course, students will learn to see conflict management as central to leadership in times of adaptive change. We will focus on the cultivation of wisdom and agility in the leadership tasks of seeing, understanding, and influencing the particular conditions affecting change and conflict in their communities by enhancing their proficiency in postures, perspectives, and practices that are attentive to ethnic and organizational culture. Case studies from their ministries will engage students in expanding their abilities to detect, diagnose and discern ways to address conflict and mobilize members for new/deeper discernment of community call.

DM-6055 *Gospel and Global Media Cultures*

This course explores the emerging discussion at the intersection of biblical studies, cultural studies, public theology and digital media environments. Students explore how Christian faith informs the narrative identities and practices of missional congregations as they engage their communities and the world. Students use at least two digital tools to create their own interpretation and confession of Christian witness.

DM- 6026 *Jazz, Traditions, Leadership: Complex Systems and Open Histories.*

What are the critical, theoretical foundations of effective spiritual leadership? How does a spiritual leader know oneself as a participant in a dynamic system? How do theological, sacramental, mystical, and ethical traditions relate to dynamic systems? And how is leadership like jazz, whose dynamic method of improvisation arises out of a particular African-American historical context? This seminar examines religions and religious communities as complex systems and will introduce students to the rise of the science of complex systems in the twentieth century; the impact of this field on economics, political science, sociology, and theology; and its implications for organizational leadership today.

DMSP-6502 *The Art of Contemplative Listening*

This course introduces participants to contemplative listening and to the dynamics of personal spiritual direction. Pastor as Spiritual Leader (PSL) participants will ponder how to adapt these dynamics to their settings.

DM-6062 *Discernment in Systems*

This course extends discernment to systems of all kinds, including congregations, chaplaincies, communities, schools, civic groups, etc., utilizing the “Social Discernment Cycle,” a process of prayerful reflection and small group sharing that helps individuals become clearer about how God is at work in systems and structures and might be calling the discerners to respond individually or collectively. It examines our understanding of the theological basis for the Social Discernment Cycle, the linkages between our experiences in systems/structures/institutions and our spirituality. Students will develop awareness, vocabulary and strategies to assist other persons and groups in this important arena—i.e. to think, imagine, pray and discern systemically.



DM-6047 *Spiritual Formation and Practice.*

The ancient practice of spiritual direction is rooted not only in what one learns in a classroom but in on-going commitment to spiritual practice and formation. This class will provide opportunities to encounter several classical and contemporary models of spiritual practice while also engaging in different forms of meditation, art, chant, and body prayers. By deepening our personal practice we will learn to “guard the heart,” inspire the spirit, welcome diversity, and remain more vibrantly present to others.

DM-6065 *Prayer and Discernment in Pastoral Ministry*

This course concentrates on the biblical and theological foundations for spirituality in one’s personal formation, congregational leadership, and other expressions of ministry. The significance of prayer and discernment in the practice of ministry and leadership is a major focus. Students will explore how various contexts, including the congregation and community, are the loci for spiritual formation, prayer, and discernment.

DMPS-6051 *How People Change: Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy*

This course examines the major theories of personality and counseling, as background theory and as having practical implications for our work as pastoral caregivers and counselors. The primary theme of this comprehensive review is what constitutes change. How do people change? What blocks change? What facilitates change? Our effort will result in each student building an integrated theory of pastoral counseling and a theology of change

DMPS-6041 *Dynamics of Loss, Grief, Trauma in Pastoral Care and Counseling*

This course explores the psychological, relational, and theological dynamics of loss, grief, and trauma. These subjects will be placed in the larger theoretical contexts of attachment theory and trauma theory. Special attention will be given to the growing incidence of trauma in modern life, and the corresponding body of literature that informs how we understand the dynamics of trauma. The practical implications of this theory for pastors, chaplains and counselors who are seeking to help people and families in pain will then be explored. Attention will also be given to the theological understandings of loss, grief, and trauma in the context of clinical work.

DMPS-6052 *Interfaith/Intercultural Care and Counseling*

This course focuses on cultural and spiritual factors and the dynamics of difference in caring and counseling processes. It offers students a way to sensitively and flexibly understand and care for and with people in light of their cultural context. Context is viewed as including gender, age, class, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and religious/spiritual tradition. By identifying and working with those factors operative in the caregiving relationship, students will be better equipped to serve in multicultural and multifaith settings. They will be introduced to a psycho-spiritual, wisdom-focused model, and guided to develop competency in three interrelated dimensions: personal-

spiritual, academic-interdisciplinary, and clinical-ministerial. Thus the emphasis of the course will be on methodology rather than on comprehensive cultural knowledge.

DM-6164 *Research Methods 1: Action Research & Evidenced-Based Research Methods*

This course will provide an opportunity for participants to establish or advance their understanding of research through critical exploration of research language, ethics, and approaches. The course introduces the language of research, ethical principles and challenges, and the elements of the research process within quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. Participants will use these theoretical underpinnings to begin to critically review literature relevant to their field or interests and determine how research findings are useful in informing their understanding of their environment (religious tradition, work, social, local, global). After reading about and discussing different approaches to research and examining research studies, we will engage a research project.

DM-6165 *Research Methods 2: Quantitative vs Qualitative Research Methods*

This course will provide an opportunity for participants to establish or advance their understanding of research through critical exploration of research language, ethics, post-colonialism, and methods. The course introduces the language of research, preliminary ethical principles and challenges, and elements of the research process within quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. Participants will use these theoretical underpinnings to begin to critically review research literature, search relevant literature in their field of interests, and determine how research findings are useful in forming their understanding of their work, social, theological, local and global environment. Prerequisites: Research Methods 1

DM-6045 *The Politics of Research: Ethical, Epistemological, and Ontological Issues*

The third of three core courses in the Chaplaincy/Spiritual Care Research Literacy concentration, this course provides a framework for evaluating and working with evidence based research in various chaplaincy contexts through theological reflection on the history and politics of research. Prerequisites: Research Methods 1

DM-6162 *Biblical Images for Reimagining Church*

Biblical history provides multiple examples of how the faith communities of ancient Israel and early Christianity (the temple, the synagogue, the church, and more) organized themselves for mission in their particular historical and social context. In each case, a careful reading of Biblical texts can teach us the benefits and challenges of different forms of organization. With this understanding, we can see how faith leadership responds effectively to new and changing social situations.

DM-6057 *Paul in Contexts*

Reading Pauline Epistles from the perspective of their first century socio-historical contexts as well as from the viewpoints of our twenty-first century existential contexts. As a "thinker in action" Paul will be studied first in terms of the interface between his life and work, and then his theology as "work in progress" will be discussed to see if it is possible to trace a meaningful trajectory of the evolution of his thoughts, especially in the scope of soteriology. This trajectory then would further shed light on some of the contemporary issues of Christian identity in the pluralistic and multi-religious global society.

**Additional Elective Options**

A number of semester courses are available for either in-person or online attendance through the SFTS MDiv/MATS course offerings. These include (but are not limited to):

DMST-6070 *God and Human Suffering.*

If God is good and loves us like a parent deeply loves her or his child, then why do we—or those we love—sometimes go through experiences of utter hell? If God is “Lord of all” and works vigorously to bring God’s peace, then why do children die of horrible diseases? And beyond individual suffering, why were the Japanese permitted to enslave tens of thousands of foreign women as “comfort women” during WWII, or why were African Americans transported, enslaved and repressed for centuries in America? Where is God? And what do we say when our congregants go through horrific suffering? We will investigate several Christian responses—two classic and three contemporary—to the relation between God and human suffering.

DM-6111 *A Good Death*

All the world's religions have traditions about how to die well, versus a poor death. In medieval Europe, a poor death, one that was frightening and unwanted, was a quick, surprising death. Such a death left no time or space to say goodbye to loved ones and this world, and to prepare, mentally and spiritually, for what would come beyond death. Many in modern Western culture seek the reverse: Either the indefinite extension of life, or a quick death in one's sleep. The Western medical system often supports these values. This course looks at what it means to die, at what a poor death looks like, and how to have a good death. Using recent works from medical doctors as well as memoirs, it describes how we die in the West, how it can be painful and alienating. Its focus, however, is on religious understandings of how to die well.

DM-6079 *Joy*

Jesus promises us “abundant life,” a life that is full to overflowing, in John 10:10. He later says that the joy that is in him will also be in the disciples, and “their joy will be full” (John 15:11; 16:24). Similarly, Paul says that God promises to not only meet our dreams, but to exceed them, for we shall be “filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:19-20). What is the “joy” that is complete and full and overflowing? Is it the same as happiness, or different from it? This course looks at joy from four angles: The Jewish and Christian scriptures and traditions; the wisdom of the world’s religions;

philosophy; and contemporary neuro-psychology and its recent studies of happiness. Through these four approaches, we look at how five human traits create joy: Gratitude, humility, desire, forgiveness, and service. Through this study, we will be able to discern not only the difference between unhappiness and happiness, but also between happiness and the joy that is actually promised to us by Jesus.

DM-6130 *Afterlives of Biblical Hatred*

An inescapable part of Biblical tradition is the presence of hatred, expressed through statements against the other, exclusion, patterns of persecution and oppression, genocide, and condemnation. This course will examine the difficult biblical texts that describe such evils, and work toward ethical understandings of the passages in context. Most of the course will focus on the historical afterlives of these biblical problems over millennium, from religious exclusion, classism, anti-Semitism, genocide, slavery, holocaust, incarceration, marginalization, and more, even into the present. We will find religious, ethical, and moral ways to resist these evils, in defiance and correction of our own traditions, for the healing of the world.

## **Advanced Pastoral Studies Policies**

(Revised, November 2022)

### **Admission**

#### **Prerequisites**

- Master of Divinity (M.Div.) Degree

Evidence must be presented that the applicant has a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from an educational institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or above.

- M.Div. Equivalency

Applicants to the Doctor of Ministry program who are requesting equivalency for the M.Div. degree must submit transcripts of all their graduate theological work. The applicant's transcripts will be evaluated by the APS Committee, with input from the Registrar as appropriate, according to four criteria:

- a. Were these courses taken at an educational institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools?
- b. Is the total number of semester units 72 or more?
- c. Is the overall GPA 3.0 or higher?
- d. Does the applicant's course work include an array of courses covering the span of theological disciplines?

If the applicant's previous studies meet these criteria, she or he will be granted M.Div. equivalency for purposes of application to the Doctor of Ministry program.

- Ordination or Equivalency

San Francisco Theological Seminary recognizes that some faith groups do not ordain persons for leadership, and/or that in some faith traditions certain persons, because of their gender, race, or sexual orientation, are prohibited from ordination. If an applicant to the Doctor of Ministry program is not ordained in the usual sense of the word, he or she must submit documentation testifying to his/her status as a professional religious leader, however so considered in her or his faith tradition. We accept as equally valid such terms as licensing, consecration, commissioning or endorsement, as so denominated by the applicant's faith tradition.

- Professional Experience

The nature of the Doctor of Ministry as a professional degree assumes that a student is returning to school after years of experience as a religious professional, thus bringing that maturity and experience to the educational process. The requirement of three years of experience in ministry normally refers to full time, post-M.Div. professional ministry. The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) allows an exception to this provision for up to 15% of entering students in a given year. (*Effective: June 2012*)

- An active ministry context is required to complete the DMin degree.

## **Provisional Admission**

### Option 1

Students who are not eligible for admission to the D Min program because they do not have an M.Div. degree and have been denied equivalency based on the standard criteria, may be granted provisional admission while they take the additional graduate level theological courses necessary to meet the equivalency requirement. In order to be admitted provisionally to the DMin program, an applicant must have, at the time of admission, at least 48 graduate theological units. He or she must then secure up to an additional 24 units. These additional units will focus on subject areas felt to be deficient in the student's array of earlier course work, as determined by the APS committee. Such students are eligible to take some or all of these additional courses at the D Min or M.Div. course level at SFTS or other GTU schools. Such students may also secure the necessary course work at any other accredited university or seminary approved by the APS Director. Upon satisfactory completion of these units, the student will be advanced to full admission by the APS committee, and then continue taking the normal sequence of seminars in the program.

Students so admitted must meet all of the other requirements for admission (three or more years of experience in ministry, 3.0 GPA, ordination or its equivalent, writing sample, and sufficient references).

### Option 2

Students who are not eligible for admission to the D Min program because they do not have an MDiv degree, but who do possess the requisite professional ministry experience in positions or roles that are recognized as holding the responsibilities of spiritual or pastoral leadership may be granted provisional admission based on their demonstration of the following criteria:

- (a) the ability to thoughtfully interpret scripture and the theological tradition of one's ministry context,
- (b) the capacity to understand and adapt one's ministry to the cultural context,
- (c) a basic self-understanding of one's ministerial identity and vocational calling,
- (d) a readiness to engage in ongoing personal and spiritual formation for one's ministry,
- (e) an accredited master's degree (or its educational equivalent) in an area related to one's ministry setting or vocational calling, *with a GPA of 3.0 or better* and
- (f) significant ministerial experience that enables the applicant to engage as a ministry peer with other students in this advanced professional doctorate.

In addition to the standard application, applicants under this provision shall demonstrate their competencies by providing:

- (1) transcripts or other documentation of any education or training that has prepared and/or qualified them for the role recognized by their religious tradition. This may include documentation of an extended period of spiritual direction or other supervised practice.
- (2) a series of personal statements demonstrating their proficiency for items (a) – (d). This may include documents originally prepared for another purpose, or, essays written for the application.
- (3) A statement from someone in a position of authority representing the applicant's religious tradition. This may be submitted as one of the required letters of reference or other statement that affirms the applicant's relationship within their identified tradition.

### **Scholarly Writing**

As part of the application for the D Min, potential students must submit a sample of scholarly writing in English that includes the use of research, footnotes and scholarly analysis.

### **TOEFL**

Applicants for whom English is a second language must include in their application evidence of a TOEFL score of at least 550 (paper-based test) or at least 80 (internet-based test). Those students who take the paper-based exam must also demonstrate that their oral communication skills are adequate for full participation in all seminars. Therefore the internet-based test is preferable.

If an applicant has also earned an appropriate theological degree from an English-speaking university or seminary, this requirement is waived.

### **Advanced Standing/Transfer of Course Credit**

#### New Students and Transfer of Course Credit

Students who have begun Doctor of Ministry studies in a program of another accredited theological institution may apply and, if admitted, request transfer credit up to half the number of required APS seminars for work completed at that institution. Transferable work will be approved/accepted by the APS committee in consultation with the Dean of the Seminary on a case-by-case basis. (*Effective: June 1, 2015*)

#### Continuing Students and Course Credit from Other Theological Institutions

An experimental cross-registration agreement allows students from the following theological institutions of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to enroll in courses offered by these institutions for transferable credit: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, Louisville McCormick Theological Seminary, McCormick Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and San Francisco Theological Seminary. Ordinarily, students would not satisfy core or foundational

course requirements through this arrangement. Exceptions may be allowed by mutual agreement of each program's directors, respectively. (*Effective: Summer 2015*)

### **Time Limit for Course Credit**

The goal of a DMin degree is to introduce students to current research and thought in the practice of ministry. Therefore, coursework that is more than six years old cannot be transferred into the DMin program or considered for Advanced Standing. Course work that is more than six years old must be repeated, or, with the approval of the Director, a more recent, suitable course may be substituted. Similarly, coursework completed in the SFTS DMin program more than ten years ago cannot be applied to the DMin requirements for re-enrolling students.

### **Advanced Pastoral Studies (APS) Committee**

The Advanced Pastoral Studies (APS) committee is the official governing body for the Doctor of Ministry program. Annually, the Dean appoints the chair and selects the members of this committee. In addition to its faculty members, the APS committee may be comprised of a student representative and a representative from the church at large. The members of the APS committee normally serve renewable one-year terms.

The committee may organize itself in any way it deems efficient to accomplish its tasks. Typically the APS committee divides into two subcommittees: an admission/graduation subcommittee and a dissertation/project subcommittee.

The duties of the admissions/graduation subcommittee are to review the applications to the D Min program, then recommending them to the entire committee for action; and to evaluate dissertation/project manuscripts for graduation, based on the readers' critiques. This subcommittee also considers student petitions and other student-related issues. The duties of the D/P subcommittee are to review students' D/P topic and design proposals, making recommendations to the entire committee for action.

### Student Representation on the APS Committee

Student representatives serve on the D/P subcommittee only. When a student representative's own topic or design is before the committee, the student must absent himself or herself.

### Faculty Advising

During the coursework phase of the DMin program, the SFTS Academic Dean serves as academic advisor. The academic advisor approves Topic Proposals.

### Petitions to the APS Committee

All petitions to the APS committee must be presented in writing and will receive a written response, a copy of which will be kept in the student's file.



## **Curriculum**

### Curriculum Substitutions

Ordinarily, students may not substitute a course or courses for any required component of the program. Extraordinary circumstances may be brought to the attention of the Dean for consideration by the APS Committee.

### Exceptions

As delineated above, coursework completed for the Seattle University Certificate Program in Pastoral Leadership, DMin courses offered by other Presbyterian Church (USA) seminaries, and courses completed by transfer students from accredited theological institutions approved by the APS Committee in consultation with the Dean of the Seminary. (*Effective June 2015*)

## **Coursework**

### Teaching Format

The courses in the Doctor of Ministry are taught in a doctoral seminar format. Students carry major responsibility to fully engage in their learning experience by presenting on the readings and engaging in critical theological reflection through class discussions, written assignments, and participation in online forum exchanges via the Canvas system.

### Plagiarism

The various human cultures have differing customs about the use of the words and ideas of others in formal writing. In English-speaking countries, and especially in academic institutions, the use of materials from other authors in one's own work without proper credit is considered plagiarism, a form of stealing.

One honors those whose ideas and language one uses by indicating the source. This means, briefly, that direct quotations are placed in quotation marks with a citation of the source by author, title, and page number. Paraphrases (which means following the ideas of a passage without using the same words) must also be credited to the source. And finally, major ideas, if you know where they come from, ought to be credited, too.

It is the policy of SFTS to identify and to penalize acts of plagiarism. The Seminary's definition of plagiarism and its policies on plagiarism are described in the *Dissertation/Project Guide*. Students guilty of plagiarizing material in seminar papers or in the D/P are subject to disciplinary procedures, including possible suspension or permanent dismissal from the program.

## Grading

Grading options in the APS program are:

- Pass/Fail (indicated by a “P” or an “F” in the grade report)
- Incomplete (indicated by an “I”).

Notations of “Incomplete” that are not replaced by a grade will be converted to an “F” at the end of the next grading period.

In addition to issuing a grade, instructors will provide a narrative summary of the student’s performance in class, indicating strengths, weaknesses, and areas for future growth and improvement. This narrative is shared with each student and a copy is placed in the student’s file in the APS office for use in Candidacy discussion. If a student disagrees with the instructor’s evaluation, he or she may write a response to the APS Committee, which will also be noted and placed in her or his student file. In accordance with SFTS Policy, students may appeal a grade with the Dean of the Seminary.

## Evaluation of Courses by Students

Each SFTS student is asked to complete an electronic course evaluation at the end of each seminar. These evaluations are completely anonymous, but a student must file an evaluation before his or her grade can be released. Faculty members do not see course evaluations until they have submitted their own evaluations and grades.

## Extensions

Course extensions: All students are expected to complete their work on time. Each class syllabus should indicate the deadline for submitting each piece of assigned written work. If a student is not able to complete all the requirements for a course by the instructor’s stated deadline or by the last day of the class, the student may request an extension of up to three weeks. This request must be made on or before the last day of the class, and the instructor is not obligated to grant the extension. Extension of the deadline beyond the three-week limit may be granted only with the approval of the Dean as well as the instructor. If the instructor does not receive the overdue work by the new deadline, and in the absence of sufficient work of passing quality, the grade will be changed to an “F.” Notations of “Incomplete” that are not replaced by a grade will be converted to an “F” at the end of the next grading period.

## Advancement to Candidacy

Upon completion of the following criteria, a student shall be considered to have advanced to candidacy for the Doctor of Ministry Degree:

- completion of 18 units (ordinarily, six 3-unit tuition-bearing seminars of DMin coursework)
- completion of the D/P Orientation Seminar and D/P Proposal Seminar
- an approved Topic Proposal
- an approved dissertation/project advisor

- an approved Design Proposal
- an approved IRB Project Proposal

If the student's academic progress is not satisfactory, the APS Committee may require the student to complete additional coursework to improve his or her academic performance.

Termination of Studies: In some cases, a student may be dismissed from the program if coursework quality warrants such action.

### Auditors

After a student has been advanced to candidacy, he or she may voluntarily attend additional resource seminars directly related to his or her area of D/P research. Auditors are expected to do the readings and in-class assignments in order to actively participate in class.

### Continuing Education

From time to time, qualified non-degree students may take a DMin seminar for continuing education. Non-degree students are expected to do the readings and in-class assignments in order to actively participate in class.

### **Concurrent Programs**

Any student who finds it necessary to enter another degree program while studying for the DMin degree should explore the relationship between the two programs with the APS committee. Ordinarily the committee discourages simultaneous participation in two programs.

### **Dissertation/Project**

The DMin degree culminates with a written dissertation/project that explores an area of ministry related to the student's vocational calling, utilizes appropriate research methodologies and resources, and generates new knowledge regarding the practice of ministry.

### D/P Manuscripts and Media Other than Print

The Learning Objectives<sup>8</sup> for the Doctor of Ministry degree adopted by the Faculty in November, 2010 include item C: "Use interdisciplinary research skills to develop innovative approaches to ministry and pastoral work." As the signature assignment the completed Dissertation/Project shall include particular chapters on project development, implementation, and evaluation; and an integrated assessment of the research outcomes and learnings.

In overseeing the fulfillment of this Learning Objective, the APS Committee seeks to preserve expectations regarding substantial and rigorous research to be reflected in the

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<sup>8</sup> For more details on Learning Objectives, please see the D/P Guide.

Dissertation part of the final manuscript while encouraging innovation by allowing reporting and presenting of innovative Projects in demonstrable formats which reflect the medium utilized, including other-than-print media. (*Effective: Summer 2014*)

#### Dissertation/Project Design Changes

When a student proposes and receives Advisor approval of significant changes to her or his APS Committee-approved Design Proposal, a copy of the updated proposal must be sent to the Dean's office, marin-aps@redlands.edu, to determine if the changes are substantive enough to require APS Committee review. If APS Committee review is required, the updated proposal will be submitted to them for consideration.

#### Editors for D/Ps

The dissertation manuscript should be presented as a professional document that adequately represents the accomplishments of the student. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the services of a qualified English-speaking proofreader/editor is enlisted prior to the submission of the D/P for reader evaluation, especially for those who have difficulty with English and/or challenges with academic writing at the doctoral level. The editor must sign the relevant form included in the D/P guide, and it must be added to the D/P as Appendix A.

*It is not the job of the advisor or readers to be copy editors.* Manuscripts that are difficult to read may be returned without formal critique of their content.

#### Length

Ordinarily, the average length of the D/P is 150 to 200 pages, plus appendices. With appendices, the entire document should not exceed 300 pages. However, when appropriate, since Projects involving digital and other media may be better demonstrated in non-print forms such as CDs and DVDs, the length of the manuscript may be less than 150 pages. When appropriate, with the approval of the D/P Advisor and the APS Committee, the Project may be presented in an alternative demonstrable format accompanying/enclosed with the D/P manuscript such as CDs, DVDs, and USB storage devices showing social media sites. (*Effective: June 2014*)

#### **Dual Relationships Between Students and Advisors or Readers**

When in the judgment of the APS committee a student and a potential advisor or reader have a close personal or professional relationship which may affect the advisor's evaluation of the quality of the student's work, the committee will not approve the potential advisor or reader.

The APS Director should be a reader only in extraordinary situations and with the concurrence of the APS committee.

#### **Evaluation of Student Work by APS Committee**

The APS committee evaluates the final D/P manuscript, utilizing written critiques prepared by the reader panel and the candidates' advisor. When the APS committee offers its critique of a student's D/P proposal or manuscript, the APS Director summarizes the critique for the student on behalf of the entire APS committee. The identity of the reader panel for D/P manuscripts are to be kept confidential and the comments of individual committee members are to be kept confidential. Critiques and evaluations of dissertation/project manuscripts shall not be released to students prior to final action by the committee.

Following final approval of the D/P manuscript, the candidate shall make an oral presentation of the D/P, open to students and faculty related to the DMin program. The presentation is expected to highlight the major contributions of the D/P and contribute to the shared learning community in the DMin program.

Oral presentations will normally be scheduled in April and May, following approval of the D/P by the APS committee. Presentations shall be limited to 15 minutes with 10 minutes for questions. The APS committee may consider using an online, recorded format, and invite the candidate's advisor to provide a brief, 3–5 minute comment on the D/P.

### **Financial Aid**

University of Redlands financial aid may be available to DMin students through the Student Financial Services department.

### **Financial Responsibility**

#### Tuition

Tuition is charged to the student's account on a per-unit basis following the beginning of each seminar. The tuition for that seminar is due and payable on the first week of class.

If a student is not able to pay the entire tuition at the due date, he or she may ask the SFTS business office for a payment plan and must fulfill the terms of any such plan. If a student does not pay all his or her tuition for any seminar in a timely manner, he or she cannot register for the next seminar or segment of the program.

### **Graduation**

The APS committee will not evaluate D/P manuscripts for May graduation later than the March committee meeting or revised D/P manuscripts later than the April committee meeting each year. Exceptions for extenuating circumstances may be granted.

Candidates must file an application for graduation with the Registrar's Office and meet all general requirements established by the Registrar and these policies. Final requirements for graduation related specifically to the D/P include:

- 1- approval of the final D/P manuscript by the APS committee
- 2- approval of any APS committee recommended revisions or editing by the Director
- 3- an oral presentation open to student, faculty and staff of the DMin community
- 4- filing of two [archival](#) copies of the approved D/P manuscript with the APS Office, in accordance with GTU Library standards.

## **Language Requirements (See Admission)**

### **Leave of Absence**

In the course of completing his/her DMin studies, a student may encounter a situation necessitating temporary suspension of work toward the degree. APS policies allow for leaves of absence for medical, family, change in ministry context, and other reasons. In consultation with the Dean's Office or academic advisor, a student may request such a leave by petitioning the APS Committee. Students with F-1 visas should note the limits on such leaves. (*Effective Fall 2013*)

A leave of absence requires a break in all academic work including library privileges, coursework, and conferences with faculty. It is not appropriate to take a leave of absence to work on a dissertation/project. Students on leave are not eligible for seminary housing.

### **Program Extensions**

Unless they have received one or more Leaves of Absence approved by the APS Committee, students who do not complete the program in five years from the time of their first seminar (or two years after the completion of the required 18 units of course work) may be granted a yearly extension for up to four years. Students should request an extension in writing and describe their timeline for the completion of the program. In each year of extension beyond completion of required coursework, students will pay a continuation fee on a semester-by-semester basis equal to the per-semester tuition rate for D/P phase studies (*Effective Spring Semester, 2013*). Students who fail to show satisfactory academic progress (SAP) after four years of extension (eight years after their first seminar) may be required to withdraw from the program. Thereafter the policies regarding administrative withdrawal apply. *See below: Withdrawal, Administrative.*

### **Readmission**

Within five years, a person who has been withdrawn from the program may apply for readmission provided that her or his financial account is clear. In all cases, the student must submit a updated D/P topic or design proposal, if he or she was formerly at the D/P stage of the program.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

In response to reporting requirements for educational institutions with students receiving government loans and international students on F-1 visas, the APS Program will need to determine Satisfactory Academic Progress by each student engaging in DMin studies. During the coursework phase of study, course load per semester and course evaluations will be used to make such determination. During the Dissertation/Project phase of study, an annual SAP Form completed by the student will be used. (*Effective Spring 2014*).

**Withdrawal Administrative**

Students may be dismissed by the APS committee at any stage in the program due to lack of academic progress.



SAN FRANCISCO  
THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY

Doctor of Ministry  
**DISSERTATION/PROJECT GUIDE**

June 2023

Doctor of Ministry Degree Program  
San Francisco Theological Seminary  
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## INTRODUCTION

The Dissertation/Project (D/P) is the signature assignment for the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree. The D/P--as the term suggests—is both a *dissertation* and a *project*. The dissertation manuscript includes a review of scholarly literature and current research, critical analysis and theological reflection on a question in the practice of ministry that comes out of the scholar-practitioner’s own lived experience and context. The project grows out of the investigation of this issue, its implications in the local context, and the practice of the researcher. Informed by the dissertation research, the project involves the development, implementation and evaluation of a field project that may introduce a new resource, practice or program, that constitutes a constructive response to the research question and an innovation in the practice of ministry.

This *D/P Guide* is designed to provide information and guidance about the expectations and requirements at each step of the process, and to help you work towards successful completion. The Appendix provides resources, samples, templates and forms related specifically to the dissertation/project. The *D/P Guide* is updated periodically, so you’ll want to be sure you’re using the most current edition, especially as you complete your manuscript, to ensure you have the most up-to-date instructions.

### Program Learning Outcomes

The Doctor of Ministry program is guided by three Program Learning Outcomes. As the signature assignment in this program, the Dissertation/Project (field project and manuscript) engages students in demonstrating proficiency in all three areas:

- 1) *Reflect independently, critically, and theologically upon issues in society, mission, and ministry today.*
- 2) *Build relationships based on trust and cooperation among peers in ministry.*
- 3) *Use interdisciplinary research skills to develop innovative approaches to ministry and pastoral work.* (Appendix A.1)

Based upon these outcomes, the dissertation/project has several purposes which should be demonstrated in the final D/P manuscript:

- To demonstrate skills necessary for identifying and explicating a problem and for determining contextually appropriate methods to effectively address it;
- To cultivate clear, coherent, objective modes of thought and research essential to wise and competent ministry.
- To develop a high level of proficiency and expertise in a focused area of ministry.
- To integrate the processes of thought and analysis typical of several academic disciplines, including theology and the social sciences; and
- To contribute to faith communities and their leader’s knowledge, reflection and resources that are both scholarly and grounded in a practical application that demonstrates excellence and innovation in the practice of ministry.

### **Advising and Decision Making**

Your work on the Dissertation/Project will be assisted and guided by advisors and the APS Committee, throughout the DMin program. Academic advising for DMin students at coursework stage is provided through the Office of the Dean. A dissertation advisor is normally identified in the proposed Topic Proposal and approved with approval of the Topic Proposal. The dissertation advisor will advise the student on development of the full bibliography and Design Proposal, implementation of the project and completion of the written D/P Manuscript. When the final manuscript is submitted for review, the Advisor also provides a written critique of the manuscript that helps to inform the APS Committee review and decision-making on the final manuscript. The APS Committee is responsible for approving the Advisor, the Design Proposal and the Final Manuscript.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

As students move from coursework to Candidacy to completion of the dissertation/project, maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is an essential element of success. Students are expected to make substantive progress in order to complete an approved Topic and Design Proposal, including the IRB application, implement your field project and complete the final manuscript within the expected timeline. Communication at this stage of the degree program is critical.

To demonstrate SAP you will be expected to do the following:

- Register every Fall and Spring semester in DM-6010 DMin Supervision I: Proposal or DM-6013 DMin Supervision II: Dissertation Project.
- Submit an SAP report to the Dean's Office each Fall and Spring semester with a brief statement on work completed, your timeline towards completion of the D/P, and any challenges or concerns you might have regarding your progress.
- Consult with your dissertation advisor on a regular basis.

The 5-year timeline for completion of the DMin degree includes your time in coursework. As you move into the D/P phase of your work it is critical to keep this timeline in mind and have specific goals for yourself, to help you stay on track towards timely completion of the D/P.

### **Leave of Absence**

In the course of completing DMin studies, a student may encounter a situation necessitating temporary suspension of work toward the degree. APS policies allow for leaves of absence for medical, family, change in ministry context, and other reasons. In consultation with the Dean or academic advisor, a student may request such a leave by petitioning the APS Committee. Students with F-1 visas should note the limits on such leaves. It is not appropriate to take a leave of absence to work on a dissertation/project. Students may request a Leave of Absence during the Proposal and Dissertation phases of the program, in accordance with SFTS policy. Contact the Dean's office for more information.

## OVERVIEW OF THE D/P PROCESS

Preparation for the Dissertation/Project begins with your course work, which is designed to teach the methodology required for the D/P and engage the student with current research in their field of study. The major steps to the completion of the dissertation/project requirement for your DMin degree are:

1. Completion of required coursework, including:
  - Six 3-unit resource seminars, including Foundational and elective courses.
  - DM-6014 DMin Orientation Seminar (1.5 units) and DM-6001 D/P Proposal Seminar (1.5 units).
2. D/P Proposal
  - Research and develop a D/P topic and project (pp. 6-9):
    - Prepare a D/P Topic Proposal
    - Propose a D/P advisor
    - Submit to Dean for approval
  - Prepare a D/P Design Proposal, for approval of dissertation (D/P) advisor and the APS Committee (pp. 10-15) including:
    - Bibliography
    - Survey of Literature (This is optional in most circumstances. Students may be required to prepare a Survey of Literature by the APS Committee. See D/P Guide, p. 13)
    - Submit required IRB application for approval (p.14)
3. Candidacy and DMin Supervision
  - Advancement to Candidacy marks completion of the required coursework and readiness to begin the research project and dissertation. It is marked by approval of:
    - the dissertation advisor,
    - D/P Design Proposal, and
    - IRB application.
  - On completion of these requirements, and with approval of the APS Committee, the Candidate moves to the research and writing phase of the DMin program.
  - Candidates will register for DMin Supervision in the Fall and Spring semesters, beginning the first semester after completing their coursework and continuing until they graduate, with one of the following course numbers:
    - DM-6010 DMin Supervision I: Proposal (pre-design proposal approval)
    - DM-6013 DMin Supervision II: Dissertation/Project (D/P) (post-design proposal approval)
4. Dissertation/Project
  - Develop social analysis and theological analysis
  - Implement project, complete project assessment, and
  - Write final manuscript

5. Submit final draft of D/P manuscript to Advisor; make revisions as recommended by Advisor.
6. Submit Notification of Intent to Submit D/P (Appendix G.2) to APS Office at least 60 days prior to submission. Where appropriate, this Notification shall include a report of any advisor-approved modifications to the original Design Proposal and/or Bibliography.
7. Submit Advisor-approved final manuscript to the Dean's Office, with the advisor's critique.
8. Review and approval of Final D/P manuscript includes:
  - a. Review of D/P manuscript by the Reader Panel, based on the approved Design Proposal. Their critiques and recommendations are provided to the APS Committee.
  - b. APS Committee consideration of recommendations from Advisor and Reader Panel and evaluation of D/P. Committee may vote to:
    - Approve with no changes
    - Approve pending minor or specified changes
    - Postpone pending major changes
    - Not approve
  - c. Editing or revision of D/P (if needed,) and submission of Advisor-approved changes to Dean's Office and/or APS Committee for final review and approval.
  - d. Manuscripts returned with minor or specified changes require review by the Dean's office.
  - e. Manuscripts returned for major changes, once edited and resubmitted, are sent to a third reader for critique and go to the APS Committee for a second vote to approve/not approve.
    - Approval at this stage may include minor editing required by the APS Committee.
    - Those manuscripts that are not approved again may lead to consultation with the Dean to determine whether withdrawal from the program is warranted.
  - f. Following review of the final edited manuscript by the Dean, students will submit two archival copies of the manuscript to the Dean's Office for filing with the GTU Library.
  - g. Graduation!

## DISSERTATION/PROJECT TOPIC PROPOSAL

The definition of your research project through the Problem Statement in the Topic Proposal lays the foundation for the development of your Design Proposal and ultimately, the Dissertation/Project (D/P). A strong Problem Statement sets the focus and scope of your research, identifies the major fields of study you will engage and the theological framework that you will apply to defining the problem and the goal or outcome you seek through your project. It should point to the nature of your project, its application to ministry and the outcome you seek through its implementation. The art of a strong Topic Proposal is to be brief, specific, without going into the full detail of what you intend to do – that will happen in the Design Proposal.

### Elements of the Topic Proposal

**Title:** The title is the way the final manuscript will be identified in the library archive. A good title finds the balance between naming what is distinctive about the D/P without getting too long! It should include key words that characterize your project. A good title points to the project, or the impact of the research. One way to think about is, what is the claim you want to be able to make after you've completed the project? Keep in mind, the title may be revised in the Design Proposal, with the advisor's approval.

**Problem Statement:** The problem statement briefly describes the problem, issue or opportunity that is directly related to some aspect of your ministry practice. *No phase of the D/P is harder or more important than shaping a problem.* Explain why this problem is important. Give a clear and concise argument. Cite evidence for why this problem is a problem. In light of the problem, describe briefly:

- how you will explore the problem—point to both the social analysis and the theological analysis
- the change or outcome you seek through your project. This might include a brief description of the project and your goal or vision for the outcome.
- What will your research contribute to your context and/or the larger faith community?

To guide your discernment towards defining your dissertation/project topic, consider the following:

- What is the central challenge presented in your topic? What opportunities are presented by this challenge? Is a needed resource missing? Has a traditional practice become outdated (no longer effective)? Have established practices become culturally inappropriate or ineffective in a changing environment?
- What is the impact--for you, the faith community or institution/agency you serve, to society?

- What is the outcome you seek? Is the problem defined in a way that enables you to indicate what you wish to change, or the outcome you seek through your project?
- Does this inquiry call for objective critical analysis? Can you personally be objective on this subject? Can you investigate all sides of the problem before becoming an advocate for any one position or posing an appropriate response?
- Does the topic call for explicit theological foundations from a faith perspective and understanding or lead you to call for a new theological orientation?
- Does the topic have a practical application, moving beyond academic research to the practice of ministry? Does it require consultation with colleagues in ministry or some church body, agency, or judicatory?
- Will the topic provide you personally with a new experience of growth and learning?

**Ministry Context:** Describe your ministry context, focusing on what the reader needs to know to understand how this problem or issue is related to your ministry. Briefly share why you are personally interested in this issue and what qualifies you to write about it. This section is typically one or two paragraphs.

**Proposed Advisor:** In consultation with the Dean, the student will identify a dissertation advisor in the Topic Proposal. Normally, this person will have academic credentials and be an expert in the topic you are focusing on, typically a PhD., but may be a DMin, especially where their own research/professional experience provides insight to the candidate's research. Candidates are encouraged to seek an advisor who is an SFTS/UOR or GTU faculty member or adjunct. Candidates may invite an advisor from outside the faculty if they provide particular expertise appropriate to the research topic or candidates' needs, such as, knowledge of their church's polity or doctrine. When proposing an advisor who is not affiliated with SFTS, the candidate must attach a copy of their *curriculum vitae*.

**Bibliography:** The Topic Proposal should include a brief (5-7), preliminary list of resources that represent the major themes and primary sources for the D/P.

- Sources may include: print resources (books, articles), oral resources (interviews) and/or electronic resources (for example: TEDTalks, websites, online journals, videos, DVDs). Your bibliography should reflect the breadth of your subject, including both resources for your social analysis and theological perspective, with particular attention to the key scholars you identify in your proposal. Your final bibliography is submitted as part of the Design Proposal. The content of your final manuscript is expected to reflect the entire bibliography.

## Requirements

- Students must submit their Topic Proposal for approval to the Dean, using the required template (See Appendix B.1). Proposals should be submitted by email to [Marin-APS@redlands.edu](mailto:Marin-APS@redlands.edu).
- The Dean's Office will review all Topic Proposals for approval and permission to proceed to develop the Design Proposal.
- Students must identify a dissertation (D/P) advisor who provides subject matter expertise for the D/P topic. If the student proposes D/P advisor who is not a member of the SFTS/UOR or GTU faculty, they must include a copy of the proposed advisor's *curriculum vitae (cv)*.
- Length: Your D/P Topic Proposal should be 2-3 pages (single-spaced), including bibliographical resources. Keep your writing clear, concise and focused.
- The proposal should be written in academic style and format. The Bibliography and any citations should conform to the approved style manual. (Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, latest edition.)



## YOUR D/P ADVISOR

As your topic proposal begins to take shape, you will need to identify your proposed dissertation advisor. The selection of your advisor is a critical step in the D/P process. They will advise you on the development of your bibliography and the design of your project. The advisor's approval is required for your Design Proposal and any modifications you may make in the process of implementing your project and writing the D/P. They must also approve the final manuscript before you submit it for review, and any revisions the APS Committee may require in the review process. They will also provide a critique of your final manuscript for consideration by the APS Committee in its decision-making process.

The dissertation/project advisor should be someone who has subject-matter expertise in the field(s) central to your research. The advisor typically has a PhD, but occasionally students have found a DMin alum is the most appropriate advisor for their project. It is the student's responsibility to identify an advisor, working in consultation with the Dean.

The advisor may be someone you took a class with. If there's someone you think you'd like to work with, you might propose a special reading course as a way to see how your interests align and begin to develop a relationship. If you know the person you might begin in a more informal way, but with anyone you approach at some point you will want to put your request in an email. Describe your topic and the project you want to do (this could be a draft of your problem statement). It's also helpful to give them a sense of your timeline. You may attach a copy of the *Tasks and Terms for Advisors*, which is included in the Appendix at H.1. (NOTE: the honorarium for Advisors is paid by SFTS, not you!)

Don't be discouraged if someone says no – it's often a matter of timing or workload. It's OK to ask for suggestions of other people you might consider.

**Working with your Advisor:** Keeping an open line of communication with your advisor is the most important element to maintaining a good working relationship. Submit your work regularly to them and let them know if you encounter issues that delay your progress.

- Ask your advisor how they like to work with advisees.
  - How often do they want to see your work?
  - How often and when do they prefer to meet?
- Be respectful of their time. Give your advisor a clear timeline for your work and keep them informed if that changes.
- Ask them about scheduled sabbaticals or other plans that might impact their availability to work with you.
- Submit your materials with plenty of time for their review! You want them to be able to give your work a careful reading and provide meaningful feedback – this takes time!

## DISSERTATION/PROJECT DESIGN PROPOSAL

After your topic is approved, the next step is for you to continue your research and begin working with your dissertation advisor to develop the Design Proposal, which is the basic learning contract between you, your dissertation advisor, and the APS Committee. Your approved Design Proposal becomes the guide by which your final D/P project and manuscript will be evaluated.

A clear, concise Design Proposal will serve you well as a guide for your research, project and manuscript. When the manuscript is completed, the D/P Design Proposal is given to the D/P Readers who will critique the final product. A strong proposal gives them a clear sense of both the expectations and the boundaries set for your D/P. With this goal in mind, the APS Committee may provide suggestions, or recommendations for revision before approving the final Design Proposal.

### Elements of the Design Proposal

**Advisor's Approval:** The final Design Proposal must include your advisor's signature on the first page of the proposal, indicating his or her full approval of this proposal, including the bibliography.

Work closely with your advisor as you develop the proposal and actively seek their input. If either you or your advisor have questions, the Director is available for consultation. Minor changes may be made to the approved Design during implementation and writing, with the approval of your D/P Advisor

The Design Proposal is composed of the following elements from the Topic Proposal:

- Title
- Problem Statement
- Ministry Context

And, the following additional elements:

**Social Analysis:** Describe what you will do to place this problem within its social, historical, cultural, and/or psychological context. How does this problem or issue manifest itself in the particular context or organization (i.e. congregation, denomination, family unit) that you will be working with? What social science discipline(s) will you employ to study this problem? Identify 3-4 scholars whose work you will rely on to define and research this problem and explain why you have chosen them. This research is key to your project development. What do you need to know and understand about the social conditions related to this problem to discern and develop an appropriate and effective response to it? What methodology(s) will you employ?

**Theological Perspective:** What are the biblical/theological lenses you will use to examine this issue? How will you understand this issue from a theological perspective? Identify

theological concepts (e.g., redemption), schools of thought (e.g., process theology), theological doctrines (e.g., doctrine of sin), theologians (e.g., Tillich) or branches of theology (e.g., pastoral theology, eschatology or Pauline theology) through which you will *look at the ministry implications of this issue and enable your project to be a ministry activity*. Identify 3-5 scholars whose work will help you understand this problem theologically and explain why you have chosen them.

**Scope:** Delineate any limitations or parameters that will set boundaries for your project. For example: a particular congregation, governing body, or other entity; a community or demographic group within a community or entity (gender, race, age, etc.)

List here definitions of any key terms related to your problem and topic.

**Project:** Describe here the project or practical application portion of your D/P. Keep in mind the *innovative* (rather than *imitative*) nature of the D/P: it is not an effort to identify past and present best practices and apply them in addressing a need or problem. Your project *could be*:

- an alternative approach to spiritual direction, pastoral care or counseling;
- an adaptive or new approach to congregational/organizational leadership development;
- a new resource for understanding and responding to a particular challenge in a faith community or chaplaincy practice, or
- an application of new technologies in the practice of traditional forms of ministry.

This element of the Design Proposal should:

- Identify the steps you will take to implement this project.
- Describe your project. What methods and procedures will you use? What is your implementation plan? Who will participate? Where and when will you conduct this project? How often or how many times will you offer this project? How will you evaluate the data?
  - The most frequently used **research instrument** assessment or evaluation in the DMin program is a set of focused interview questions. The APS committee normally discourages the use of questionnaires unless the D/P purpose cannot be accomplished without them.
- Include a copy of the research instrument (if any) which you plan to use in your field research, and Consent Form if appropriate, must be attached to the Design Proposal.

Each Candidate will be required to submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application. It is strongly recommended that a review of this application be done prior to submitting the Design Proposal to identify possible research methods that should be disclosed in the Design Proposal. (For more details, see IRB section below.)

- To whom will you report your project other than your advisor? If you are providing this project in a local congregation, will you be sharing the results with the local governing

body? If your project is connected to your denomination, agency, or professional group, will you be sharing the results with those entities? Will the results of your project be available for others to read, study or use in their ministries, outside of the published D/P?

**Evaluation:** How will you evaluate the project when it is completed? Who will be involved in providing you with feedback (project participants? advisory board? peers in ministry?) that enables assessment of results? What methods will you use to evaluate your project's effectiveness? If you are presenting a program, how will you evaluate the results of the program? Did your program achieve the results you hoped for? Please attach any survey or feedback instrument you will use to evaluate your project's effectiveness.

**Integration:** How will you integrate the results of your project with the insights of your social analysis and theological perspective? Describe how you will establish a lively and critical interdisciplinary dialogue between them that will enhance your understanding of the problem, inform the design of your project and shape any revisions you may make to your project for future work.

**Outline:** Provide a tentative outline of your D/P, chapter by chapter, with a summary or outline of each chapter. Be sure to include chapters on both the research leading to the project and the project (implementation, results, evaluation, learnings, and implications).

**Timetable:** Provide a tentative timetable for the steps and dates by which you will complete this D/P.

**Bibliography:** The Bibliography shall include approximately 50 references, which may include some or all of the references listed in your initial Design Proposal. This is your final list of resources for the D/P. ***By listing these references, you are obligating yourself to be familiar with each of them.*** Your final written D/P should show the influence of these references on your thinking and written work. Please be sure that your D/P Advisor has reviewed your list of references and approved them. List references in standardized bibliographic form (see Turabian).

Successful D/Ps depend upon extensive prior background reading and exposure to a field. To begin your background reading, carefully check through the catalogs and periodicals indexes of at least one appropriate library. Journals such as *Theology Today*, *Congregations*, *Sojourners* or similar journals from your cultural context should be checked for articles. The literature of relevant major academic and professional disciplines such as *Interpretation*, *Pastoral Psychology*, *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, *The Journal of Media and Religion*, and *Religious Education* should also be reflected in your bibliography. For instance, if your D/P involves use of psychological disciplines, research the wide range of literature available, from *Psychology Today* magazine to the major theoretical journals and books. To access the most up-to-date research, also consider online resources available from denominational and church leadership network websites

such as the Alban Weekly from Duke Divinity School and the Leadership Learning Pew Research Center, Community, or video presentations such as TEDTalks.

Library support for DMin students is available through the Digital Theological Library at <https://dtl2.libguides.com/home> with your University of Redlands log in. Students also have access to the UOR Armacost Library at [Armacost Library | University of Redlands](#). The bibliography is a critical element of the Design Proposal. As you build your bibliography, you will want to consult with your advisor and remember:

- You are required to submit a bibliography of approximately 50 scholarly, academic sources, including books, journal articles and/or other resources.
- You should be familiar with and be able to defend the relevance of each of your entries, and you will be held accountable for the body of literature in the final manuscript, which should reflect the influence of your sources in your written analysis.
- Bibliographic citations must conform to the approved style manual:  
Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, latest edition.
- Students using alternative media should consult with the Librarian if there are any questions about the proper format for citation.

### **Survey of Literature**

The survey of literature is a highly recommended part of the D/P research process:

- It may be proposed in the Topic Proposal as part of your problem discernment process before development of the Design Proposal.
- It may also be required by the APS committee to enable a student to better understand and/or appreciate the complexity of a problem before completing or revising a Topic Proposal.

Sometimes referred to as a “review of literature” or a “bibliographical essay,” it involves surveying a focused list of resources (books, journal articles, on-line and non-print resources) related to your topic and writing a 20–25-page essay which:

- reviews the present state of knowledge related to the topic at hand.
- assesses the merits of previous studies.
- explores the methodologies used in previous studies.
- shows how previous studies are related to the proposed D/P.
- shows how the proposed D/P will contribute to the present state-of-knowledge.

When required by the APS Committee, a Survey of Literature is intended to be an aid to the student, to guide the development of their research in the preparation of their proposal and/or final D/P. An approved Survey of Literature may become a

part of the eventual D/P manuscript, usually as one of the research chapters. *If you are required to write a survey of literature, the completed survey should be submitted to the Dean or Advisor for approval, as directed by the APS Committee.*

## **INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)**

Any research involving people as subjects of inquiry requires careful attention to ethical considerations regarding the way the research is conducted. Most DMin research projects involve people with whom the researcher engages in their practice of ministry, and who are a necessary part of the field project.

The basic responsibilities for ethical research include:

- Voluntary participation,
- Informed consent,
- An assessment of risks and determination that potential benefits outweigh those risks.

All research within the University is subject to review by the IRB to ensure that it:

- Safeguards the rights and welfare of research participants,
- Is consistent with the teaching and mission of the University, and
- Conforms with regulations and legal requirements under the *Federal Policy for Protection of Human Subjects (Common Rule 45CF46, Part A.)*

The IRB application is submitted online. Information about the requirements, links to the training, application, FAQs and other resources are available at: <https://sites.redlands.edu/irb/>

- The IRB application should be submitted ***after approval of the Design Proposal*** to avoid complications if the APS Committee requires any modifications to the proposed project. However, students should begin the required online training early, which may take 8-10 hours to complete.
- The APS Committee will approve the Design Proposal *pending approval* of the IRB.
- Implementation of the project cannot begin until both the Design Proposal and the IRB application are approved.
- CITI training and certification.

Students must complete a required online CITI training course prior to starting the application. Instructions are provided in the IRB on the UOR website (see link included above). There is no cost to students.

- This training may take 8 – 10 hours to complete. It may be done in multiple sessions. Students are encouraged to take this training while developing their project design so that you will be aware of any ethical considerations that may apply.
- Satisfactory completion of the training provides certification for 3 years.

Support and guidance on completion of the IRB application is provided by:

- The SFTS faculty liaison, (Dean's Office), in coordination with the IRB Administrative Coordinator (Dr. Steven Moore, [steven\\_moore@redlands.edu](mailto:steven_moore@redlands.edu)).
- The SFTS faculty liaison also has CITI certification and serves as the project supervisor for all DMin candidates.
- Both the SFTS liaison and the UOR Administrative Coordinator have access to student applications in progress and may offer suggestions, comments, or edits.
- Regular online orientation seminars are provided by the IRB Administrative Coordinator. Students are encouraged to take this seminar early in the process of developing your proposal and may attend more than once to become familiar with the requirements of the application.

**Resources:**

- Information about the work of the IRB, required forms, and other resources can be found on the UOR website at: <https://sites.redlands.edu/irb/> It can also be found in your myRedlands>find it>General>Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- Effective Fall 2021, students at proposal stage will take a required introductory training course offered by the IRB through CITI Program.
- Lincoln, Timothy D. *Qualitative Research: A Field Manual for Ministry Students*. Chicago, IL: ATLA Open Press, 2021. Ch. 2. (<https://www.atla.com/blog/qualitative-research-atla-open-press/>)
- Frequently Asked Questions: <https://sites.redlands.edu/institutional-review-board/irb-faqs/>

## D/P PROJECT AND MANUSCRIPT

### Project

This is the heart of your D/P! Your social and theological analysis provide the framework for the project. They will help you define the problem and the outcomes you seek through the project and provide a lens through which you will evaluate the project.

As you implement the project and write the dissertation manuscript it is critical that you adhere to your approved Design Proposal and IRB application. If it becomes necessary to modify your Design, you must consult and receive approval from your D/P Advisor. In the event of changes to the project design, students should also consult with the IRB Coordinator. Substantial changes to the project may require a new application to the IRB.

Minor advisor approved changes must be reported in the Notice of Intent before you prepare to submit the final manuscript. If substantial modification to the topic or project is needed, you should consult with the Dean. The Dean may determine if the change is significant enough to require that the student submit a new proposal to the APS Committee for approval. (See instructions, Appendix G.1 and G.2).

### D/P Content and Organization

Each D/P must possess *both* a bibliographic dissertation and a field project element. Although a given D/P may contain more "Project" than "Dissertation" (requiring an "inductive" D/P of "action research" to compile data due to dearth of extant research material), it must still include a full, ordered manuscript—the dissertation—that presents a review and analysis of the relevant literature for both the social analysis and the theological perspective. The D/P manuscript typically includes:

- an introduction
- a chapter on the social science data, theory and methodology used in the project
- a chapter on the theological perspectives, concepts, and key thinkers that informs the project
- a description of the project and its outcomes (not limited to "success" or "failure," but including learnings from success or failure)
- a chapter presenting substantial evaluation of the project (assumptions, theories, methodology, etc.)
- a chapter presenting conclusions, implications for and relevance to ministry, and possible subsequent research.

The D/P must be a new work. It cannot be a review or description of a ministry project already underway or completed prior to the beginning of DMin studies.

The goal for the DMin degree and the expectation of the APS Committee is that the D/P provide an integrated, interdisciplinary analysis that:

- connects the bibliographic research to the lived experience of ministry and the innovation in practice represented in the project;



- provides a scholarly assessment of the relevant social science literature, to define and understand the problem, and design the project; and
- makes explicit use of and struggles with relevant biblical and theological sources to provide a framework for understanding the problem and the change or desired outcome sought through the project.

### **Academic Writing**

The D/P is an academic document, applying scholarly research to the practice of and innovation in ministry. Students at coursework stage, and Candidates submitting their D/P manuscript for graduation are expected to demonstrate excellence in academic writing, defined as:

- clear, concise and direct
- organized in a logical structure
- paying careful attention to grammar, sentence structure, and format
- exhibiting scholarly humility that does not make broad, universal or absolute claims, does not assume that everyone agrees with the writer, honestly represents differing theories
- making claims grounded in scholarly research, fully acknowledges sources through attribution and citation, and
- engaging the thought and work of others with careful, honest analysis and critique

**Style Manual:** SFTS DMin dissertations are filed with the GTU Library and governed by their standards. The approved reference for writing style is Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, latest edition, University of Chicago Press. See Appendices D.1 – D.3 for further guidance on the GTU standards. Be sure you are using the most current edition of the *D/P Guide* when finalizing your D/P as these standards may be revised.

### **Academic Honesty**

*“When you cite a source, you show how your voice enters into an intellectual conversation, and you demonstrate your link to the community within which you work. Working with sources can inspire your own ideas and enrich them, and your citation of these sources is the visible trace of that debt.”* (<https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/using-sources>)

A major part of the written work in the D/P is the presentation of the literature that demonstrates your understanding of the research that informs your project and the content of your approved bibliography. Appropriately citing your sources demonstrates your scholarly engagement with that literature through critical analysis, reflection and interpretation in the project. Properly acknowledging your sources demonstrates your own scholarly work, and honors the work of those you cite.

In academic writing, failure to properly cite your sources is considered plagiarism or intellectual property theft. *“This means, briefly, that*

- *direct quotations are placed in quotation marks with a citation of the source by author, title, and page number.*
- *Paraphrases (meaning following ideas of a passage without using the same words) must also be credited to the source. And finally,*
- *Major ideas, if you know where they come from, ought to be credited, too.” (APS Policy, Appendix E.2)*

### **Inclusive and Expansive Language**

The use of inclusive and expansive language is the policy of SFTS and a standard of academic writing across disciplines. SFTS policy is grounded in a theological commitment “to the diversity and inclusivity of the Church Universal as the community of human well-being founded upon the gospel of Jesus Christ.” (SFTS Student Handbook)

The terms *inclusive* and *expansive* are defined as:

- **Inclusive language** refers to the use of gender neutral or gender inclusive terms and pronouns for people, and in theological writing, terms and pronouns for God.
- **Expansive Language** with reference to God, is the intentional use of the diverse and varied language and images used to name the Divine Spirit in scripture and tradition, that also avoids exclusive use of male terms and imagery.
- Additional information is available in Appendix E.1.

### **Most Common Errors in Writing a D/P**

- **Wordiness.** Avoid unnecessary adjectives, circumlocutions, and the subjunctive case. Edit carefully and heavily.
- **Rhetoric.** Avoid sermonizing and rhetorical flourishes which appeal to the heart rather than to the mind. Avoid underlining, exclamation points, and bon mots in quotation marks.
- **Inconsistency.** Keep your tenses consistent, whether past, present, or future. Be consistent in capitalization, use of quotation marks, etc.
- **False assumptions** about the reader. Assume that your reader knows little or nothing about you, your setting, or your subject. Explain carefully.
- **First person.** Avoid the use of "I" except when speaking directly about your own feelings and actions; In those cases, however, please use “I” rather than “this writer” or “this author” etc. Avoid including the readers as part of "we" since the reader may or may not be part of the group so designated.
- **Avoid beginning sentences with, "This..."** when referring to the previous sentence. If you do use "this," be sure to add the referent, so that the reader will not have to glance back at the previous sentence: "This study," for example.

- **Clichés.** Carefully avoid such phrases as “after all,” “firstly,” “lastly,” “amongst,” and “We all know that...”
- **Overstatement.** Don’t make excessive claims for your work; avoid mentioning “everybody,” “all,” “the whole Church,” “always,” “never,” “completely,” etc. Modesty will make your work more precise.
- **Lengthy sentences and paragraphs.** Avoid the Pauline tendency to prolong sentences and paragraphs.
- **Failure to follow a standard format for bibliography and notes.** Your computer may contain software to help you create your references. If not, use the latest version of the Turabian style manual.

### **Manuscript**

The physical formatting requirements for the D/P manuscript are defined by the GTU Library guidelines (see Appendix E.1 and E.2). To prevent problems at the very end, when it’s time to file your archival copies, it is recommended that you format the draft manuscript to meet these requirements at the beginning of your work and check for any updates to the *D/P Guide* during the writing phase of your work.

**Length:** The final manuscript should meet standard academic expectations regarding substantial and rigorous research, allow for thorough reporting on implementation and evaluation of the outcomes of the project. Ordinarily, the average length of the D/P is 150 to 200 pages, plus appendices. To meet library constraints, the entire document, including appendices and blank front and end pages, should not exceed 300 pages.

**Alternative Media:** When appropriate, since Projects involving digital or other media may be better demonstrated in non-print forms such as a CD or DVD, the length of the manuscript may be less than 150 pages. When appropriate, with the approval of the D/P Advisor and the APS Committee, the Project may be presented in an alternative demonstrable format accompanying/ enclosed with the D/P manuscript such as CDs, DVDs, and USB storage devices showing social media sites.

- The use of alternative media should be clearly spelled out in the Design Proposal. If the student anticipates a manuscript of less than 150 pages, the D/P Outline in the proposal should include an estimate of page length.
- It is the student’s responsibility when using alternative media, to consult with the GTU librarian on requirements for library documentation.

**Advisor Approval and Critique:** As you complete the final D/P manuscript you need to communicate closely with your advisor Keep them aware of your timeline and plan to allow for time for consultation with your D/P Advisor as you refine the final manuscript

and prepare for submission to the Dean's Office. Your D/P Advisor plays a critical role in the final review process for your D/P.

1. Your D/P Advisor must approve the final manuscript for submission to the Dean's Office. Your timeline should include sufficient time for your advisor to provide a careful review of your completed manuscript and give you their feedback with time for you make any needed revisions before submission to the Dean's Office. (See Final Review Timeline, Appendix F.1).
2. You will request your advisor to prepare a 2 – 3-page critique of your final D/P for submission to the APS Office, normally at the same time you send the D/P manuscript.

This evaluation is a critical part of the APS Committee review process. It is in your own best interest to give your advisor ample time to do this. Don't wait until you've mailed the manuscript to the Dean's Office!

**Editor or Proofreader:** It is common for students to secure the services of a copy editor at this stage and especially encouraged for students who are not accustomed to scholarly writing or for whom English is a second language. Do not expect your advisor to edit your entire manuscript for grammar, sentence structure, format, etc. (See Appendix F.3 for additional information.)

**60-Day Notice of Intent:** As you near completion and final editing of your final manuscript, you must notify the Dean's Office of your anticipated date of submission so that the staff can recruit the Panel of Readers for your D/P. Your notification does not create a rigid deadline for your submission, but if you need more time, please keep the Dean's Office informed of your extended timeline.

With this Notification, you must also include a description of any modifications to the Design Proposal, including updates to the bibliography, and confirm whether your D/P Advisor has approved the changes. This documentation of revisions to your approved Design Proposal is included in the materials provided to the D/P Readers and helps to guide their evaluation of your manuscript.

- **The Notice of Intent to Submit D/P is due to the Dean's Office at least 60 days prior to submission of your manuscript** to enable timely processing. Use the form provided at Appendix G.2.
- Revisions to the Design Proposal, should be described in a **cover letter**, and the revised proposal, with a current Advisor's signature, submitted to the Dean's Office.
- Changes to the bibliography must include a list of the items that have been removed, as well as the items that have been added. Use the form provided at Appendix G.1

### **Submit Final Manuscript for Review**

With your advisor's approval, submit your final D/P manuscript for review by the APS Committee. This is the copy that will go to the reader panel for their review and critique. It should be a single, completed document (including appendices), proof-read for grammar, spelling, citations and format – in short, *it should be as close to perfect as you can make it!*

- Send a digital copy and one unbound hard copy on standard paper (photocopy paper is acceptable) to the Dean's Office:

Christine de Chutkowski, Office of the Dean  
Univ. of Redlands, GST/SFTS – Marin Campus  
105 Seminary Rd  
San Anselmo, CA 94960  
[Marin-APS@redlands.edu](mailto:Marin-APS@redlands.edu)

- D/P Advisor approval is required for submission of the final D/P manuscript for evaluation. To document their approval at this stage, your advisor shall send a separate confirmation of their approval that your manuscript is ready for review. This shall be in email form with their critique attached.
- Request your D/P Advisor to submit their critique to the Dean's Office. Ideally this should happen at the same time you submit your manuscript and may be sent by email to the APS address above.

**Digital Manuscript:** The digital copy of your manuscript should be submitted as PDF file. A PDF document is safe, unalterable and easily transmitted as an email attachment. *Do not use online document services.* They often require downloading additional software for which the university does not provide tech support.

**Security:** Be sure to make copies of your work, including digital and print versions. Keep a copy in a safe place along with your notes. When mailing drafts, either to your advisor or to the Dean's Office, consider using USPS flat-rate priority mail or UPS registered mail. NEVER MAIL YOUR ONLY COPY.

**Deadlines:** For candidates seeking to graduate in May of any given academic year, the review process begins in the preceding Fall semester. The complete timeline, which begins with obtaining your D/P Advisor's approval of the completed manuscript is shown in the Final Review Timeline, at Appendix G.1. The Timeline outlines the steps and timeframes required for the review process to help you plan ahead. In order to be eligible for graduation in May, your completed manuscript should be approved by your advisor and submitted to the Dean's office by the preceding **November 1**. Observance of this deadline does not guarantee graduation in the following May but gives you a reasonable expectation that if revision is needed you will have time to do so.

The Review Timeline is not designed to be restrictive. Candidates may submit their final manuscript for review at any time, and the Dean's Office will manage the review process in as timely a manner as possible to give the candidate a final decision. However, candidates submitting their D/P manuscript after January 15 should anticipate that in most instances, they will not be able to meet all the requirements of the review and approval process in time for graduation in the following May. Candidates who do not meet the deadline for graduation in a given year will be eligible to participate in Commencement in the following year, once they are approved for graduation.

**Reader Panel:** Upon receipt of the final manuscript in the Dean's office, a team of outside readers is identified and the manuscript is sent to the Reader Panel for review. The readers also receive a copy of the approved Design Proposal and any modifications to the Design and/or Bibliography included in the Notice of Intent to Submit. Their primary task is to review the manuscript for its faithfulness to the Design and make a recommendation to the APS Committee. They will also note issues of grammar, format, proper use of citations, etc., BUT it is not their task to document edits needed for the entire document.

The Reader Panel includes two Readers, chosen for their expertise and familiarity with your topic and competence to judge doctoral level scholarship on it. The Panel members will prepare critiques of your manuscript based upon your approved Design Proposal. Their evaluation is made without consulting with your advisor or with each other. The readers' critiques comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the document, its significance as a contribution to ministry, the adequacy of its logic, insight, scholarship, style and format, and its theological coherence. The Panel is anonymous to you, your D/P Advisor, the APS committee members (except staff), and to each other.

**APS Committee Review:** Acting on the basis of the readers' and advisor's critiques and recommendations, the APS Committee reviews the final manuscript and makes a decision.

Possible committee decisions are:

- approve, without change
- approve, pending minor or specified changes
- action postponed pending major changes
- not approved.

**Post-Review Editing and/or Revision:** The Dean's Office will notify you in writing of the committee's action and provide instructions where the committee directs changes. The Dean's Office instructions will normally include the Reader's critiques, and any marked copies of the manuscripts, if available.

Deadlines for submitting revisions will be provided in the instructions based on the level of revision required and the timeline for graduation.

- All revisions require the approval of your D/P Advisor before returning your manuscript to the Dean's Office. Candidates should work in close consultation with their D/P Advisor to edit their manuscript.

- Manuscripts requiring minor or specified changes are submitted to the Dean’s office for review and approval, with a cover letter identifying the changes made. The manuscript does not go back to the APS Committee for review or vote. A digital copy of the manuscript is sufficient for the review.
  - **Minor changes** are typically limited to typographical, grammatical, or formatting errors that can easily be corrected, without extensive editing.
  - **Specified changes** may include editing of content that is focused and limited in scope and judged to be able to be completed by the candidate in a short period of time.
  
- **Major Changes** indicates that the APS Committee is requiring a significant reworking and/or expansion to the manuscript, in order to meet the expectations for the D/P. If major changes are required, you will complete them under the continued supervision of your advisor, and you will need your advisor’s approval to resubmit the manuscript.
  - A decision requiring Major Changes, also requires another reading by a third independent reader and a second vote by the APS committee.
  - This submission requires a digital and one hard copy of the manuscript.

**Library Archive Copies:** Following final approval of your D/P manuscript, you will receive notice from the Dean’s office instructing you to have two copies of the final manuscript printed on acid-free archival paper. These copies are provided to the GTU Library for binding and become a part of the library archive. See Appendix D.1 and D.2 for detailed instructions. It is strongly recommended that you follow the formatting guidelines when you begin writing the D/P, to avoid extensive editing at the end of the process. The archival copies will be examined by the Dean’s office staff for compliance with the library standards before sending them for binding.

Unless you live in close proximity to a major university, most students have had to order the required acid free paper from an online provider. This may take time, order early to ensure that you have the paper you need when you are ready to print!

**Oral Presentation – D/P Forum:** Students whose D/P has been approved by the APS Committee for graduation, will make a brief oral presentation on the dissertation/project to students and faculty. This is in response to ATS accreditation guidelines and is designed to give Candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the expertise acquired through their research and writing and contribute to the shared learning community of the DMin program. Presentations will normally be scheduled in the Spring term. These D/P Forums are normally scheduled as an online seminar, although an in-person Forum could be scheduled if there are enough local participants.

## Graduation

As you enter the final phase of your D/P, you must file an application to graduate by January of the graduation year. The application may be found in MyRedlands/SelfService online portal. Graduation fees will be billed in May.

- Commencement ceremonies for all SFTS degree and diploma programs are held in San Anselmo, in late May, normally on a Saturday, with a Baccalaureate service to be held the day before.
- You need not be present at Commencement to graduate. If you are unable to attend Commencement, your degree will be granted *in absentia* provided all requirements are met and your UOR student account has a zero balance and no administrative holds. Your diploma will be mailed to you via a third party vendor. It is imperative that you confirm your correct mailing address in Self-Service. If you have questions, please contact the Registrar's Office at [registrar@redlands.edu](mailto:registrar@redlands.edu).
- The graduation fee may include the cost of renting regalia. Graduates wishing to purchase their own regalia should contact the Dean's office for specifications and information on providers.
- **Please respond promptly to all communication regarding graduation.** It is essential that you maintain access to your student email account as all correspondence regarding graduation will go to that email address. You will also receive correspondence regarding Commencement and related events at your Redlands student email account.



## A FINAL WORD

For most DMin students, the experience of writing the D/P is unlike any other academic experience you've had. It is largely self-driven, and the process of researching and writing will typically involve multiple drafts and revisions. It is a process of inquiry, analysis and learning. It is also a process of reporting on your project, and reflecting on the experience, integrating experience with theory and theology. Engage the process—it is part of your learning.

Do not be afraid to revise your topic as you develop your bibliographic research and begin to design your project. Seek the input and/or feedback of your D/P Advisor and other colleagues. Do not be over-protective or defensive. The feedback from your D/P Advisor, the Dean and the APS Committee is intended to help you produce an excellent D/P that reflects your learning and contributes to the wider knowledge and practice in professional ministry. Take advantage of their help. They are your peers and colleagues with whom you are embarking upon a learning journey.

Remember, the fundamental purpose of the project is to advance your research, knowledge and expertise in the practice of ministry, and to learn from the experience. This is where the innovation and creativity of your D/P take center stage. Like any experiment or new approach, things may not always go as expected. Moreover, you are not implementing your project in a controlled laboratory environment. You may encounter challenges you didn't anticipate, or outcomes that were not what you hoped for. That is part of the process of learning and innovation. A less than perfect project may contribute to learnings and insights you didn't expect. It does not mean your project failed! A good D/P gives an honest account of the project, including the things that did not go as planned. You should include a clear assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your project—including the things you will do differently next time, if appropriate, and a thoughtful evaluation of your learnings from the process.

The research and writing to produce a D/P manuscript takes time. Set a writing schedule for yourself, and plan to give yourself the time and space to do the work. Share your schedule with your D/P Advisor. Consider finding a writing partner to help keep each other accountable. Work diligently and carefully; you will produce a better D/P.

## Appendix

The following documents include samples intended to help students see the general form of D/P work that is expected; forms and templates for required documents; policy statements and resources to provide orientation to the ethos of the DMin program, SFTS and the University of Redlands.

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## Appendix A.1

### SFTS Doctor of Ministry Program Learning Objectives Rubric

*PLO A: Reflect independently, critically, & theologically upon the issues in society, mission, and ministry today*

<b>Proficiency</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>High</b>
Independent and critical reflection	Student demonstrates reasoning skills that are limited by bias, dependency, and subjectivity.	Student demonstrates reasoning skills that shows some objectivity and independence.	Student demonstrates reasoning skills that are independent and objective.	Student demonstrates reasoning skills that are both objective and independent, and creative and original.
Theological analysis	Student demonstrates thinking that is limited by little or narrow awareness of basic theological concepts and methods in contemporary issues.	Student applies some basic theological concepts and methods to contemporary issues.	Student proficiently applies theological concepts and methods to contemporary issues.	Student applies theological concepts and methods to contemporary issues in an original way and demonstrates the ability to apply these in their own home ministry.
Social analysis	Student is able to analyze very few issues in society, mission, and ministry.	The student is able to identify and analyze some issues in society, mission, and ministry.	Student is able to cogently and clearly analyze issues in society, mission, and ministry.	Student is able to articulate and clearly analyze contemporary issues in society, mission, and ministry, and articulate how those issues interface and interlock with each other.
Written communication and organization	Student's written presentation is unclear, filled with grammar errors and poorly organized.	Student's written presentation is marginal, has some writing errors and is partially organized.	Student's written presentation is clear, free of writing errors and organized well.	Student's written presentation is so well done that it is publishable in a professional journal.

*PLO B: Build relationships based on trust and cooperation among peers in ministry*

<b>Proficiency</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>High</b>
Relationship building	Student shows limited capacity to pursue appropriate relationship with peers.	Student shows some capacity to pursue appropriate relationship with peers.	Student forms healthy and mutually beneficial relationships with peers in classroom.	Student forms healthy and mutually beneficial relationships with colleagues outside of the classroom, in their home ministry site.
Openness	Student is guarded, cautious and/or insensitive in class with student peers.	Student tries to be more self-disclosing, open and sensitive but resists professional feedback from peers.	Student is self-disclosing, open, and sensitive to professional feedback from peers.	Student is able to be self-disclosing and open with student peers and is able to use that trust to identify areas of professional improvement.
Cooperation	Student works alone and/or competitively with student peers.	Student will work in teams, when so assigned by the instructor.	Student is able to work and learn effectively in teams with student peers.	Student initiates the building of teams both with student peers and with colleagues at student's home ministry site.
Cultural Competence (refers to gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, and any other factor protected by law)	Student isolates oneself in own cultural group and resists engaging peers from other cultural groups.	Student is able to converse with peers from other cultural groups and shows tolerance toward others.	Student freely engages with peers from other cultural groups with an opening and welcoming attitude.	Student freely engages with peers from other cultural groups and is able to identify ways in which he or she has learned or has been changed by the encounter.

*PLO C: Use interdisciplinary research skills to develop innovative approaches to ministry and pastoral work*

<b>Proficiency</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>High</b>
Research Skills within ministry	Student is able to identify some research tools but cannot apply them objectively to the ministry problem or reaches conclusions already predetermined.	Student is able to apply various research tools to a ministry problem in ways that give the student new understandings and insights into the problem.	Student demonstrates the ability to apply research tools and principles to new ministry problems and challenges outside of the scope of student's initial study.	Student demonstrates exceptional ability to apply research tools and principles to new ministry problems and challenges outside of the scope of student's initial study.
Application of interdisciplinary thinking	Student has done a partial or shallow job at summarizing knowledge from one other discipline as it pertains to a ministry problem.	Student has done a good job at summarizing and analyzing an identified ministry problem from at least one other non-theological discipline.	Student is able to think and dialogue across two or more academic disciplines, at least one of them being a theological discipline.	Student is excellent in his or her ability to think and dialogue across two or more academic disciplines, at least one of them being a theological discipline.
Project Development and implementation	Student's approach to the ministry problem is not innovative or creative.	The student is able to develop an innovative approach to an identified ministry problem, but unable to show useful results.	The student is able to develop and implement an innovative approach to a ministry problem and able to analyze the results.	The student's approach to a ministry problem is able to be revised based on experience and duplicated.

**San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies**

**DMin Dissertation/Project - Topic Proposal**

**Student:**

**Date:**

**Title:**

**Problem:**

**Your Ministry:**

**Resources:**

**Proposed Advisor:** If your proposed advisor is not a member of the SFTS, UOR or GTU faculty, please attach his/her *curriculum vitae*.

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Mailing Address:

**San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies**

**DMin Dissertation/Project – Topic Proposal**

**Student:**

**Date:**

**Title:**

**Problem:** *Describe the ministry problem or issue your D/P will focus on. Explain why this issue is important. How is it a ministry problem? Cite evidence to support why this issue is a problem – use both social and theological data. Identify the theological issue or question at stake. In general, what do you want to see changed in reference to this problem or issue?*

**Your Ministry:** *Briefly describe the ministry (congregation, hospital, agency, etc.) in which you will implement your project. How is this topic or problem related to your ministry? What qualifies you, personally or professionally to do this D/P?*

**Resources:** *Please list 5 - 7 references: written (books, articles), oral (interviews) and/or electronic (internet, movies, DVDs, videotapes, etc.). In this preliminary list, focus on the central issues and/or primary scholars that will inform your research.*

**Proposed Advisor:** *If your proposed advisor is not a member of the SFTS, UOR or GTU faculty, please attach their *curriculum vitae*.*

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Mailing Address:

**TOPIC PROPOSAL – SAMPLE A**

*San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies*  
**DMin Dissertation/Project - Topic Proposal**

**Student:**

**Date: 7-1-09**

**TITLE:** *Ministering with People with Chronic Illness: A Course for Faith and Wholeness*

**PROBLEM:**

According to the Centers for Disease Control, there are well over 90 million people who live with chronic illness in the United States. Chronic illness results in extended pain and suffering, major limitations in activity and decreased quality of life in more than one out of every 10 Americans. As life span is lengthened and medical technology advances, chronic illness will become more and more common.

Apart from Clinical Pastoral Education, parish pastors are, by and large, ill equipped in their ministry with those who are chronically ill. Our ten Presbyterian Church (USA) seminaries require only one general pastoral care and counseling course for Master of Divinity students who are preparing to be Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. In order to effectively minister with those who are chronically ill, pastors and pastoral counselors need training and tools to offer support. As pastors understand how traumatizing and life changing chronic illness can be, they can ensure that their congregations are truly sanctuaries for all people.

Most parish pastors, chaplains and clinical pastoral counselors are familiar with and understand the loss and grief associated with acute illnesses. With acute illness, there is a rapid beginning, a cause, a diagnosis, a treatment that cures, and a short duration. Grief associated with acute illness has predictable stages, and normally a closure. Pastors receive training in normal grief but not grief associated with chronic illness.

I want our congregations to do a better job at serving the needs of their congregants with chronic illness. They need to provide support, encouragement and accountability so that affected people may develop a sense of wholeness spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially, despite their challenging and ever-changing circumstances.

**YOUR MINISTRY:**

I am the Parish Associate of Congregational Care at the First Presbyterian Church in XXX. I offer pastoral care and counseling to 1,200 members and community members, many who have chronic illness. I also train and equip lay leaders to offer care and compassion as Deacons, Stephen Ministers and members of a variety of other caring ministries in our congregation. This topic is directly related to my ministry as it will increase my knowledge and professional skills,



provide additional training for lay leaders and offer support to the many people in our congregation who face health challenges.

Since 1989, I have had an invisible chronic condition that manifests itself in constant pain, chronic fatigue and a number of other health challenges. I know personally the trials and tribulations of chronic illness and the impact it has on my life as a person, family member, pastor, friend, and health advocate.

**Proposed Advisor:**

<b>Name:</b>	Rev. Dr. R. Scott Sullender, Ph.D.	
<b>Address:</b>	San Francisco Theological Seminary	Phone:
	105 Seminary Road	
	San Anselmo, CA 94960	Email:

**References**

Boss, Pauline, *Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

**End of sample**

**TOPIC PROPOSAL – SAMPLE B**

***San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies***  
**DMin Dissertation/Project Topic Design Proposal**

**Student:**

**Date: June 13, 2018**

**Title:** *Making the Covenant Work: A Web-based Resource for Welcoming Gay Pastors.*  
[www.gaypastorwelcome.com](http://www.gaypastorwelcome.com)

**Problem:**

Some Protestant denominations, notably the United Church of Christ (UCC), Unitarian Universalist, Presbyterians (USA), Lutheran (ELCA), and some regions of Disciples of Christ, now authorize the ordination of gay ministers. Therefore, more gays in these denominations will graduate from seminary, or become otherwise authorized to enter the call process and hopefully receive calls or to local churches. Yet, change is complex, slow, and often ambiguous. Some congregations who call an openly gay pastor, may not have any previous experience welcoming gay leaders. There is cultural resistance to gay pastors, even in publicly declared open and affirming churches. A 2016 survey by the Open and Affirming Coalition (ONA), an advocacy ministry within the United Church of Christ, asked “Is your ONA congregation served by an openly lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender minister, or would you seriously consider calling an openly LGBTQ minister if that person were the best candidate?” With 541 respondents, 24% answered, “No.” In this historic Protestant United States denomination, which passed a General Synod resolution in 1985 declaring the denomination to be in a “Covenant of Openness and Affirmation,” and endorsed equal marriage regardless of gender in 2005, only 1500 of the nearly 5000 UCC churches are self-declared open and affirming congregations.

Congregations are not uniform or monolithic in the degree of experience, knowledge or “welcoming” attitude. Similarly, gay pastors are not all the same. Some may be experienced pastors; others may not know what to expect. Theological, cultural, and experiential differences can present gaps in mutual understanding. All this may create difficulties securing jobs, establishing effective ministry relationships, and may lead to damage of the pastor as person, premature pastoral terminations, negative community perceptions of the church, or prolonged congregation conflicts.

While these same denominations offer various resources for search, call, appointment, and transition processes for clergy and congregations, they infer heteronormative situations. There are few, if any, resources focused to educate and assist gay pastors and their calling congregations to establish authentic and healthy relationships in ministry. A practical resource is needed to help congregations and newly arriving gay pastors initiate ministry together on good theological, cultural, and experiential bases.

## **Your Ministry**

I am a gay man whose ordained ministry career aspirations were thwarted by a congregation's homophobia. Three decades later, I successfully co-founded a local church to be a pastor while some official church rules labeled me "incompatible" for Christian leadership. Therefore, I want gay pastors to get considered and be hired for church pastorates. In my recent 16 years of local church leadership, I learned many nuances for forming a thriving partnership with a congregation. With three years' experience on the Southern California Nevada Conference UCC Eastern Association Church and Ministry (credentialing) Committee, and two remaining years in my term, I see gay members in discernment for ordained ministry choose fields other than the pastorate for calls because they think the local church is not as welcoming as other fields, e.g., chaplaincy. I see them worry about career mobility limitations for gay pastors as certain geo-ecclesiastical regions are less welcoming to gays. One of the ongoing commitments I have in ministry is to help gay pastors do well with congregations. Furthermore, a core value of my ministry and hermeneutic is to promote inclusion and welcome-based values formation in the local church. With 20 years of business experience, including 11 years in business communications and training content and technology development, I have skills to develop this D/P as a Web based community education tool.

## **Resources:**

- Bahr, David Paul. "Openly Gay and Lesbian Pastors Called by Predominantly Straight UCC Congregations." Doctor of Ministry Research Paper, Wesley Theological Seminary, 2006.
- Boyd, Malcolm. *Gay Priest: An Inner Journey*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012.
- Cain, David J. *Person-Centered Psychotherapies*. 1st ed. Theories of psychotherapy series. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.
- Douglas, Kelly Brown Black. *Bodies and the Black Church; A Blues Slant*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012.
- Eoyang, Glenda H., and Royce J. Holladay. *Adaptive Action: Leveraging Uncertainty in Your Organization*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford Business Books, 2013.

## **Proposed Advisor**

Name:

Phone:

Email:

San Francisco Theological Seminary  
DMin Dissertation/Project - Design Proposal

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor's Signature of Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(This indicates full approval of this proposal and bibliography.)*

**Title:** *(From approved Topic Proposal)*

**Problem:** *(From approved Topic Proposal)*

**Ministry:** *(From approved Topic Proposal)*

**Social Analysis:**

**Theological Analysis:**

**Scope:**

**Project:**

- a. Field research and methods*
- b. Implementation Steps*
- c. Steps to inform project participants about the project - nature, limitations and any ethical issues.*
- d. Project Advisory Group/Accountability Committee/Supervisor (not D/P Advisor)*

**Evaluation:** *(Include a copy of any evaluative instruments you will use as an appendix)*

**Integration:**

**Outline:** *Please provide a tentative outline of your D/P, chapter by chapter with a brief summary or outline of each chapter.*

**Timetable:** *Please provide a tentative timetable of the steps and dates, by which you will complete this D/P.*

**Bibliography:** *(Approximately 50 resources, listed in bibliographic form, in conformance with the approved style manual, Turabian, et al, A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. University of Chicago Press, latest edition.)*

San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies  
DMin Dissertation/Project – Design Proposal

**Student:**

**Date:**

**Advisor:**

**Advisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**  
(*This indicates full approval of this proposal and bibliography.*)

**Title:** (*From approved Topic Proposal*) *The title may be edited as appropriate to the reflect the final design.*

**Problem:** *Describe the ministry-problem or subject area you wish to study or explore. Explain why this issue is important. How is it a problem? Cite evidence to support why this issue is a problem. In general, what do you want to see changed in reference to this problem or issue? (From approved Topic Proposal, may be edited is appropriate to the reflect the final design.)*

**Your Ministry:** *How is this topic or problem related to your ministry? What qualifies you, personally or professionally to do this D/P? (From approved Topic Proposal, may be edited as appropriate to the reflect the final design.)*

**Social Analysis:** *Describe what you will do to place this problem within its social, historical, cultural or psychological context. How does this problem or issue manifest itself in a particular social group or organization ( i.e. congregation, denomination, family unit) that you will be working with? What social science will you employ to study this problem? Identify 3-5 scholars whose work you will rely on the most to study this problem and explain why you have chosen them.*

**Theological Analysis:** *What are the biblical/theological lenses you will use to examine this issue? How will you understand this issue from a theological perspective? Identify one or more theological concepts (i.e. redemption), schools of thought (i.e. process theology), theological doctrines (i.e. doctrine of sin), theologians (i.e. Paul Tillich) or branches of theology (i.e. Pastoral theology, Eschatology or Pauline theology) through which you will look at this issue. Identify 3-5 scholars whose work will help you understand this problem theologically and explain why you have chosen them.*

**Scope:** *Delineate any limitations or parameters that will set boundaries for your project. For example: a particular congregation, governing body, or other entity; a community or demographic group within a community or entity (gender, race, age, etc.) List definitions of any key terms related to your problem and topic.*

**Project:** *Describe the project or application portion of your D/P? (Will the project be a curriculum for a class or workshop, a professional article, a program in your congregation, field research, a new counseling approach?)*

*a. Will you be conducting any field research in reference to this project? How will you do this research, what methods will you use?*

*b. What steps will you take to implement the project?*

*c. What steps will you take to inform the people participating in your project of its nature, limitations and any ethical issues.*

*d. To whom will you report your project?*

**Evaluation:** *How will you evaluate the project? What instruments or methods will you use to evaluate your project's effectiveness? (Please attach a copy of any evaluative instruments you use, i.e. questionnaires or structured interviews). How will you analyze the data, summarize the findings, and be sure that your results are free from bias?*

**Integration:** *How will you integrate the results of your project with the insights of your Social Analysis and Theological Perspective? Describe how you will establish a lively and critical interdisciplinary dialogue that will enhance your understanding of the problem and shape revisions you make to your project.*

**Outline:** *Please provide a tentative outline of your D/P, chapter by chapter with a brief summary of each chapter.*

**Timetable:** *Please provide a tentative timetable of the steps and dates, by which you will complete this D/P.*

**Bibliography:** *On a separate page(s), list approximately 50 resources. This is your final list of resources. By listing these you are obligating yourself to be familiar with each of them. Your final written D/P should show the influence of these resources upon your thinking and written work. Ask your advisor to review your list of resources and approve them. Refer to Turabian, et al, A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, University of Chicago Press, latest edition, for proper format for all bibliographic notes and citations.*

## SAMPLE DESIGN PROPOSAL A

### *San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies* DMIN DISSERTATION/PROJECT – DESIGN PROPOSAL

**Student:**

**Date:** 9/13/12

**ADVISOR’S SIGNATURE:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** 9/17/2012

**TITLE: From Household Churches to Home *Altarcitos*: Creating Sacred Spaces through Hispanic Eyes**

**1. PROBLEM:**

The estimated Hispanic/Latino-a population of the United States as of 2009 is 48.4 million. It is projected that Hispanics/Latinos-as will surpass the 132.8 million mark by the year 2050. More than two-thirds (68%) of all Hispanics/Latinos-as in the United States consider themselves to be Roman Catholics. Hispanics/Latinos-as compose more than 35% of all Catholics in the United States.<sup>1</sup> In the Pacific Northwest approximately 52% of the total Hispanic population is affiliated in some way with the Roman Catholic Church<sup>2</sup>.

Despite their presence in the United States, and particularly in the Pacific Northwest, many Catholic Hispanic adults, both newcomers and those who have been here for many years, have had little opportunity to study their faith formally. Raúl Gómez-Ruíz, a renowned Latino liturgical theologian, believes that “the liturgy as the foundation of Hispanic *mística*<sup>3</sup> and thus the starting point of ministry among Hispanics in the United States has yet to be fully examined and appreciated.”<sup>4</sup> Gómez calls for engaging in liturgical formation of adults since “popular religiosity has been the primary focus of pastoral efforts and theological reflection among Hispanics and others involved in Hispanic ministry.”<sup>5</sup> Gómez is not alone in his endeavor. The U.S. bishops in their 1984 pastoral letter *The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment* acknowledge the

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops website. <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/hispanic-latino/demographics/> (accessed January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Mary Beth Celio, Office of Planning and Research, Archdiocese of Seattle, “Hispanics in the Archdiocese of Seattle,” Presentation to the Pastoral Leadership Network for Hispanic Ministry in the Archdiocese of Seattle, 19 April 2012, Seattle, WA.

<sup>3</sup> The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry (published in 1998; hereafter NPPHM) defines *mística* as “the series of motivations and deep values which enliven the process of the people and create experiences of faith, producing spirituality that encourages life and pastoral work.”

<sup>4</sup> Raúl Gómez-Ruíz, “Hispanic Ministry, Liturgy and Spirituality,” in *Hispanic Ministry in the 21st Century: Present and Future*, ed. Hosffman Ospino (Miami: Convivium Press, 2010), 132.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



role of popular Catholicism in Hispanic spirituality and call “for a bridge between popular religiosity and liturgy.”<sup>6</sup>

Fr. Gómez underscores the emphasis that U.S. Bishops place on popular religion in The National Pastoral Plan for Hispanic Ministry published in 1998:

“we are thus challenged to greater study of Hispanic prayer forms especially those emerging from Hispanic homes since the home has traditionally been for them the center of faith and worship...Hispanic *mística* at its roots is devotional and popular rather than primarily liturgical...the spirituality or *mística* of the Hispanic people springs from their faith and relationship with God... Since spirituality penetrates the totality of life, it is likewise manifest in a multitude of expressions. This affirmation of popular religiosity is an affirmation of Hispanic culture which unmistakably has been marked by a rich devotional life both at home, as evidenced by *altarcitos*<sup>7</sup>, and in the streets as seen in the frequent processions and pilgrimages involving large segments of the community.”<sup>8</sup>

As a means of forming present and future lay leaders within the fastest growing sector of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest, an adult liturgical catechesis that incorporates Hispanic *mística* and engages the liturgical tradition needs to be developed. Promotion of adequate adult liturgical catechesis for Hispanics advances the present mission and the future of the Catholic Church in Western Washington.

My dissertation proposal is a modest attempt to respond to this need by modeling a program for forming and welcoming Hispanics in a manner that honors their culture, traditions, and deep religious faith. Moreover, my dissertation project can offer one example of how to bridge Hispanic *mística* and the liturgical tradition when it comes to preparing lay leaders in a parish setting. Specifically, my project will provide a concrete response to this need by providing a 16-hour workshop that covers the history of sacred spaces, three visits to modern examples of formal sacred spaces, and the study and construction of a personal home shrine or *altarcito*. The workshop is an attempt to bridge home and church as holy places where God is encountered.

## **2. MY MINISTRY:**

I entered the Jesuits fourteen years ago. For most of these years, I have been deeply involved with the Latino/a sector in the Church. My academic interest focuses on the impact of architecture and sacred spaces on the creation of ethnically appropriate environments for worship, prayer and spiritual direction. This interest emerges from my lived experience at home with my great-grandmother and grandmother who passed on the tradition of creating nativity scenes, and *altarcitos* to gather the family for prayer and contemplation. This practice continues to be at the core of the *mística* of Hispanics living in the United States.

Recently, I worked for the XXX Hispanic Ministry Coordinator in the Archdiocese of Seattle. My main contribution was to provide the appropriate scriptural, liturgical and spiritual

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Devotional home shrines and altars.

<sup>8</sup> Ospino, *Hispanic Ministry*, 134.

training for Latino-a lay leaders to increase their effectiveness and impact of their parish ministry.

### 3. **SOCIAL ANALYSIS:**

For my dissertation project, I will research the following questions:

- a. **Christian Sacred Spaces as Home.** Our dwelling places shape us into who we are becoming and shape the identity of a community. What is the impact that physical spaces marked as sacred have in passing on the Tradition to the next generation? I will use the works of Mircea Eliade to explore the notion that myths and rituals do not simply commemorate hierophanies, but actually participate in them (*The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion, Rites and Symbols of Initiation: the Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth*).
- b. **Seeking a New Home: Immigrant reality.** How do we welcome the immigrant, the displaced, all those who lack permanent housing? How do the sacred spaces they access reflect (or not) the immigrants' own religiosity, their hopes and what they are becoming? Where are Hispanic immigrants coming from? What are they coming into (i.e. the culture of the Pacific Northwest)? How is the lack of immigration reform in the U.S.A. contributing to the destruction of families, and the loss of identity of younger migrant generations? To explore these questions I will use 2010 Census data from the U.S.A, the state of Washington, and Seattle (Seattle Archdiocese Planning and Research Office).
- c. **Furnishing a Home.** How do we bridge formal expressions of religious belief with home devotions i.e. *altarcitos*? How do we reconcile popular liturgical expressions with mainstream tradition? How are home devotions aiding the hybridization, assimilation and syncretism of the immigrant worldview? Who presides over them? To explore these questions I will look into the concept of the liminal experience from the anthropological perspective of Victor Witter Turner (*Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture, The Ritual Process: Structure, and Anti-structure* and his study of Arnold van Gennep's three-fold structure of liminality and *communitas*). Also, I will read about the phenomena of *altarcitos* to gain more understanding of the construction and meaning generated by the pieces contained in them (Dana Salvo's *Home Altars of Mexico*, and Marie Romero Cash's *Living Shrines*).

### 4. **THEOLOGICAL RESOURCES:**

I will begin the theological research using the works of Hosffman Ospino and Tim Matovina to contextualize my questions in the realm of Hispanic Ministry (*Hispanic Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Present and Future, Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church*). Then, I will explore Paul Tillich and his three requirements for cultic formation today and an understanding of dwelling, space and time. Moreover, Tillich will help me as I explore the question of how artistic symbols are related to the symbols in which religion expresses itself. This question is a key in my pursuit of bridging home and church sacred spaces (*On Art and Architecture*). R. Kevin Seasoltz will help me bring into dialogue the history of Christian art and architecture with liturgy to help bridge the gap between home and church. (*A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art*, and *The House of God*:

*Sacred Art and Church Architecture*). Gleaning deeper knowledge of the evolution of the Christian understanding of sacred space will be possible by exploring the Old Testament and New Testament Scripture readings. I will anchor my search with these two passages: (1 Kings 5-7, Solomon builds the temple), and (1Corinthians 11:23-26, the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples).

5. **SCOPE:**

This dissertation/project will focus on exploring the key components of sacred spaces (e.g. altars, shrines, temples), how sacred spaces are marked and described, how they were transformed over time and the importance of constructing sacred space at home. The scope of this dissertation/project will focus on how to form adult Hispanic lay leaders in a parish setting. Twelve participants will take part in a 16-hour weekend workshop. The group will consist of Latino/a leaders from diverse<sup>9</sup> backgrounds who are active ministers in their parishes, and who are interested in learning about sacred spaces.

I will not focus on offering solutions to immigration issues nor issues in architecture and worship.

6. **PROJECT:**

The project will consist of a 16-hour weekend workshop for Hispanic lay leaders who are active in parish ministry. The workshop will provide an overview of the history of Christian sacred spaces, a walking tour of three churches in the Seattle area, a presentation and construction of an *altarcito*. The seminar will be preceded by a pre-interview to establish the participants' understanding and expectations prior to the workshop. Then, a post-interview will be conducted to assess learning attained from their participation in the workshop.

The steps I will take in implementing this project are:

1. Research the literature of marking, constructing and accessing sacred space.
2. Research the theological literature on liminality and *communitas*.
3. Research the *altarcitos* and their connection with household religious practice.
4. Design the workshop.
5. Develop the pre-interview and post-interview questions.
6. Recruit and interview participants for the workshop.
7. Offer the workshop
8. Interview the participants.
9. Evaluate the results of the interviews and the workshop.
10. Write the dissertation.

Participants in the 16-hour workshop will be informed that they are participating in a doctoral dissertation project and that their responses to the interviews and pictures of their personal *altarcitos* may be included in the dissertation. Also, the participants will be informed that any

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<sup>9</sup> By diverse I mean in the following categories: country of origin, educational level, economic status, immigration status and age.

direct quotations or references to their comments will be anonymous. A copy of the consent form is attached (Attachment A).

7. **EVALUATION:**

The pre and post-interviews of the workshop participants will serve as evaluation tools. The participants' input will provide data that will allow me to assess whether the workshop helped participants gain deeper understanding of the continuity of sacred spaces and whether it motivated them to share their gained appreciation of sacred spaces with their family and other fellow parishioners. I will take pictures of the *altarcitos* created at the end of the workshop. I have attached a sample of the interview questions (see Attachments B and C). I will summarize the data and report it in the D/P. I will analyze the data to determine trends, insights and helpful feedback. I will discuss the data with my advisor and her office. I will share the results with the Pastoral Leadership Network for Hispanic Ministry in the Archdiocese of Seattle, and with the *Instituto Hispano* at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara at Berkeley.

8. **INTEGRATION:**

Throughout my D/P I will be integrating my research from the social sciences and theology, with my practical experience in forming Hispanic laity. The workshop will be developed out of my research in the social sciences and theology. In turn, after I have evaluated my pilot workshop, I will use this feedback to enrich my curriculum for future use and augment my knowledge of both the science and theology necessary to improve adult formation of Hispanic lay leaders in their *mística*. A concluding section of my D/P will address the issue of what I have learned from the experience of the workshop.

9. **OUTLINE:**

*Chapter 1:* The Nature of the Problem and the Cultural and Social Context of Catholic Latinos/as in the Pacific Northwest in the Eastside Deanery of the Seattle Archdiocese.

*Chapter 2:* The Theology of Liminality and *Communitas* in Sacred Space.

*Chapter 3:* Furnishing a Home: Hispanic Household Holiness and the Practice of Making *Altarcitos*.

*Chapter 4:* The Workshop: Creating Sacred Space through Hispanic Eyes. Description of how the workshop was set up, the findings, what unfolded, the workshop evaluations and synthesis, and emerging questions.

*Chapter 5:* So what? Pastoral Implications and Conclusions

*Appendices:* "From Household Churches to Home *Altarcitos*: Creating Sacred Space through Hispanic Eyes." Notes generated during the workshop and pictures.

10. **TIMETABLE:** A tentative timetable of the steps and dates by which I will complete this D/P:

- Read the literature and prepare the workshop (end of-August 2012-end of October 2012)
- Conduct interviews with prospective workshop participants (October 2012)
- Conduct the workshop (November 2012)

- Conduct closing interviews to evaluate the workshop and participants' experiences (end of November 2012)
- Share finding with my advisor (December 2012)
- Write the dissertation/project (January-April 2013)

## Resources

1. Badillo, David A. *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. (personal)
2. Bouyer, Louis. *Liturgy and Architecture*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967. (personal)
3. Brown, Robert F. "Eliade on Archaic Religion: Some Old and New Criticisms." *Studies in Religion* 10 (1981): 429-449. (personal)
4. Brueggemann, Walter. *Solomon: Israel's Ironic Icon of Human Achievement*. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2005. (personal)

**End of sample**

## SAMPLE DESIGN PROPOSAL B

### *San Francisco Theological Seminary: Advanced Pastoral Studies* DMin Dissertation/Project Design Proposal

**Student:****Date: June 13, 2018****Advisor:**

**Title:** Making the Covenant Work: A Web-based Resource for Welcoming Gay Pastors.  
[www.gaypastorwelcome.com](http://www.gaypastorwelcome.com)

**Problem:**

Some Protestant denominations, notably the United Church of Christ (UCC), Unitarian Universalist, Presbyterians (USA), Lutheran (ELCA), and some regions of Disciples of Christ, now authorize the ordination of gay ministers. Therefore, more gays in these denominations will graduate from seminary, or become otherwise authorized to enter the call process and hopefully receive calls or to local churches. Yet, change is complex, slow, and often ambiguous. Some congregations who call an openly gay pastor, may not have any previous experience welcoming gay leaders. There is cultural resistance to gay pastors, even in publicly declared open and affirming churches. A 2016 survey by the Open and Affirming Coalition (ONA), an advocacy ministry within the United Church of Christ, asked “Is your ONA congregation served by an openly lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender minister, or would you seriously consider calling an openly LGBTQ minister if that person were the best candidate?” With 541 respondents, 24% answered, “No.” In this historic Protestant United States denomination, which passed a General Synod resolution in 1985 declaring the denomination to be in a “Covenant of Openness and Affirmation,” and endorsed equal marriage regardless of gender in 2005, only 1500 of the nearly 5000 UCC churches are self-declared open and affirming congregations.

Congregations are not uniform or monolithic in the degree of experience, knowledge or “welcoming” attitude. Similarly, gay pastors are not all the same. Some may be experienced pastors; others may not know what to expect. Theological, cultural, and experiential differences can present gaps in mutual understanding. All this may create difficulties securing jobs, establishing effective ministry relationships, and may lead to damage of the pastor as person, premature pastoral terminations, negative community perceptions of the church, or prolonged congregation conflicts.

While these same denominations offer various resources for search, call, appointment, and transition processes for clergy and congregations, they infer heteronormative situations. There are few, if any, resources focused to educate and assist gay pastors and their calling

congregations to establish authentic and healthy relationships in ministry. A practical resource is needed to help congregations and newly arriving gay pastors initiate ministry together on good theological, cultural, and experiential bases.

### **Your Ministry:**

I am a gay man whose ordained ministry career aspirations were thwarted by a congregation's homophobia. Three decades later, I successfully co-founded a local church to be a pastor while some official church rules labeled me "incompatible" for Christian leadership. Therefore, I want gay pastors to get considered and be hired for church pastorates. In my recent 16 years of local church leadership, I learned many nuances for forming a thriving partnership with a congregation. With three years' experience on the Southern California Nevada Conference UCC Eastern Association Church and Ministry (credentialing) Committee, and two remaining years in my term, I see gay members in discernment for ordained ministry choose fields other than the pastorate for calls because they think the local church is not as welcoming as other fields, e.g., chaplaincy. I see them worry about career mobility limitations for gay pastors as certain geo-ecclesiastical regions are less welcoming to gays. One of the ongoing commitments I have in ministry is to help gay pastors do well with congregations. Furthermore, a core value of my ministry and hermeneutic is to promote inclusion and welcome-based values formation in the local church. With 20 years of business experience, including 11 years in business communications and training content and technology development, I have skills to develop this D/P as a Web based community education tool.

### **Social Analysis:**

Since the 1970s, with the advance of the Gay Rights Movement, Christian churches have struggled with allowing gay men being credentialed pastors in local churches and other professional roles. Until recently, upon coming out, most gay pastors were summarily dismissed. To fulfill a calling in Christian ministry, gay men had to stay in the closet to avoid detection and subsequent employment discrimination. Most Christian judicatories prohibited out gay ministers from serving openly and honestly.

During the past two decades, the Gay rights movement made significant advances toward equality. A few Christian churches opened their ranks to out gay pastors. As anti-gay societal values adapt to effective LGBTQI communities gaining marriage equality and confirming other civil rights and equal social opportunities, the presence of gay men in ordinary society is more acceptable. That change is felt in religious societies as well.

The heteronormative assumption pertaining to pastors continues in flux. Some religious bodies welcome gay pastors, some do not, and it is safe to assume some never will. Thinking historically, this is a progression in line with women and persons of color having to endure difficult transitions to be welcomed as pastoral leaders in congregations that are demographically dependent on stereotypical straight white male clergy, or white heterosexual clergy couples. Building relationships that crossed cultural boundaries is one of the ways non-demographically

matching clergy changed preconceived notions, which previously hindered their arrivals and the early months of settling.

Just as racism and misogyny remain hindering factors in community interactions, other factors in community tensions associated with the arrival of the new gay pastor are embedded homophobia and heterosexism. I will examine this influence on the relationship between the congregation and the gay pastor as presented in, *Sexually Stigmatized Communities: Reducing Heterosexism and Homophobia: An Awareness Training Manual*, by Chuck Stewart, and *Overcoming Heterosexism and Homophobia: Strategies That Work*, by James Sears and Walter L. Williams.

Church communities contain a complex web of relationships. The organizational and personal relationship the church community has with the pastor is a key factor in ministry effectiveness. Starting off in a good relational context is important. This dissertation is exploring how pastors and congregations form successful ministry partnerships. Certain features make some relationships successful and some not. Attitudes, for example, are strong influential ingredients in the pastor-congregant relationship mixture. Anti-gay-pastor attitudes may be changed when understood and addressed, thereby enhancing the positive potential for the ministry of a newly arriving out gay pastor. Using Peter Coutts' Alban at Duke University work, as described in his blog post entitled, "Encouraging Attitude Change in the Congregation," the dissertation will present ways to affect attitudes for positive outcomes. Coutts writes that leaders can help congregants revise the strength of an attitude by helping them reconsider the relative importance of a few attitudes that are important to them.

Since receiving a gay pastor in a congregation that is not demographically dependent upon the gay community for survival is rare, receiving an out-gay pastor in such a congregation will likely involve change for the congregation. This change will influence attitudes about social order and biblical principles. Likely, there are parallels to other social movements such as the Civil Rights Movement and Women's Rights Movement.

*Managing Polarities in Congregations: Eight Keys for Thriving Faith Communities* by Roy M. Oswald will reveal the factors at work in change that involves social adjustment. The book uses polarity maps, to present pathways to healthy outcomes. Such techniques will be offered to assist in the new Gay pastor's arrival and integration with the congregation. This will help both the pastor and the congregation improve chances of establishing a positive relationship and developing benevolent ministry outcome.

Times of social change are difficult in communities. Divisions that grow from the struggle of change will undermine the potential success of the congregation's ministry. The documentary film entitled, "A Time for Burning," shows Augustana Lutheran Church congregation trying to participate in discussions related to integration in Omaha, Nebraska. It presents vividly the challenges of social change in a reticent community. The invisible "they" or "them" present in many conversations detailing the dangers of going forward with change was a constant drain on



any progress. This mid-last-century film is a tool for use that transcends the decades and topical difference that separate it from gay pastors arriving in congregations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Once on site, the pastor must establish clear boundaries and understandings of family systems that relate to clergy leadership in order to promote healthy personal and professional relationships. The findings and advice of Edwin Friedman on family systems will be used to understand the relationship of leadership and anxiety in the church. Congregational dynamics and the benefits of self-differentiated leadership will be used to calm anxiety induced agitation that may arise with the arrival of the out gay pastor in a congregation that has never had one.

The saying goes, “If you’ve seen one UCC church, you’ve seen one UCC church.” This is due in part to the hyper-congregationalism claimed by some congregations to protect their autonomy. This contributes to why, it is reported anecdotally that in the UCC, a gay person can be authorized for ministry, yet embedded homophobia and heterosexism in search committees and congregations prevent interview invitations and hires being made. Naming this dynamic in religious history and practice, as this D/P will do, will reveal opportunities to address it in the larger church. The work will provide persons in other denominational polities to draw inferences to how this functions in their own system.

### **Theological Perspective:**

Attitudes toward the Holy Bible and God, as their wisdom applies to human relationships and church rules, are significant influences on actions when gay men are welcomed or rejected in Christian ministry. The historical context presented in *Stealing Jesus: How Fundamentalism Betrays Christianity* by Bruce Bawer, shows that the values most active now against gay pastors come from a historical biblical perspective based in fear and prejudice rather than ancient Christian heritage. The theological construct for anti-gay discrimination against clergy developed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, not ancient Israel.

Rather than doctrinaire or creedal rules, developing relationships based on mutual respect and granted integrity is the basis for a theological perspective that includes the LGBTQI community – including gay pastors – as welcome and essential elements of humanity in God’s created realm. The dissertation will explore theology from a relational perspective.

As a young seminarian, I read Martin Buber’s theological presentation entitled *I and Thou*. The deep wisdom found in the relationship with God described in the book presented a context for my own close relationship with God. I-Thou is a qualitative relationship that embraces human divine interaction with supreme integrity and care. The sense of relationship between congregation and gay pastor is “I-it” when entities are not understood or in relationship. As relational covenant is formed and nurtured, an “I-You” model forms as the parties gain understanding of each other. According to Buber, this relationship develops through encounter. Fostering the move from experience to encounter, from quantitative to qualitative relations is a model for churches and gay pastors to put to work between them.

In a DMin seminar presented by Dr. Andrea White on Womanist Theology, a relationship-based sense of God was developed using the image of a “theology of the crossroads” by Kelly Brown Douglas in her book *Black Bodies and the Black Church; A Blues Slant*. The crossroads is a three-dimensional space that God inhabits and humans visit. This is the place where people wrestle with the divine and are changed. In my sense of church mission, taking into account the anti-gay positions many people bring to their church experiences, it is hopeful to envision that traditional anti-gay-embedded opinions meet progressive-inclusive aspirations at the crossroad where the local church sits and are changed.

Protestant theologian Walter Brueggeman compares LGBTQI people to canaries in a coal mine. Meaning, the way the minority community is treated is an indicator of the health of community relationship. As a leading theologian in the United Church of Christ, he relates the justice tradition and the holiness traditions of the Hebrew scriptures to the struggle of homosexuals to gain ordination and marriage equality in the church. His book, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*, will provide biblical insight on the topic of religio-socio acceptance for gays in for this D/P.

**Scope:**

The D/P will interact with out-of-the-closet (out) gay male ordained clergy (gay pastors). While principles and findings may apply to ordained and non-ordained lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and polyamorous (LGBTQIA&P) clergy serving in ministries anywhere on the globe, this D/P is focused gay pastors serving in historically mainline Protestant churches in the United States of America. In this case, United Church of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Presbyterian Church USA, and Episcopal Church of America gay pastors are included.

For this D/P, it is confirmed that the congregation served by each interviewed clergy person was aware of the out status of the gay pastor throughout the hiring process. While church communication gaps may mean some congregants initially were unaware, the leadership and general membership were informed through typical local communication channels.

It may also be the case that the gender of LGBTQIA&P persons arriving as pastors elicits different or similar responses for congregations and communities. Any cross-gender experiences that are helpful to fostering a positive beginning to a new job in the local church are welcome. The design in this D/P is to focus on those as they apply to gay pastors.

The D/P is time specific. It is a resource applicable to clergy and congregants in the period one month before the job start date through six months’ experience. It may be consulted outside of that time frame as desired for introductory purposes or review. The goal of the D/P is to help a newly hired out gay male clergy person arrive and begin duties in a prepared positive environment.

What the D/P is not: The D/P is not a study of the pastor search-and-call or appointment hiring process. It is not an attempt to justify and validate the professional/spiritual calls of gay pastors. While some historical context will be included to establish the problem, this D/P is not a survey

of literature or critical analysis of Biblical and/or doctrinal tenets relating to gay pastors and related church polity matters such as ordination and marriage equality. While church polity will be noted, this D/P is not a survey of ecclesiastical structures.

### **The Project:**

The D/P is a Web-based resource for assisting gay pastors and congregations hiring them to experience unencumbered welcome upon arrival. It will build better relationships from the interview, to the hire and the first several months of pastoral tenure and program development unimpeded by homophobia and heterosexism. Using existing Internet tools, the content will consist of video interviews and web accessible documents, which interested parties may watch and read to gain helpful transitional perspectives. These will come from interviewees who have been the first out gay pastors in churches that are not LGBTQI-dependent demographically.

Resources of congregational development theory, theology, adaptive change theory, and historical developments will be included.

#### **a. What steps will you take to implement this project?**

##### 1. Establish methodology and outline (underway):

Research books, journals, and articles for appropriate content. Sources include SFTS D.Min. class studies, previous congregational development seminars and experience, personal experiences and explorations, and additional research as warranted by the topic.

##### 2. Establish production calendar:

Write introduction and social analysis chapters (see below).

Finalize interview questions.

Set appointments and travel arrangements.

Do video interviews in locations or via Zoom software.

##### 3. Establish post-production process:

Edit video clips into topical categories, i.e. representing the questions.

Transcribe finished videos for text inclusion in D/P appendix.

Assess and integrate combined research and interview.

##### 4. Finish D/P.

Compile findings from interviews.

Write evaluation of D/P.

Write conclusion.

#### **b. If your project is field research, describe your study.**

The D/P will compile the personal perspectives and experiences of gay pastors hired by churches not LGBTQI-demographically dependent, the church not having had gay pastoral leadership previously. The pastors will be videotaped documentary-style, answering the same set of

questions aimed at ascertaining their experience and findings. The videos will be edited by me and posted online via YouTube.

The open-ended questions follow: “20 Questions”

1. Please tell your name, credentials, years of service, and brief pastoral history.
2. What did you consider the risks and rewards of being the first openly gay pastor to serve this church? How did you process those?
3. Describe the feelings you had on your first Sunday there.
4. How did you communicate your arrival into the community – the local congregation and the surrounding areas?
5. Describe your feelings and cumulative findings at the end of the first six months of your pastorate.
6. What surprises did you encounter?
7. Describe any disappointments you encountered.
8. Tell us how your calling is in alignment with your personal identity.
9. Describe any measures you took to check for intrinsic or obvious feelings of staff and congregants relating to your being an out gay pastor.
10. If there are staff, describe the sense you got from the staff upon your arrival.
11. Describe the first time you perceived that someone might be reacting poorly to your being a gay pastor.
12. How did you respond? Describe any church response that came into the situation.
13. Describe situations of an opposite reaction.
14. Describe aspects of being a man that you thought might come into play in the new location.
15. How did those aspects play out upon your arrival and settling in?
16. How do you keep a solid identity in the face of homophobia and internalized homophobia?
17. How do you keep a solid, self-affirming identity in response to community homophobia and internalized homophobia?
18. Tell us what you hope a congregation would do to welcome and respond to an arriving out-gay pastor.
19. What advice would you give a gay pastor approaching a new church job?
20. What advice for good a good beginning would you give a church receiving a newly hired gay pastor for the first time?

**c. Where and when will you conduct this project?**

My three-month sabbatical of June, July, and August is the target time for the bulk of production related to the D/P. Finishing this proposal is the first step. Writing the introduction and social analysis will occur in June and July of 2018. The interview D/P will occur in July and August of 2018. As possible, I will travel to meet with the interviewees in their local church settings. In the cases where travel for face-to face interviews is not workable, Web-based meeting tools with recording capability will be used. Transcriptions of interviews will be included in the D/P.

The evaluation and conclusion writing will follow in August. I plan to submit the manuscript and post the videos in September. Graduation is planned for June 2019.

### **Who will be participating with you in this project?**

Clergy interviewee names are listed in the bibliography and resource list.

### **d. What steps will you take to inform the people participating in your project of its nature, limitations and any ethical issues?**

A telephone conversation will serve as the introduction and invitation to participate in the video interview. That will be followed by email communications communicating the purpose of the D/P using the salient elements of this Topic/Design/scope document, confirming the invitation. Video permission forms listing rights and responsibilities will be signed.

### **e. To whom will you report your project?**

The D/P will be generally available on the World Wide Web via YouTube and [www.gaypastorwelcome.org](http://www.gaypastorwelcome.org). I will request feedback from users. I will send notices of its availability to appropriate church organizations and colleagues. In the United Church of Christ, this would be association church and ministry committees, the conference ministers' national association, and the national body that oversees the Manual on Ministry. I will investigate sources for parallel organizations in other denominations.

### **Evaluation:**

I will share Web site location and information through social media and word of mouth. I will ask my conference minister and associate conference ministers, plus my Southern California Nevada Conference UCC colleagues on church and ministry committees, and 10 colleagues across the United States to review the resource and send me their feedback.

### **Integration:**

I bring almost 40 years of experience as a gay pastor – both serving and exiled. Therefore, throughout the D/P I will integrate and assimilate the learnings of my personal journey with the research, gay pastor interviews, and D/P findings. Gaining the benefit of those who have gone before us into local churches as the first openly gay pastor, I will use the material and experiences to provide guidance to future gay pastors approaching new jobs and congregations. I will feel accomplishment as the hiring covenants of gay pastors are entered, validated, and nurtured. I will gain insight and practical helps to include in the D/P as research materials and gay pastor interviewees offer them. Gaining the real time insight, the gay pastors I talk with will enable me to learn from their experience. Insight gained will be recorded among the conclusions made in the project. A concluding chapter in the D/P will present my research- and experience-based learnings gained from the D/P process.

### **Outline:**

#### **1. Introduction**

I will set the context of this D/P with the events of personal history as a gay man not allowed to continue in United Methodist Church parish ministry and parts of the story of my friend and

colleague, the Rev. Dr. Bill Johnson, the first out gay man ordained in a historic mainline Christian church – the United Church of Christ. This will be an expansion of the Problem Statement above. I will include points about 20<sup>th</sup> century shifts in Christian thinking that led to the ostracization of homosexuals from ordained ministry leadership. Furthermore, I will reference historical actions of church and state that generate personal value, spiritual hope, and career opportunity for gay pastors. This will show where the D/P comes from, why it is important to me, and how it will be helpful to gay pastors and congregations that hire them.

## **2. Social Analysis**

The local church is where the pastor meets the congregation in the context of society. There are systems in force that the newly arriving pastor needs to anticipate and reveal. I will present congregation development, family systems, adaptive action, and psychological change theories to equip the arriving pastor with tools to begin building relationships and learning the nature and function of the hiring local church.

Particular theologies and politics are present and influential in local church settings. I will present multiple theologies that the pastor may use as a basis to interact with the theologies found in the local church. Various politics will be explored lightly to provide a basis to relate to the church politics of the local setting. Emphasis will be on family systems theory as a key methodology for navigating the established system in the local church.

## **3. The Project – [www.gaypastorwelcome.com](http://www.gaypastorwelcome.com)**

My D/P is as a series of video interviews available online, a compilation of best practices/lessons learned, and a quasi-lesson plan (pedagogy) for a seven-month suggested activity timeline for the arriving gay pastor and hiring congregation to share. I will describe the interview process and report any surprises, barriers, and challenges that arose and how I responded to them. I will relay the evaluative feedback for colleagues and groups that review the D/P.

## **4. Conclusions**

I will relay my findings in conjunction with feedback I have. Since the D/P is intended to function beyond my graduation for as long as it remains current and useful, I will not have the entirety of feedback. I will report changes made because of the feedback. I will present my integration of research, theory, theology, and point to how I hope people will use the D/P in the future. I will close with a statement of impact – presenting how the D/P may or may not help gay pastors begin ministry with sure footing in new jobs with primarily straight congregations. I will also report what I learn of how the D/P helps ease a congregation's resistance to hiring gay pastors. I will close by offering any concerns or cautions the D/P raised and, finally, the joys and thanksgivings it catalyzes.

## **Timetable:**

1. Topic was approved, pending design scope approval in 2017.
2. Design-Scope approval June/July 2018.

3. Writing June/July/August 2018.
4. Video Interviews July/August 2018.
5. Web resource created, and draft document submitted September 2018. *This took much longer. Site went live Summer 2019. User feedback produced updates through October 2019.*

**Resources:**

Amico, Joe. "Interview of Rev. Joe Amico in Boston." Video, July 2018.

Ammermann, Nancy T., Jackson Carroll, Carl Dudley, and William McKinney. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon: Press, n.d, n.d.

*End of sample*

## D/P Manuscript: GTU Archival Standards

### DMin Dissertation/Project Guidelines

Candidates for the Doctor of Ministry degree at SFTS will prepare the dissertation/project in accordance with the standards described in this document, consistent with the standards for all masters and doctoral candidates and the archival standards required by the GTU Library (Jan. 2019).

*Follow these instructions carefully. You may not file your dissertation/project or graduate until the physical format of your dissertation/project has been approved by the Sr Assistant to the Dean for compliance with these standards. Further questions about archival standards or approval of your dissertation/project format may be directed to the Sr Asst to the Dean at Marin-APS@redlands.edu*

#### **STYLE**

Turabian is the standard reference for writing style for GTU theses and dissertations (i.e. *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 9th edition, by Kate Turabian).

Bibliographical references may be in a format appropriate for the field of study and approved by the Department. In instances where this document differs from Turabian the student should follow this document. Approval of content is the responsibility of the APS Committee.

#### **ABSTRACT**

Doctoral candidates *must include* an abstract of no more than 350 words, which clearly sets forth the context and conclusions of the dissertation. It is bound with the dissertation itself. It should not appear in the table of contents. The abstract should carry the full title of the dissertation and the author's name at the top of the first page. The advisor's signature should appear on the last page.

#### **ARCHIVAL STANDARDS**

After obtaining approval from the APS Committee, candidates should present their dissertation/project to the Sr Assistant to the Dean, who will approve the archival nature of the dissertation/project, for filing with the GTU Library. These unique documents will be preserved by the Library in perpetuity.

Library approval is based on the following:

- TWO FINAL COPIES
- TITLE PAGE, with original signatures of advisor and APS Director on all copies
- PAPER
- MARGINS
- ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL (including charts and graphs)



Each standard is described below.

### **TITLE PAGE**

Please see the example on page 60 of a title page, substituting your own information and, including title, degree, and advisor. You must obtain an *original* signature from your advisor on *all* copies of the signature page prior to obtaining format approval from the Assoc. Dir., APS. We suggest providing the Assoc. Dir. A digital copy of your title page for review, prior to obtaining your advisor's signature. The APS Director will sign the title page when the complete manuscript is received in the APS Office.

### **PAPER**

Two copies of the dissertation/project manuscript must be printed on 8-1/2 x 11" paper that meets **all** of these archival standards:

- **20 lb.** paper
- acid-free
- buffered
- contains at least 25% cotton rag
- does not contain post-consumer fiber

For simplicity and convenience, we highly recommend that you use **Permalife** paper, which complies with all of these archival standards.

Appropriate paper is available at The Campus Store, 1805 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, CA, at Vicks Copy, 1879 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, CA, and online. If you order Permalife online, be sure to obtain the correct paper (20 lb and 8 ½" x 11"). **NOTE:** this paper is significantly cheaper online.

***You must provide proof that the paper complies with these requirements when you submit your dissertation/project for approval to the APS office. Please include your paper wrapper or box with the manuscript as proof.*** If you have further questions about the paper you are about to use, please contact the GTU Library Reference Desk (phone: 510-649-2501).

The **print** must be letter quality with dark black characters that are consistently clear. Do not print on both sides of a page, every page of the dissertation/project must be printed single-sided.

### **SPACING**

Double spacing is required for the main body of the work except in those places where usage calls for single spacing, e.g., footnotes, indented quotations, tables, etc. Use Turabian, 9<sup>th</sup> edition as your guide.

## FONT

The type size should be 12 point in an easily readable font such as Times New Roman or Arial. Type used for charts, drawings, graphs, tables, footnotes, etc., may differ according to format and space requirements, but should be at least 10 point.

## MARGINS

Your dissertation/project will be bound so that it can withstand use for years to come. The Library will bind your thesis/dissertation for you via Trappist Abbey Bindery. Do NOT bind your thesis/dissertation yourself. When your thesis/dissertation is bound, it will be trimmed on all four sides. Once it is bound, the left-hand margin will fall into a gutter; for this reason **the left margin is larger than the others and is the most critical margin to pay attention to.**

Margin requirements apply to all pages, whether text, illustration, charts, graphs, or other content. Be sure to check the margins not only on pages with text, but also pages with charts, graphs, or images.

- **Left: 1 1/2 inches**
- Top, right, and bottom: 1 inch

Page numbers may be 1/2 inch from edge, but no closer.

## CORRECTIONS

Corrections of typographical errors and other mistakes should be made by re-printing the page(s) or by photocopying corrected pages on thesis paper.

## PAGINATION AND ORDER OF MATERIALS

TITLE PAGE	not numbered
ABSTRACT, PREFACE, DEDICATION, TABLE OF CONTENTS, ETC.	numbered separately in Roman (i,ii, iii) at the bottom middle of the page
MAIN BODY OF THE TEXT	numbered with Arabic numerals at the bottom middle of the page at least 1/2 inch from the edge

Pagination of the main body of the text should include illustrations.

If it becomes necessary to insert materials after typing, the new page should be noted, for example, as follows: page 21, then 21a, 21b, 21c, etc. If a page is removed, another numbered page, blank except for the notation "lacking in numbering only" should be inserted in the proper place.

## **ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL**

Illustrative materials (e.g. photographs, graphs, charts) should be printed or photocopied on thesis paper since any pages on which illustrations appear must also be on acid-free paper. Black and white as well as color photocopying/printing is acceptable. The left margin must be 1.5 inches.

## **OTHER MEDIA**

The use and format of all other media must be approved by a reference librarian before the submission of the dissertation/project. DMin students are advised to consult with the SFTS Branch Librarian when the Design Proposal is approved, if the use of alternative media is expected.

"The library will retain copies of supplemental works in electronic media such as CDs or videotapes which accompany the dissertation/project as a courtesy to candidates who wish to include them. However, because such media are unstable and relatively short-lived, such works shall not be considered a part of the archival record of the candidate's fulfillment of the requirements for the degree."

## **NUMBER OF COPIES**

DMin degree candidates must provide two (2) archival quality copies of their dissertation. Both copies must receive approval for archival standards from the Assoc. Dir., APS Office, before the copies will be filed with the GTU Library. Each copy of the dissertation should be in a separate box or envelope. Blank front and back pages for each copy should be included. **Please Note:** The UoR Registrar may hold the candidate's diploma until the archival copies have been submitted.

## **FILING PROCEDURES**

Follow the instructions provided in this guide carefully. You may not file our dissertation/project and graduate until the physical format of your D/P has been approved by the APS Office and is ready for filing with the GTU Library.

## **MAILING**

Mail your D/P first class certified mail, priority mail, UPS or FEDEX, wrapped very securely in recyclable material, in a sturdy box. See mailing address below. **ALWAYS KEEP A COPY IN YOUR POSSESSION.**

## **ADVISOR SIGNATURE**

Please make arrangements to have your advisor's signature included in the copies you provide to the APS Office, or sent directly to the APS Office.

**A note on titles for doctoral dissertations:** Dissertation Abstracts (the entity responsible for indexing and distributing copies of dissertations) recommends that titles be succinct so that the full title can be carried in a database.

## **DISSERTATION FILING FEE**

The dissertation filing fee for DMin candidates at SFTS is included in the Graduation Fee. This fee covers the cost of microfilming, binding, diploma, and diploma cover, as well as copyright fees for dissertations.

### **A note on electronic and personal copies**

Some schools of the GTU are participating in an electronic upload of dissertations and theses, to make these unique documents more widely available to the academic community. The guidelines in this DP Guide only describe the submission of the print copies.

**Questions?** Feel free to write or call the Dean's office:

Christine de Chutkowski  
Sr Asst to the Dean  
University of Redlands, Graduate School of Theology  
*Home of* San Francisco Theological Seminary  
Marin Campus: 105 Seminary Road, San Anselmo, California 94960-2905

Phone: 415.451.2838 or 415.451.2813

Email: [Marin-APS@redlands.edu](mailto:Marin-APS@redlands.edu)

San Francisco Theological Seminary

**Toward a Model of Pastoral Care for Elder Taiwanese Immigrants  
in Canada and the United States**

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Committee for Advanced Pastoral Studies  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Ministry

by

**Robert Larry Hallett**

San Anselmo, California

April 2019\*

---

(Type first and last name below line), Advisor      Date

---

Rev. Dr. Laurie Garrett-Cobbina, Dean      Date

*\*This date should be the month & year you “file” your manuscript – i.e. submit two acid free copies to the Dean’s Office for the library.*

**ABSTRACT**

Sample

Author: Meggan Manlove

Equipping Lutheran for Faith Storytelling

The purpose of this research was to develop and implement a faith storytelling workshop for members of an ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) Lutheran congregation in southwest Idaho, with the goal of better equipping the workshop participants to share their faith with others.

In order to understand the problem, the inability to share faith stories easily, the researcher explored the history and demographics of both southwest Idaho and the Lutheran tradition. The next phase of research was into disciplines, especially though not limited to therapy and ministry, which use storytelling as an effective tool for human flourishing. Themes from this research were explored and then incorporated into the workshop. Despite the parts of the Lutheran tradition which contributed to the original problem, the researcher still believed the Lutheran tradition held gifts which could be part of the solution. Research here focused on the theology of the cross, the priesthood of all believers, and an openness to mystery.

The workshop itself was a day-long event in the church building with twelve participants from Trinity Lutheran Church in Nampa, Idaho. The researcher drew conclusions about the project including what would be kept for future workshops and what additional work needs to be done in congregations around faith storytelling.

The dissertation ends with an addendum reflecting on the unique gifts and challenges of writing a dissertation during the pandemic and reckoning with racism that overwhelmed 2020.

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Dr. Carol Jacobson, Advisor

Date

**NOTE:** See Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, Appendix A, for further guidance on formatting front pages for the dissertation/project manuscript.

## INCLUSIVE and EXPANSIVE LANGUAGE

### GST Student Handbook (excerpt)

As a seminary of the PC(USA), a member of the Graduate Theological Union, and an institution committed to the diversity and inclusivity of the Church Universal as the community of human well-being founded upon the gospel of Jesus Christ, SFTS uses inclusive language as a matter of policy.

Seminary education is intended and designed to promote honest, critical, scholarly examination of religious tradition and to provide a setting for exploring a variety of ideas and modes of expression. It is also designed to provide preparation for leadership in the churches. Heedless use of language frustrates these purposes. With full awareness that using language in new ways, employing unfamiliar terms, and drawing upon expanded imagery do not come easily, we are convinced that “the diversity of the people of God is to be acknowledged and embraced in such a way that all may feel included.” This includes the following:

- **Language about People.** Language about people that is employed in written communication or in any public gathering of SFTS under the jurisdiction of the faculty should be intentionally sensitive to human diversity.
- **Language about God.** Language about God that is employed in SFTS written communications or public gatherings under the jurisdiction of the faculty should be diverse and varied, faithful to the richness of the Bible, and faithful to our theological traditions.

*2019-2020 GST Student Handbook, p. 72*



**ADVANCED PASTORAL STUDIES**  
**Policy Regarding Plagiarism**

The various human cultures have differing customs about the use of the words and ideas of others in formal writing. In English-speaking countries, and especially in academic institutions, one honors and demonstrates their scholarly engagement with those whose ideas and language one uses by indicating the source. The use of materials from other authors in one's own work without proper credit is considered plagiarism, a form of stealing. This means, briefly, that:

- direct quotations are placed in quotation marks with a citation of the source by author, title, and page number.
- Paraphrases (meaning following the ideas of a passage without using the same words) must also be credited to the source.
- And finally, major ideas, if you know where they come from, ought to be credited, too.

*See GST Student Handbook* for additional information. You may also find guidance for students in religious studies through the Armacost Library at:

<https://library.redlands.edu/c.php?g=117288&p=6313307>

### Working with an Editor

Doctoral students often find it helpful to work with an editor in the final process of perfecting their manuscript. You may want to consider this if the discipline of academic writing is not a personal strength, if you are not good at proofreading your own material or have had feedback from your advisor and/or course instructors suggesting that working with an editor would be helpful. Students who are working in English as a Second Language may have particular challenges with editing the final manuscript for the best English expression. For many reasons, candidates may consider working with an editor can help perfect your written English.

DO NOT EXPECT your advisor or the readers of your final D/P to serve as editors or proofreaders for you. Your advisor may give you guidance to help make your writing clear, and may mark typos or formatting issues as you submit your drafts, but you should always seek to submit material that is fully proofread and as free from error as possible.

The University of Redlands offers a number of resources for assisting students to improve their writing skills. You may want to consider taking a writing course through the SFTS and/or GTU course offerings, or other local institutions available in your area.

***If you opt to work with a proofreader or editor, you must include notification for the APS Committee with submission of your final manuscript. A template is provided below:***

To: The APS Committee

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print your name here

Re: Proofreading and editing of the final D/P manuscript

I have read and edited the English version of the D/P manuscript of \_\_\_\_\_,

entitled \_\_\_\_\_. It is now ready for evaluation by the APS Committee and its readers.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## FINAL REVIEW TIMELINE FOR MAY GRADUATION

<b>AUG/SEPT</b>	Submit completed manuscript to advisor for review and approval for submission.
<b>SEP/OCT</b>	Send <i>Notice of Intent to Submit D/P</i> to the Dean's Office, no later than Oct. 1.  If needed, submit Updated Bibliography to Dean's Office.  Edit D/P as directed by your advisor.
<b>DECEMBER</b>	Submit completed manuscript to Dean's Office, including signature page with Advisor's signature. Target Date: Nov. 1.  Request your advisor to send their comments to the Dean's Office.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Your manuscript is sent to 2 anonymous readers for review. They are given your approved Design Proposal, changes noted in the Notice of Intent and a copy of the Program Learning Objectives to guide their assessment.</li></ul> Submit Application to Graduate to the Office of the Registrar. This application is found in MyRedlands/SelfService.
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	APS Committee, using advisor and readers comments, makes decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Approve, with no changes</li><li>- Approve, with Minor or Specified changes</li><li>- Return for Major Changes</li><li>- Not Approve</li></ul> Manuscripts requiring minor or specified changes are returned to the Director for review.  Manuscripts requiring major changes are reviewed by a third reader when resubmitted and sent to the APS Committee for another vote.
<b>MARCH / APRIL</b>	Complete editing and/or revisions, resubmit for final approval.  <b>Filing:</b> Submit 2 copies of your manuscript printed on archival paper to the Dean's Office. These copies are bound and placed in the library.  <b>D/P Forum.</b> This series of online webinars is scheduled by the APS Office in March, April & May to allow students to make their presentation <i>after</i> their D/P has been approved.
<b>MAY</b>	Commencement

**UPDATING BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR D/P**

Every D/P Design Proposal submitted includes a bibliography listing all the resources for which the candidate is held accountable by the readers. Sometimes during the research carried on after the design has been approved, the candidate discovers that some of the works listed in the bibliography are not relevant to the D/P. At other times the candidate discovers additional relevant works. An updated Bibliography may be submitted to the APS Committee for review at any time in the research process. Minimal changes (less than 10 resources) may be submitted with your Notice of Intent to Submit the D/P.

All changes to the bibliography must be approved by your advisor. Please list below any work which you wish to add to or delete from the bibliography which your readers will receive. Then sign and date this form and return it to the Dean's office.

Candidate \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Signature

-----  
Date

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Instructions:** List all items included in the original approved Bibliography that have been removed and/or added. Additional pages may be attached, if needed. In the case of extensive modification, APS Committee approval may be required.

**Items Deleted:**

**Items Added:**

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**For Office use only:**

Approved by the APS Committee on Date:

*San Francisco Theological Seminary*  
**Doctor of Ministry**

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT D/P MANUSCRIPT**

**Candidate:**

**Date:**

**D/P Title:**

**I intend to email a digital copy of my D/P manuscript to [Marin-APS@redlands.edu](mailto:Marin-APS@redlands.edu) on (mm/day/yr):**

**I intend to ship/deliver 1 hard copy of my D/P manuscript on (mm/day/yr):**

**Advisor Review:**

\_\_\_\_\_ My Advisor has approved the final D/P manuscript

\_\_\_\_\_ My Advisor is currently reviewing my final D/P manuscript

**Amendments to the Design Proposal**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have updated the bibliography in my approved Design Proposal. See attached,  
**UPDATING BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR D/P**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have amended my original approved Design Proposal, with my advisor's approval.

**Briefly describe the changes made to the proposal below, and attach a copy of the revised proposal, with your advisor's updated signature. The revised Design Proposal will be provided to the readers to guide their evaluation of your manuscript.**

***Example:***

*I reorganized the chapters.....*

*My project was modified to include a PowerPoint presentation.....*

*My bibliography was updated to include....*

## Tasks and Terms for Dissertation/Project Advisors

**The Doctor of Ministry Degree.** The DMin degree focuses on the practice of ministry. The curriculum and research methodology are designed to enable the student to demonstrate a skillful and scholarly blend of theory, theology and practice through critical reflection upon that ministry. The word "project" is included with the usual academic term "dissertation" to emphasize that the scholarly study, exploration and reflection upon a particular facet of ministry provide context and tools for assessing an applied project in the practice of ministry.

**Academic Expectations.** The DMin requires solid graduate level work. The aim is professional excellence. The D/P should reflect maturity of thought, logical progression and clarity, and precision of style. It should be evaluated on its:

- faithfulness to the approved design;
- theological coherence;
- primary strengths and weaknesses;
- significance as a contribution to ministry;
- the adequacy of its logic, insight and research; and
- style and format.

**Your Initial Role as Advisor.** Your invitation to be an advisor indicates that the Dean has approved the student's initial topic proposal (see enclosed). The next step is the development of the bibliography and research design that the student will prepare in consultation with you. You must approve the Design Proposal before the student may submit it to the APS committee. In many cases, the committee will suggest changes prior to granting final approval. The approved design becomes the blueprint for the D/P and the standard by which the readers will evaluate it.

**IRB Application.** The student must also submit an application to the UOR Institutional Review Board for approval of the project. The Dean's Office staff is responsible for support and oversight of this portion of the approval process. While you do not have a direct responsibility in this part of the review process, be aware that the student may not begin implementation of the project until both the Design Proposal and the IRB application are approved.

**Survey of Literature.** In some instances, a student may have written a review of the literature on a topic relevant to their social and/or theological analysis, either as a special reading course or independent project on approval of the topic proposal. In some cases, it is appropriate to incorporate such an essay, after proper editing, in one of the early chapters of the D/P. At the discretion of the APS Committee, certain students are required to submit a survey of literature along with the Design Proposal. As advisor, you may also consider requesting the student prepare a survey of literature to help them develop and/or clarify the focus of their research in a particular element of the design. Further guidance on the Survey of Literature is included in the *D/P Guide*.

**Monitoring the Work.** We urge the student to give you portions of the work as it is written, so that you may monitor and respond both substantively and editorially. In this way, the student will proceed only with your general acceptance. If work is unsatisfactory, please ask that it be redone and/or rewritten. If the quality of successive drafts continues to be unsatisfactory, please write or call the APS Director.

**Editorial Work.** Your primary responsibility when reviewing a student's work is to focus on content. Minimal editing is to be expected, but you should expect the student's work to meet general academic standards for English usage and style. You may require the student to secure the services of an English editor if the initial writing submitted to you does not meet these standards. The Dean' Office can provide them with a list of suggested editors.

**Length.** The typical D/P is 150 to 200 pages, but must not exceed 300 pages in length, including bibliography and appendices. Candidates incorporating alternative media in their project and incorporated in the reporting in the D/P may have a shorter manuscript. Candidates taking advantage of this option should include an estimate of the proposed length of the written manuscript in the Design Proposal, in the section outlining the D/P chapters.

**Final Steps.** When the student completes the final rough draft, you should respond to it as a complete document, approving it or asking for changes. When it is satisfactorily edited and you have approved it, the student submits two copies to the Dean's Office for evaluation by two anonymous readers. **At the same time you should prepare a two to three page critique of the work, noting its strengths, weaknesses and other salient features. Please send this critique to the APS office at the same time the student sends in the reader copies.** Your knowledge of its faithfulness to the design, particular challenges, unique insights, or contributions to the practice of ministry can be very helpful to the committee in its decision-making process.

**Readers.** The committee selects two readers for their expertise; they are unknown to you, to the student, and to each other. They are given a copy of the Design Proposal and any updates in the Notice of Intent, as a guide to their reading and critique.

**Committee Judgment.** The APS committee makes a decision about the D/P, using the critiques submitted by you and by the two readers. Should revision and/or rewriting be judged necessary, both you and the student will be notified, and you will remain in the advisory capacity during the revising stage.

**Honorarium.** The honorarium for D/P advisors is \$800. Unless you request otherwise, you will receive half of this when you submit your critique and the other half when the APS Committee has made its final determination, and, if approved, when you approve the final archival manuscripts for the student's submission.

**Further Information.** A copy of the current *D/P Guide* is enclosed for further information about the D/P process and expectations. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dean or Associate Dean at the email listed below.

We recognize that the advisor plays a critical role in the success of our students. We are very appreciative of the time and the guidance you provide this advisee and we look forward to working with you through the completion of their DMin degree.

Office of the Dean

Graduate School of Theology | University of Redlands

*Home of San Francisco Theological Seminary*

Marin Campus - 105 Seminary Road, San Anselmo, CA 94960

[Marin-APS@redlands.edu](mailto:Marin-APS@redlands.edu)

Dr. Laurie Garrett-Cobbina, Dean

Phone: 415.451.2876

Rev. Ruth T. West, Assoc. Dean

415.451.2838

Christine de Chutkowski, Sr. Admin. Asst. to the Dean

415.451.2813



**TASK AND TERMS FOR READERS OF DISSERTATION/PROJECTS  
for the  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY DEGREE**

**The Doctor of Ministry Degree.** The DMin degree focuses on the practice of ministry. The curriculum and research methodology are designed to enable the student to demonstrate a skillful and scholarly blend of theory, theology and practice through critical reflection upon that ministry. The word "project" is included with the usual academic term "dissertation" to emphasize that the work is a scholarly study, exploration and reflection upon a particular facet in the practice of ministry typically focused on implementation of a field project carried out in the Candidate's own context of ministry.

**Academic Expectations.** The DMin. degree requires solid graduate level work. The aim is professional excellence. The Dissertation/Project (D/P) should reflect maturity of thought, innovation in application of research to practice, logical progression and clarity in presentation, and precision of style. It should be evaluated upon its:

- faithfulness to the approved design;
- theological coherence;
- significance as an innovative contribution to ministry;
- demonstration of proficiencies in critical reflection, and creative translation of research into practice according to the DMin. Program Learning Objectives (PLO's);
- primary strengths and weaknesses; and
- style and format.

**Your Role as Reader.** We ask you to prepare and send to the Dean's Office:

- a 2-3 page critique of the work
  - Submission should be unsigned to ensure confidentiality of your identity;
- the signature page sent to you along with the manuscript;
- a list of editorial/typographical changes, and/or a marked copy of the manuscript itself;
- your indication of the proficiency level demonstrated by the D/P marked on the PLO charts; and
- your recommendation for the committee's action (see below.)

The D/P Design Proposal, prepared by the student and approved by the APS committee, is enclosed as a guide for your assessment of the points listed above. If the students has submitted any approved updates to the Design Proposal and/or bibliography, that will also

be provided to you. Please bear in mind that the candidate is only accountable to the approved design.

As you read and evaluate the work, please bear in mind the following questions:

*Does the D/P follow all parts of the methodology of the approved design?*

*Has the writer included an evaluation of the project, including reflection and presentation of significant learnings from successful/unsuccessful project results?*

*What are the work's major weaknesses? In what ways could the D/P be improved? Please be specific. This will help the student to make revisions, should the committee require them. If no changes are required to meet the program standards, your suggestions may assist the student if he or she decides to publish the D/P.*

*Does the writer reveal a grasp of the main lines of thought and/or action now being used by leading scholars or practitioners in the areas covered by the D/P?*

*Does the writer cite, at relevant places, viewpoints opposed to their own? Are these viewpoints stated fairly and accurately, showing their relevance to the D/P focus?*

*Does the writer reveal a grasp of the basic disciplines which bear upon their task — e.g. biblical studies, theology, demographic data, cultural and organizational analysis, social change theory, etc.?*

*Has the writer demonstrated thought in an explicitly theological context?*

*Does the discussion get below the level of generally accepted statements in the field to wrestle with new formulations of the problem or new solutions? Has the writer omitted any major lines of thought, research, data, or other considerations?*

*Does the writer support major points with adequate data, references and exposition, as required by the logic of the design? Are there any unacknowledged quotations, paraphrases, or other material from unknown sources?*

**Recommendation.** What is your overall evaluation and recommendation? Please include a statement at the conclusion of your critique.

Should the Advanced Pastoral Studies committee:

- Approve the dissertation/project with **no changes**?
- Approve pending **minor or specified changes** (please delineate)?
  - Minor changes may include limited grammatical, typographical, or format errors
  - Specified changes may include limited editing for clarification, content or structure, *eg.* revision or addition of a paragraph,

- Postpone approval pending **major changes** (please indicate the major changes)?
- **Not accept and return for rewrite** (please present your rationale for this)?

**Other Readers.** Please note that there will be critiques from one other reader of this work, unknown to you, and from the student’s advisor. The committee will consider your critique along with those of the other reader and the advisor before deciding. In cases where readers disagree, a third reader may be asked to critique the D/P.

**Honorarium.** The honorarium for this task is \$250, payable when the APS office receives your critique and your copy of the marked manuscript. You may request reimbursement for postage, please advise the Dean’s Office in advance, and/or send a receipt to Christine de Chutkowski, Sr. Admin. Asst. to the Dean.

**Time Limit.** Please return your critique and the manuscript—via UPS, first class mail or email—within 30 days. If you anticipate any delay in completing this task, please notify us as soon as possible.

**Further Information.** As a D/P Reader, you play a critical role in the review and evaluation of the D/P for our candidates as they seek to complete their DMin degree. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need assistance or have any questions. You may contact us as shown below:

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