

## Deepening Soul Care and Spiritual Transformation for Mission

*A 3 Year, Cohort-Based Doctor of Ministry Program*

Primary Mentor: Rev. Dr. Chuck DeGroat

*Those who apply for this cohort will demonstrate interest in exploring some aspect of spiritual formation for the sake of the mission of God. While a wide range of proposed studies may apply, we seek to build a cohort with women and men whose research interests intersect in meaningful ways such that deep and rich lifelong conversation partnerships and friendships are cultivated.*

### Objectives:

- To produce doctoral level research for the church in the area of spiritual formation
- To build a cohort-community of eager and earnest learners committed to building relationship and encouraging one another
- To encourage personal transformation for vibrant and sustained ministry

### Intensive Dates 2018-19:

August 27 (9am) to August 31 (noon) 2018

May 13 (9am) to May 17 (noon) 2019

(future intensive dates will follow a similar schedule)

### Core Readings: (forthcoming)

*Students are required to read approximately 3300 pages in Year One, of which 1000 are chosen by the student. If one or more of the above books have been read previously, the professor/ student will select an alternate.*

### Year One – Orientation

During Year One, students are invited into a conversation with one another, with a larger tradition of meaningful writings, and into a focused assessment of their own context.
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### Intensives

Students will participate in two one-week face-to-face cohort gatherings, held in the late summer and in the late Spring.

Summer Intensive: The first gathering is devoted to engaging one another's stories through an Autobiography of Loss, hearing initial project interests, and engaging rhythms of silence, solitude, and self-care.

Spring Intensive: The second gathering is devoted to exploring the fruit of Year One while refining and finalizing the primary question/topic the student wants to engage in his/her project.

### Readings

During year one, students will be introduced to essential texts and crucial conversations in the area of deepening soul care and transformation. Year One will require no fewer than 3000 pages of reading, with 2000 assigned and at least 1000 chosen by the student with approval from the mentor.

### Ongoing Engagement

Students will engage in bi-weekly triad conversations via face-to-face online forum and a monthly full-cohort debrief for interaction with the mentor. Individual meetings with the mentor are scheduled as needed.

### Assignments

1. Students will write an Autobiography of Loss prior to the first intensive to be shared with the group.
2. Students will write a 3-page book review of each book they read, due in May. The review will briefly summarize salient points of the book, noting key insights and important takeaways for the student's project.
3. Students will develop a 5-10 page draft of their research question or topic, highlighting the following:
  - a. The rationale for exploring their proposed question or topic.
  - b. A description of the ecclesial or organizational context for their research.
  - c. A brief summary of relevant literature or research connected to this general question or topic.
  - d. A proposed pathway for research for Year Two, complete with additional yet unexplored relevant literature, interviews to be done, sites to be visited, etc.

### **Year Two – Research**

During Year Two, students engage in the primary research for their project. Based on proposed questions and pathways presented in the Year One final intensive, students will engage necessary readings, interviews, conversation partners, and other sources profitable for their project.

### Intensives

Summer Intensive: Through one-on-one meetings with the primary and/or secondary mentor, triad discussions, and cohort conversation, students will refine and finalize their question and Year Two pathway. In a presentation to the group, students will take 15 minutes each to present their finalized project and share what they will need from one another to accomplish their work. Spiritual disciplines to cultivate presence and focus will be explored.

Spring Intensive: In the second intensive, students will be present the findings of their previous months of research and study, and will be invited into an exploration of the structure and

expectations of their thesis project. A final proposal will be drafted after this intensive and forwarded to the DMin committee for approval.

### Ongoing Engagement

Students will engage in bi-weekly triad conversations via face-to-face online forum and a monthly full-cohort debrief for interaction with the professor.

### Assignments

1. Students will finalize their project proposal due one month after the Spring Intensive of Year Two for approval by the DMin committee.
2. Students will write a 10-15 page literature review (due in January of Year Two).
3. Students will write a 10-15 summary of the fruits of their research (due at May intensive) to be presented to their cohort. The form and content of this will be agreed upon by mentor and student.

### **Year Three – Writing**

*During Year Three, students will be writing their thesis under the direction of the primary and/or secondary mentors. The student will present and defend their work, and graduate in May.*

### Intensives

Summer Intensive: This intensive is devoted to a unique trip which cultivates community, celebrates accomplishments thus far, and motivates for the year of writing ahead. Details and costs will be presented at a future intensive.

Spring Graduation: Students will schedule their thesis defense prior to May graduation, no later than March 15.

### Ongoing Engagement

Students will engage in bi-weekly triad conversations via face-to-face online forum and a monthly full-cohort debrief for interaction with the professor.

### Assignments

1. Students will finalize their project proposal due one month after the Spring Intensive of Year Two for approval by the DMin committee.
2. Dates for thesis reception, reader review, etc. TBD.