



DOCTOR OF MINISTRY
Program Reference Guide
2019

Mission Statement

It is the purpose of Western Theological Seminary to prepare Christians called by God to lead the church in mission.

Identity Statement

Western Theological Seminary is an evangelical and ecumenical community of faith and learning in the Reformed tradition that serves the church of Jesus Christ. In covenant with the Reformed Church in America, Western equips men and women for Christ-centered, biblically based, theologically integrated, culturally competent, and mission-oriented Christian leadership.

Vision Statement

By 2020, Western Theological Seminary will be a nationally recognized center that forms leaders to empower, renew, and plant congregations and ministries that participate in God's ongoing redemptive work in the world.

Curricular Values

- **Biblical:** We listen to and faithfully render the Scriptures in contemporary contexts.
- **Theological:** We grow to be interpreters of the Word in the World, and grow in knowing the Triune God and discerning what God is doing in the world.
- **Reformed:** We live out of a posture of commitment, humility, readiness (anticipation), desire, wisdom, and gratitude that arrives to us from *coram Deo* and is consonant with the Reformed tradition.
- **Formational:** We attend to our baptismal and pastoral identities, and further discern our call and gifts for ministry.
- **Sacramental:** We see and imagine God's grace-filled presence in the many layers and moments of life and understand anew God, self, church, and world. We discover and remember this through the practice of the Lord's Supper and baptism.
- **Contextual:** We are formed as self-aware, generous, and inclusive persons seeking relationships with the people of the world in their various social and cultural identities.
- **Missional:** We discover the church is called to have a sacramental and eschatological vision to bless the world.

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WELCOME TO THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

Welcome to the Western Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry program. The faculty, administration, and staff are eager to walk with you on your learning path over the next few years.

The Doctor of Ministry program at WTS is designed around specialized tracks that meet the needs of specific areas of ministry (pastoral care and counseling, preaching, pastoral leadership, discipleship, etc.). Once committed to a specific track, the cohort of students journeys with their mentor(s) along the curriculum designed for that specific area of ministry. Working collaboratively with other students and faculty, the student has the flexibility to shape their learning around their particular ministry context.

The D.Min. program at WTS encourages formation at five levels simultaneously:

- who you are as a person (emotional and psychological formation),
- who you are as a child of God (spiritual and ecclesial formation),
- what you do (skills and experiences),
- what you know (intellectual and academic formation); and,
- where you serve and empower others (leadership formation).

The D.Min. program culminates in a project that is pastorally sensitive, intellectually disciplined, and advances the mission of the church.

Western Theological Seminary's Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the State of Michigan.

THE GOAL AND CHARACTER OF THE D.MIN. PROGRAM

A. The Doctor of Ministry Program as Continuing Education for Ministers

Western's Doctor of Ministry program began in the fall of 1977 as a response to the growing need of pastors and church leaders for a sustained experience of depth and breadth in continuing education. It recognized the desire of ministers from various backgrounds and denominations to pursue an "in-ministry" degree rooted primarily in one's ministry setting, rather than in a school. Built on the foundation of the Master of Divinity degree or equivalent training, the D.Min. student would be able to pursue advanced studies in the theory and practice of ministry from the perspective of a mature involvement in ministry. The personal and professional growth secured would, at the same time, yield significant benefits to the candidate's ministry setting.

Four decades of experience with the program have demonstrated that the goals initially set forth have been achieved with a high level of approval and satisfaction by the seminary and the many students who have completed the program. However, recent trends in the pedagogy of theological education reveal that students thrive in collective learning environments (cohorts). Western responded to these trends by redesigning and restructuring its Doctor of Ministry program and in 2017 launched cohort-based, specialized ministry tracks that focus on one particular area of ministry. Working collaboratively, the students will be able to follow their spiritual passion for ministry while increasing academic and ministerial skills in a specified field of ministry. Cohorts are led by faculty mentors who are not only experts in their field of study but are also deeply committed to mentor students as they hone ministerial skills for church leadership.

B. Educational Assumptions

The D.Min. is designed around the assumptions of adult collaborative learning. Employing discussions, clarification of ideas and evaluation of the ideas of others, collaborative learning guides students as they share experiences, skills, and knowledge that shape their questions. Adult learners recognize what they know and seek out other learners (peers or faculty) to assist them in discovering what they do not yet know. Ultimately, adult learners take personal responsibility for learning, enjoy collaborative (democratic) processes for learning, and learn for the sake of deeper engagement in the world. The assumption that D.Min. students are adult learners unfolds several additional assumptions about how learning happens in our D.Min. program:

1. D.Min. education is done best by self-motivated learners, where planned learning takes place within the context of active ministry, in open conversation with ministerial colleagues. Self-motivated students gain skill in locating their own resources, a process that enables the student to discover the most efficient methods of learning.
2. Learning is a process of practice reflection and ongoing action. The student's ministry context is thus a "living textbook" that provides experiences for reflection.
3. Learning is a communal process where peers, congregation and constituents, faculty, and other professionals contribute to the student's learning.

C. Program Goals

The D.Min is not a research nor an academic degree intended for those seeking a career in academic teaching; rather it is designed to help participants develop their ministerial skills and understanding to the fullest extent in congregational, parachurch or missionary service. The program integrates active ministry, academic work and disciplined reflection under the guidance of a mentor and in company with ministerial colleagues.

Specifically, students will:

- grow in basic skills required for Christian ministry: biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, historical inquiry and contemporary application, theological reflection and ethical understanding, and pastoral ministry analysis and application.
- demonstrate familiarity with a representative body of knowledge and praxis related to a specialized field.
- be able to articulate in writing and practice a coherent biblical theology of ministry.
- demonstrate maturing personal qualities in advanced levels of ministerial excellence.
- demonstrate self-awareness in capacity to plan appropriate continuing education.
- demonstrate collegiality in work with faculty mentors, colleagues, and other professionals with differing orientations.

Faculty will evaluate student competency in these areas through residency course work, qualifying oral examination, projects, thesis-project and defense.

The realization of these programmatic goals and the students' growth in ministry will be greatly aided by the relationships the student establishes with faculty mentors and other participants in the program. Students will study, converse, work, and share life together for an advanced learning experience.

THE LEARNING PROCESS OF THE D.MIN. PROGRAM

The D.Min. at Western is designed to be taken in an uninterrupted sequence of learning experiences over three years, with an additional one-two years to complete and defend the thesis-project. It includes two continuous weeks of seminar residency each year over three years with one major on-site (ministry context) project each year. In some instances, the two weeks of collaborative study may be split into two separate weeks meeting at different times and possibly locations.

1. Course preparation

Prior to each seminar, a syllabus will be available to students. The faculty mentor assigns extensive readings in preparation for the upcoming learning experience. It is expected that students will arrive at the residency having met all the required reading and written assignments. Students should plan to set aside approximately 12 hours per week in preparation for each residency.
2. Residency courses

The two-week seminar consists of two one-week courses that are designed sequentially by the faculty mentor to enable students to acquire increasing competency in his/her selected area of concentration. A principal focus of each residency is the student's personal preparation as well as the faculty mentor's approval of a proposal for a major ministry project to be carried out within the ensuing year.
3. Projects

The successful completion of the first two residencies shall include a written project that relates the students' D.Min coursework to their ministry context. The faculty mentor will inform students about expectations for content, necessary components and matters of form. Project proposals and nominations for on-site evaluators (if needed or required by the faculty mentor) must be completed during the residency. In the ensuing 4-6 months the students will complete the project for the residency. The final project must be submitted to the faculty mentor no later than the beginning of the next residency. The faculty mentor evaluates the project and advises the students as to their development in the program.
4. Qualifying Oral Exam

During the second residency, students will have a qualifying oral exam, conversational in nature, with their faculty mentor that focuses on the student's

progress in the program. The faculty mentor will review student completion of all requirements to date and recommend whether he/she should continue in the program. Candidacy status is granted upon faculty mentor affirmation that the student has demonstrated a purpose and plan for completing the degree, and that the student is formally eligible to receive the D.Min. degree upon completion of the remaining work.

See "Appendix M: Form for Approval of Candidacy Status."

5. Thesis-Project and Defense

The culmination of the D.Min. is the student's thesis-project which demonstrates the student's ability to engage in a lifetime of ministry as a scholar-practitioner in the given area of specialization. In addition to the faculty mentor, the student is assigned a second reader to evaluate the quality of the thesis-project proposal. Together these two comprise the thesis-project committee and they guide the student through to the final draft. The final requirement for degree completion is the student's successful defense of the completed thesis-project in an oral examination with the mentor and two readers. A final public presentation of the thesis-project is necessary to complete the degree.

The D.Min. Committee exercises policy supervision of the D.Min. program and the faculty delegates responsibility for implementing the program to the D.Min. Committee. The director of the D.Min. program functions as chairperson of the D.Min. Committee.

D.Min. Committee

The D.Min. Committee's responsibilities include the following:

- Admissions
- Implementation of policies regarding student status
- Review of all policies and procedures
- Monitoring the quality and standards of the program
- Maintaining relationships with advisors, mentors, and readers

D.Min. Program Director

The D.Min. Program Director oversees the supervision and administration of the program and is responsible for the overall ethos of the program, its quality and reputation, calling meetings, and assigning and reviewing the work of mentors and faculty mentors. The D.Min. Program Director is also responsible for implementing the final stages of the project review and public presentation for candidates intending to graduate. Along with the committee, the D.Min. Program Director upholds the integrity of the program at a level above the minimum standard set by the Association of Theological Schools.

Faculty

Faculty support the D.Min. program by leading specialized tracks, advising students, mentoring students through their program of study, evaluating residency projects, and guiding and consulting students as they develop their thesis-project.

The Academic Dean, in consultation with the director of the D.Min. program, selects and assigns faculty mentors for each of the specialized D.Min. tracks. The director of the D.Min. program, in consultation with the D.Min. Committee and Academic Dean, may appoint adjunct faculty for leadership in the program as time and circumstances require.

The director of the D.Min. program assigns faculty as second readers to advise students in the completion of the thesis-project. Assignments are made through consultation with faculty and students.

Record Keeping

Student files are maintained in the office of the Registrar. This file contains materials submitted with the application to the program and records of student progress in the program. Students assume responsibility for keeping a record of their progress and for uploading documents in the learning management system, Canvas.

Statement of Call

Applicants to the D.Min. program submit a 2–3 page statement of call. This statement includes the persons and events that shape the call to ministry and theological understanding of who God has called the applicant to be as a leader in ministry. The statement of call also includes recent discoveries around one’s strengths and weaknesses in ministry.

See “Appendix A: Statement of Call Guidelines.”

Statement of Focus

Applicants to the D.Min. program submit a concise statement of focus for their learning in the program. This statement names the problem that will guide the work throughout the program. The focus for the D.Min. program emerges as students reflect on their own call to ministry and the call that has guided them to their particular ministry setting. Students are encouraged to probe the deeper issues in their own Christian formation and the deeper issues in the life of their ministry setting.

See “Appendix B: Statement of Focus Guidelines.”

First Seminar

Students will be introduced to the D.Min and to the specialized track by the faculty mentor during the first seminar. An overview of all programmatic requirements will be provided by the D.Min. office as well.

The course work of this first residency will culminate on a Project 1 Proposal. Before the residency concludes, each participant should receive final approval from his/her mentor of the project proposal for year one. If needed, participants may nominate an on-site evaluator who will function as a source of feedback in the ministry context while the project is being implemented.

Parish or Ministry Setting

Completing all required reading and writing should be a priority once the first seminar has concluded. The faculty mentor will inform students about course work expectations. Students will receive a letter grade from the faculty mentor for each course of the seminar.

Each student should begin planning and implementing the first project as soon as possible. The mentor will inform students about expectations for content, necessary

components, and form. A project report must be submitted to the mentor no later than the beginning of the second seminar. The mentor may require an earlier date.

At the close of the first seminar, students may receive a syllabus for the upcoming class sessions outlining reading assignments and other necessary preparations.

Second Seminar

Before the second seminar, the participant should have:

1. Completed project 1
2. Completed readings and pre-seminar assignments, etc.

During this seminar period, track mentors offer two weeks of coursework which build upon the foundation of the first residency. In addition to classroom lecture and discussion, a key component of the second seminar is the Qualifying Exam. The Qualifying Exam is an oral interview by the faculty mentor to determine student readiness for candidacy status. The exam is based on the student's work-to-date in the DMin program. Before the beginning of the second seminar, a student should have:

- Submitted all written assignments from the first seminar to the mentor.
- Finished writing the first project report and received evaluations from the on-site Evaluator (if assigned) and the mentor.

All of the above will be used to evaluate the student and determine advancement to candidacy status. See: "Appendix M: Form for Approval of Candidacy Status."

In addition, students will work on Project II proposals during this seminar. Mentors will guide students in proposal construction. By the conclusion of the seminar, students should have received final mentor approval for the project to be carried out in the upcoming year.

Parish or Ministry Setting

Students should, upon returning to their ministry context, focus on completing all required reading and writing from the second seminar. Written work should be turned in to the mentor according to established guidelines. Students will receive a letter grade from the mentor.

As soon as possible, the student should initiate the planning and implementation of Project 2. Mentors will inform students about expectations for content, necessary components and matters of form. The final project report must be submitted to the mentor no later than the beginning of the third seminar or at an earlier established date. Both the on-site evaluator and the mentor evaluate the project.

During this period, the student should begin thinking about the thesis-project proposal that is a major part of the third seminar. The approved thesis-project proposal is put into final form during the third seminar.

Third Seminar

Before the third seminar, the participant should have:

1. Completed project 2
2. Admission to candidacy form signed by the faculty mentor.
3. Completed readings and pre-seminar assignments, etc.
4. Completed the thesis-project proposal draft
5. Completed the proposal outline and beginning bibliography

During this seminar, mentors build upon the material that has been covered during the first and second seminars. In addition to lectures and discussions, the focus is on final preparation of thesis-project proposals.

Faculty mentors must approve thesis proposals and will give students specific directions to help guide them to form the thesis. Student theses must strictly conform to library standards. The mentor serves as thesis advisor and an additional qualified individual serves as the thesis reader. Together they make up the thesis committee.

The Parish or Ministry Context

The culmination of student work in the program is the thesis-project. The thesis-project should demonstrate competent doctoral level integration of student's learning in the program with their ministry context. It is expected that the thesis will make a significant contribution to a particular field of study.

As the student completes each chapter of the thesis-project, a copy must be sent to both the mentor and the reader. The faculty mentor and the reader will review the material and return the chapter to the student with comments and/or corrections.

After the faculty mentor and the reader have given final approval of the entire thesis-project, a thesis defense will be scheduled. The faculty mentor and the reader, as the thesis committee, make arrangements with the student for the thesis defense. If the thesis defense is sustained, the committee's evaluation is forwarded to the D.Min. Committee who then makes the recommendation that the Doctor of Ministry degree be awarded. The D.Min. Committee reviews all student work in the program before making a recommendation to the faculty to grant a degree.

Thesis-Project

The thesis-project is the final stage of the D.Min. program. A project may resemble the form of a doctoral dissertation with multiple chapters, or it may take other literary forms such as poetry, narrative, drama, a handbook, a curriculum, or sermons. Whatever form the project takes, its successful design and completion should demonstrate that a student has met the defined goals of the program. D.Min. projects should, with appendices, range between 100–200 pages. Permission should be granted to significantly go beyond this limit.

See "Appendix H: D.Min. Project Proposal Guidelines."

Proposal

In preparation for the Project Seminar, candidates draft an initial proposal of the project. The seminar is primarily dedicated to refining the proposal. The proposal draft is then reviewed by the faculty mentor to assure coherence with program goals. The completed project proposal is submitted by the faculty mentor to the D.Min. Program Director for D.Min. Committee approval. Quality proposals include: a clear problem statement; plan of inquiry or methodology including underlying assumptions; literature review; research design including collection of survey and/or interview data; project outline; timeline; and budget (if applicable).

Thesis-Project:

In order to be eligible to participate in the May commencement, students must have their projects completed and finalized (including the internal/external review, the project review/defense, and final edits) by April 24. **Students should endeavor to submit their work well ahead of program deadlines.** Completed drafts are initially submitted to the faculty mentor for review. The mentor approves the final draft and submits it to the Program Director, who distributes the project to the internal and external readers. Internal and external readers are appointed by the Program Director in consultation with the student and faculty mentor. Internal and external readers have three weeks to read and offer a response to the Program Director who returns the feedback to the mentor and student. The student considers the responses of the readers and integrates the suggestions into the final project and resubmits the project to the mentor and Program Director.

Project Review:

Upon final approval by the Program Director, a date for the project review will be established. The project review is a closed-door meeting with the first and second readers, the faculty mentor, and the Program Director. The Program Director moderates the review. The format includes a 20-minute presentation by the candidate, 45 minutes of inquiry by the mentor and readers, and 15–30 minutes for deliberation and decision.

The presentation by the student candidate is focused on sharing one's learning, reflecting on vocational and ecclesial significance, and extending the implications of the project for future research and ministry practice.

Based on the discussion during the project review, the mentor, faculty reader and outside reader make one of three recommendations to the D.Min. Committee:

- (1) To approve the project and recommend the granting of the D.Min. degree;
- (2) to approve the project on condition that specified revisions be made; or
- (3) not to approve the project and require further work before resubmission.

For an approved project, the designation "with distinction" may be added if the project is deemed to be of superior quality. When the review is completed, the Program Director of the D.Min. Program reports the status of the degree to faculty.

Public Presentation:

The purpose of the public presentation is to share one's learning with others. The public presentation is a gathering for faculty, area pastors, lay people, and a candidate's friends, family, and congregation/ministry colleagues. The format includes a welcome and introduction by the Program Director, an opening word by the faculty mentor, a 20-minute presentation by the candidate, and 30 minutes for open discussion moderated by the Program Director. At the request of the student (who shall assume all expenses incurred by this option) the public presentation may take place at the student's ministry context, i.e. wherever they are serving.

Submission of Final Project

Students must submit a PDF of their D.Min. thesis along with the "Thesis-Project Consent and Release Form" (see Appendix L) to the library before receiving their diploma. Please contact Dr. Daniel Flores (dan.flores@westernsem.edu) for more information.

Students are not required to submit paper copies of their D.Min. theses to the library for binding. The library will produce a paper copy for its own collection. All other access will be from the institutional digital repository.

Students who would like a bound copy of their thesis may contact Wallaceburge Bookbinding at <http://wbmbindery.com/thesis-binding/personal-thesis-binding>

Commencement and Diploma

Students who complete all requirements may participate in the May commencement ceremony. Diplomas will be awarded either at commencement or sent via mail to the student's home address on file with the seminary. Students may elect to receive their diploma in their place of ministry. Students who elect a special commencement service incur the expenses for the faculty mentor and Program Director. A diploma cannot be granted until all program tuition and fees are paid and the library has received a PDF of the thesis and the signed "Thesis/Project Consent and Release Form" (see Appendix L).

D.Min. Program Seminars

The seminars for the D.Min. program outlined below must be taken in sequence.

DM850 Orientation Seminar 1

Gives an introduction to the major administrative and academic components of the program, as well as to the specialized track (theme) that identifies the particular focus of the cohort. Course descriptions vary depending on the faculty and cohort topic. The course description will be available in the syllabus. Includes a one week in-person intensive.

DM851 Orientation Seminar 2

A continuation of DM850. Students identify a challenge, opportunity, or topic that needs to be addressed in their ministry setting. Includes a one week in-person intensive.

DM860 Research Seminar 1

Provides tools and skills to develop and strengthen academic research and writing. Students learn to structure and format an academic professional paper, providing a model for their project proposal and guidance for their practicum. Students will critically reflect on the practices of ministry and learn to interpret those practices within an academic theological framework. Course descriptions vary depending on the faculty and cohort topic. The course description will be available in the syllabus. Includes a one week in-person intensive.

DM861 Research Seminar 2

A continuation of DM860. Students determine what needs to be changed or achieved in their ministry to address the challenge, opportunity or topic they have identified. Students design a thesis project proposal. Includes a one week in-person intensive.

DM870 Thesis Seminar 1

Equips students with tools required for the completion of their D.Min. thesis. Course descriptions vary depending on the faculty and topic. The course description will be available in the syllabus. Includes a one week in-person intensive.

DM871 Thesis Seminar 2

A continuation of DM860. The doctoral program concludes with the completion of a professional doctoral-level thesis project. Includes a one week in-person intensive.

DM940 Thesis-Project

Under the director of the faculty mentor and assigned reader(s), the student designs, develops and writes a thesis-project linking his/her ministry context to the specialized field of the D.Min. track.

D.Min. Program Suggested Timeline

Year One—admission

- reading and written preparation for first seminar (consult syllabus)

Year One—First seminar (consult syllabus for dates and location)

- Coursework with Mentor(s) and other student participants
- Preparation for first Project Proposal (faculty mentor approval required)

Year One leading up to Second seminar

- Finish reading and written work from first residency (if any)
- Write first Project Report
- Reading and written work in preparation for second seminar (consult syllabus)

Year Two—Second Seminar (consult syllabus for dates and location)

- Coursework with Mentors and other student participants
- Qualifying exam
- Preparation for second Project Proposal (faculty mentor approval required)

Year Two leading up to Third seminar

- Finish reading and written work from second seminar (if any)
- Write second Project Report
- Begin work on Thesis-Project Proposal (in consultation with faculty mentor)
- Complete reading and preparation for third seminar (consult syllabus)

Year Three—Third Residency (consult syllabus for dates and location)

- Coursework with Mentors and student participants
- Complete final form of Thesis-Project proposal

Year 4 – The Project Writing Year

- Finish reading and written work from third seminar (if any)

- Write Thesis-Project (in consultation with the Mentor and second reader)
- Defend Thesis-Project and submit final Thesis-Project.

In writing a thesis project, the student might want to follow the recommended timeline outlined below.

May–December

- Write draft chapters and submit completed chapters to faculty mentor for ongoing feedback

December 1

- Statement of intent to graduate submitted by candidate to faculty mentor, D.Min Program Director, and Registrar

December 1–February 1

- Bi-weekly updates to faculty mentor on progress.

NOTE: The following dates are at the upper limit deadlines. The student should endeavor, as much as possible, to submit the project *ahead* of these dates.

February 1

- Submit a completed draft to faculty mentor and D.Min Program Director for mentor (first reader) feedback. Mentor will provide an assessment in approximately two weeks.

February 15–March 1

- Revisions based on mentor/first reader feedback (students will complete edits in one week; faculty mentor/first reader will provide final review feedback in approximately one week.

March 1 (Deadline for May Graduation)

- Completed Thesis submitted to D.Min. Program Director for assignment to first and second readers (readers will provide an assessment to students in approximately three weeks.
- Readers return feedback and request for revisions to student. Edits should be completed within two weeks.
- Revised thesis is submitted to faculty mentor, D.Min Program Director, and assigned readers; a review (defense) date is scheduled.

April 5–April 24

- Project review with student, faculty mentor, D.Min Program Director, and first and second readers AND public presentation.
- Committee recommends to: (1) Approve the project; (2) Approve the project pending specified corrections made and approved by faculty mentor and director; or (3) Postpone approval of the project and require further work for resubmission.
- Completed thesis submitted to Cook Library (in PDF form) along with "Thesis/Project Consent and Release" Form (see Appendix L).

May

- Graduation at WTS or student may petition to have special commencement service. Diploma granted upon submission of project, submission of library form, and payment of all tuition and fees.

D.MIN. PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The D.Min. academic year runs from September to May. The program is full-time and students are expected to complete the degree in four years but not more than six years (e.g., a student entering the program in September 2018 should graduate no later than the May 2024 commencement). Candidates are expected to complete one two-week residency per academic year (6 credits) each of the first three years and a project seminar (the fourth year). In some instances, the two weeks of collaborative study may be split into two separate weeks meeting at different times and possibly locations. The D.Min. degree is granted when a student has completed the core curriculum of 36 credits plus the final thesis-project and its defense. Students not progressing at the above listed rate will not be considered making progress towards a timely completion.

Admission

The D.Min. Committee of Western Theological Seminary grants admission to the program. Minimal requirements are:

- A Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent from an accredited seminary or graduate school
- A minimum of one year in the present ministerial position

Application

Students submit the following material with their application for admission to the D.Min. Program:

1. A completed application form, including a list of the applicant's experiences as a church professional, noting places and dates of service together with information about the primary function or responsibilities in the position.
2. Letters of recommendation: One from a lay leader in a local congregation or ministry agency, one from a supervisor (current or former), and one from a peer.
3. Transcripts from all institutions granting undergraduate and graduate degrees
4. A statement of call. See Appendix A for guidelines.
5. A statement of focus for the program. See Appendix B for guidelines.
6. Review of three significant books (no more than 1½ double-spaced pages per book)

Credits

The D.Min. program totals 36 credit hours: six courses (seminars) at 6 credits each, plus the thesis-project. WTS does not normally substitute credit for work completed prior to entry into the D.Min. program.

Tuition

The full cost of tuition covers the full four years of the program, including the six seminars and the year of project writing. The amount is payable in six bi-annual installments, invoiced in equal parts in each of the first three years. Payment plans can be negotiated to spread the cost across the year. Complete the form in Appendix J if you wish to participate in the payment plan (for students paying tuition directly to WTS only).

In addition to tuition, there is a continuation fee charged for each additional year in the program beyond four years (i.e. at the start of the student's fifth year in the program) and for each year in which a leave of absence is granted during earlier stages. Students must (1) pay their annual tuition in full before they can enroll for the subsequent year of the program, or (2) have a satisfactory arrangement in place (e.g., a monthly payment plan) with the Business Office before September each year.

Termination Guidelines and Suspension

If students are not completing work in a timely manner, they must petition the D.Min. Committee for an extension of their program. The D.Min. Committee may request that the student withdraw from the program or recommend alternative action, including a leave of absence.

Students may complete their programs in not less than three years and not more than six years after the first year Orientation Seminar. A student who does not complete the D.Min. program within the required six years from entrance may be terminated from the program. If there are extenuating circumstances, the student may petition the D.Min. Committee for an extension. This petition must be submitted sixty days prior to the six-year deadline (please contact the Program Director for more information).

When the quality of the project does not conform to program guidelines or the written portion of the project is unacceptable in any way, the faculty mentor or Program Director may require a rewrite. If this does not produce adequate quality, the project may be referred to the D.Min. Committee with the recommendation that the candidate be terminated.

Students are suspended for failure to pay annual tuition or the annual continuation fee in the fifth year of the program and beyond. A suspended student may not continue work in the program until all fees are paid.

For additional institutional policies, please see the most recent Western Theological Seminary Handbook.

Standards for Student Workload (WTS Handbook)

Each credit hour stands for 42 hours work for an average Western student. The workload for each learning unit should be calculated by the following standard.

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| Reading | 25 pages per hour |
| Alternative Texts (film, audio/podcasts, etc.) | Time according to engagement |
| Written research papers | ½ page per hour |
| Non-research writing (i.e. journals, reflection papers, etc.) | 1 page per hour |
| Other assignments | Based on reasonable expectations of an average D.Min. student. |
| Conferences and Events | Hours calculated by time-in-attendance. |

Writing Guidelines and Writing Studio

To ensure consistency in student submissions, the D.Min. and Th.M. programs provide students with a Manual of Style Supplement as the guiding protocol for theses, research papers, and projects. This supplement is based upon the eighth edition of Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. For projects that make extensive use of biblical, classical, and medieval sources, the *SBL Handbook of Style* is also recommended.

The Writing Studio at Western Theological Seminary is available to help students strengthen their writing skills. The studio instructor will assist in identifying issues such as proper punctuation, sentence structure, and accurate citation methods. Appointments are conducted in the Writing Studio located on the first floor of the Learning Commons in Cook Library. Online conferencing is also available for students at a distance. In order to schedule an appointment, students should visit the Writing Studio module in the Academic and Community Information Course in Canvas. This is a free service.

SEMINAR INFORMATION

Dates and Locations

Seminar dates and locations will vary for each specialized track. Detailed information regarding schedules and other logistics will be sent to accepted students ahead of time. Please note that students are required to pay the cost of their own transportation to and housing at the seminar sites, unless notified otherwise in writing. Some meals may be provided by prior arrangements.

COOK LIBRARY

Cook Library

Cook Library provides access to over 250,000 English language print and electronic books for theological study. Included in the collection are reference materials, over 1,300 periodical titles, audiovisual materials, and a unique collection of rare and foreign books. Whether you're on campus or off, Cook Library services are available to you as a Western Theological Seminary student each semester you are registered in WTS courses.

For non-English language cohorts, WTS may arrange for student borrowing privileges at another library to provide resources in the language of that cohort.

At the beginning of the D.Min. program you may receive a student ID card that doubles as your library card. This card enables you to borrow materials from both Cook Library at WTS and VanWylen Library at neighboring Hope College. If lost, the card can be replaced by for \$5.00.

Please see "Appendix K: Cook Library Information" for additional information.

Software

The seminary's course software, Canvas, is a web-based learning management system. D.Min. students utilize Canvas to upload readings, assignments, project proposals, completed residency project reports, thesis-project proposals, and completed projects. Seminar information is also posted in Canvas.

First-year students attend a short Canvas training session during the first week of the Orientation Seminar and may also participate in online Canvas training.

Canvas Learning Managements System FAQ's

- **What is Canvas?**

Canvas is a web-based course management software that enables teaching and learning on the internet in a secure environment.

- **What is the Canvas website?**

You can access Canvas at <https://westernsem.instructure.com/login/canvas>.

- **What web browser or system should I use for Canvas?**

Currently, Canvas supports Internet Explorer, Safari, Chrome, and Firefox web browsers, and operates on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, and Android systems.

- **What do I need to know to use Canvas?**

You need to know basic internet browsing skills, how to download and upload files, and how to add attachments.

- **Is wireless access available during times I am on campus?**

Yes, and you are encouraged to bring your laptop or tablet with you during the on-campus seminars. Wireless access is available throughout the seminary.

STATEMENT OF CALL GUIDELINES

The Doctor of Ministry program assumes clarity around understanding one's call to ministry. From application to graduation, the D.Min. program expects students to reflect on this past-present-future story of God working to transform a leader's life within a particular ministry setting. The statement of call is a 2–3 page essay that theologically narrates one's story in relationship to God calling them as a leader.

The statement of call is autobiographical, not merely as a chronological document but a brief theological memoir. The statement of call addresses the following questions:

- When and how have you experienced the presence of God in your life and ministry? What is your story of encountering God?
- Who is God calling you to become and how have you tested this call in the past?
- What have been the most fulfilling aspects of your ministry?
- What have been the disappointments, frustrations, and difficult passages of your ministry?
- Who are the primary mentors and friends (2–4 persons) who have walked with you as you came to understand your calling? How have they shaped you and your ministry?

Examples of well-written, albeit extensive, theological autobiographies include:

Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*

Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, *Unexpected Destinations*

Rigoberta Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*

Eugene H. Peterson, *The Pastor*

Lewis B. Smedes, *My God and I*

STATEMENT OF FOCUS GUIDELINES

Applicants are required to submit a 1–2 page statement of focus which guides the work throughout the D.Min. program and is regularly revised as students progress in their learning. Students determine the focus of their research which emerges through reflection on their own call to ministry and the call that brought them to a particular ministry setting, in conjunction with the theme around which their cohort is gathered. Students are encouraged to probe the deeper issues in their own Christian formation and deeper issues in the life of the ministry setting. The focus for the D.Min. program is the point of intersection between what God is doing in the life of the student and in the life of their congregation or ministry.

The statement of focus should begin with: "In my D.Min. program, I want to explore . . . "

In this statement, a student should:

- Reflect on the primary themes and questions that have marked your spiritual formation. All of us have been formed in particular contexts (family, church, and cultures).
- Reflect on the primary themes and questions that have marked the ministry to which you have been called. Like an individual, a particular ministry setting has a history and cultural particularities; a ministry has been formed in particular ways.
- Identify the point of intersection between what God is doing in your life and in the life of the congregation or ministry.
- Identify the fields of study that will constitute the core of your D.Min program. The fields might include the traditional fields of theological learning, yet more often in a D.Min. program the fields of inquiry are interdisciplinary.

The statement of focus should provide clarity regarding the project question that the student is interested in and how it ties into the larger theme of the cohort to which they are applying.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LOSS WRITING GUIDELINES

Autobiographies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Autobiography of Loss and present their autobiography to their peers during a seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to course syllabi for final requirements.

Autobiography of Loss Guidelines:

1. Briefly describe the most significant losses you have experienced. Think of material loss, relational loss, loss of visions or dreams, loss of roles and functions, and the experience of loss that comes when one is no longer part of a larger system.
2. Reflect on what your family of origin, your church family and your culture have communicated to you regarding grieving and mourning.
3. What would you say is *the* most significant loss you have experienced?
 - Evaluate the work of mourning you did or are doing regarding this loss.
 - Revisit and identify the emotions you experienced during the loss.
 - How did you engage God during the loss? What did you pray about? What was the nature of your communication with God during the loss?
 - Where was God during the loss? Close and personal? Remote and distant? Somewhere in-between?
 - Were you angry with God? Was the loss punishment? Was it God's will? Did it have nothing to do with God?
 - If you could say something to God about this most significant loss today, what would you say?
4. Reflect on the relationship between this most significant loss and your call to the ministry:
 - In what ways is being a minister helping you to do the work of mourning for this most significant loss?
 - How has this loss revisited you in your ministry?
 - How does this loss help or hinder you in being present to your parishioners or colleagues who are grieving?

5. Describe your personal theodicy (a specific, plausible account as to why God allows evil/suffering/pain) as it relates to the losses you have experienced.

- Approximately 2500-3000 words
- Font: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12; Line Spacing: 1.5; Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom

ECCLESIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY WRITING GUIDELINES

Autobiographies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Ecclesial Autobiography and present their autobiography to their peers during a seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to course syllabi for final requirements.

As I looked out upon this cloud of upturned faces, each representing others already turned to the light, I was embraced by a wholeness I never before experienced. It seemed to me that I was looking at the church as God sees it, not as a series of individual quirks and opinions, but as a single heart of love and sorrow. The only thing that made us different from any other kinship group or society was the mysterious presence of Jesus in the community. We are his body, which is not a metaphor. The ordinary world really is capable of hosting the infinite Being. As I searched the face of my congregation on my last Sunday, I felt the theological point was proved.

~Richard Lischer, *Open Secrets*

Autobiographies are a main component of the D.Min. program at WTS. Students present their autobiographies to their peers during each seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers.

The first autobiography focuses on one's story of loss; **the second focuses on one's story in, with, for, and against the church**; and the third focuses on one's vocation.

Assignments:

1. Read one of the following with a view toward writing your own ecclesial autobiography.

Samuel Freedman, *Upon This Rock*

Richard Lischer, *Open Secrets*

Gary Dorsey, *Congregation: The Journey Back to Church*

2. Write an ecclesial spiritual autobiography. You may find it helpful to revisit your first-year spiritual autobiography of loss.

Seminar Focus for Autobiography: Deepening the practice of ministry is a primary focus of the D.Min. program; deepening one's understanding of who the church and who he/she is in, with, for, and against the church is assumed in this. The second installment of the autobiography invites you to explore who the church is and how you are called to lead.

Please utilize the following guidelines toward writing an integrated essay.

1. Briefly describe the most significant experiences you have had with the church. Think chronologically (when have you been engaged), and functionally (the roles you have played or witnessed others playing).
2. Reflect on what the multiple voices (family, education, church, culture), other than God, have communicated to you regarding the church.
3. Where have you seen the church suffer? Reflect on how suffering manifests within a church context.
 - a. How did the church relate to the suffering? How did it grieve?
 - b. How did you engage in this time?
 - c. What was the relationship of the church to God during this time?
 - d. If you could write a letter to the church NOW about the time of suffering, what would you say?
4. Where have you seen the church living into God's mission?
 - a. How did the church celebrate?
 - b. How were you engaged with the church during this time?
 - c. How did the church engage with God during this time?
5. What are the primary practices, actions, and activities that constitute "church." How and what do these practices, actions and activities mean?
6. Who are you in relationship to the Church? How do you live as a leader who serves *in* (king), *with* (priest), and *for and against* (prophet) the Church?
7. What is your ecclesiology—your biblical and theological perspective on the Church? What is God up to in calling the Church into being and leading the Church into flourishing? Who is the Church? For whom/what does it exist? How is it manifested or structured?

Please submit your Ecclesial Autobiography with the following formatting. Post to canvas to share with your peers and email a copy to your adviser.

- Approximately 2500-3000 words

- Font: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12; Line Spacing: 1.5; Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom

VOCATONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY WRITING GUIDELINES

Autobiographies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Vocational Autobiography and present their autobiography to their peers during a seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to course syllabi for final requirements.

"Neither the hair-shirt nor the soft-berth will do; the place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

Frederich Buechner

Autobiographies are a main component of the D.Min. program at WTS. Students present their autobiographies to their peers during each seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers.

The first autobiography focuses on one's story of loss; the second focuses on one's story in, with, for, and against the church; and **the third focuses on one's vocation.**

Assignments:

In preparation for writing your vocational autobiography, read James Neafsey's *A Sacred Voice is Calling* and one of the other memoirs/autobiographies listed above. Be prepared to share during class how these texts have influenced the writing of your vocational autobiography. Upload to course site in Canvas by the due date specified by your cohort leader. Prior to coming to the intensive, read through all of your colleagues' vocational autobiographies

Seminar Focus for Autobiography: Deepening the practice of ministry is a primary focus of the D.Min. program; deepening vocation is assumed in this, and your last autobiography invites you to describe what your calling (vocation) has been and is, while also turning your attention to how God is inviting you to more deeply engage your calling for the future. So we join Thomas Merton, who wrote, "Education in this sense means more than learning, and for such education, one is awarded no degree. One graduates by rising from the dead."

Please utilize the following guidelines for writing an integrated essay:

1. Briefly describe your call to ministry (again) and how this call has been fulfilled in the past, is being fulfilled now, and how you see the call to be fulfilled in the future.
2. Reflect on what multiple voices (family, education, church, culture), other than God, have communicated to you regarding vocation and work.
3. What are your practices to cultivate listening (discernment) to where and how God is calling you? As Neafsey writes, "Sometimes careful listening reveals that our true calling is not to more work, or better work, or different work, but to a reordering of our priorities and a more balanced life."
4. Reflect on the suffering related to your calling. In what ways have times of suffering deepened your sense of calling and in what ways have these times weakened your sense of calling (making you want to run away from your vocation)?
5. Reflect on the rejoicing that your calling has bestowed on you.
6. Reflect on your social consciousness and the common good of your calling. How does your vocation bless the world or give life to others as it gives life to you?
7. Describe your theology of vocation as it relates to your experience of work.

Please submit your Vocational Autobiography with the following formatting:

- Approximately 2500-3000 words
- Font: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12; Line Spacing: 1.5; Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom

CASE STUDY GUIDELINES

Case Studies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Case Study and present it to their peers during a seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to course syllabi for final requirements.

A case study is a story of a problem or situation from your ministry leadership life that invites you and your colleagues to reflect on what occurred and what could occur next time considering the promise of theological reflection. The writing of a case is primarily focused on what occurred as best as you remember it. You are free to change names and locations to protect the confidentiality of those involved.

Case studies give us slices of real life ministerial leadership to discuss and they force us to look at our engagement with a ministry opportunity with an evaluative perspective. The case study invites the writer to discover more about themselves through peer interaction and personal reflection. The case study also invites peers to discover more about themselves by reflecting on how they would engage a situation that may be foreign to their own experience.

1. What is a case study?

A "case" is a leadership event in which you were a principal player, written in a particular format, and intended to foster learning and faithful action through peer reflection.

2. What should a case study contain?

A case study has 5 parts—each a paragraph heading to guide your written reflection:

Background: Share enough information to set the event in context. What do we need to know to understand the event?

Description: Report what happened with the community (first). Report on how you engaged, if you did. Describe briefly the event as if it was a newspaper article.

Social Analysis: What is unstated but important to know to understand the multiple layers of the story? What do you perceive to be going on in you and with the people involved?

Theological Reflection: Where do you find intersections of this case with Scripture, history, or theological tradition? What do you hear God saying to you and the people involved? Relate biblical and theological themes to this event in order to illuminate what took place.

Educational Objectives: The educational objectives include a discussion of the learning points raised by the case. As you analyze this case, what action did you take? What do you learn (about yourself and the organization) having distance from the case? What would you do differently next time?

3. Formatting

- Approximately two single-spaced pages
- Font: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12; Line Spacing: 1.5; Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom
- It is helpful to format a case study in two columns.

CREATING A D.MIN. PROGRAM GOAL

The D.Min. Learning Goal is the guiding statement for a student as he/she works throughout the program. It is a fluid statement that needs to be revisited before and after completing each seminar. The statement considers problem, context, content, and process. The statement names: the *problematic* or case by which one hopes to engage throughout the program (e.g. preaching in postmodern world; women in the pulpit; living into a missional theology; embodying Christian practices, etc.); the location or *context* of exploration, which is most often one's current ministry location and position; the *content* area(s) that are central to one's ministry related question; and the *process* by which a student desires to explore the question or theme of ministry.

The Problematic: State succinctly in a single, clear, focused sentence the problem or question you are intending to engage in your D.Min. program. Questions to consider:

- What primary ministry practice(s) or cultural question do you perpetually face as a called leader?
- What is the significant challenge you face that will require learning growth on your part?
- What do you believe you are called to do something about?

The Context: Frame in a succinct sentence the facets of your ministry location that give rise to your D.Min. focus. Questions to consider:

- Who do you serve?
- Where are you located in ministry (this includes demographics, cultural particularities, and ministry position)?
- How do you understand these people in light of the redemptive reign of God?

The Content: State succinctly in one or two, clear, focused sentences the learning topics that will orient and focus your D.Min. path of learning. Questions to consider:

- What areas do you need to explore in relation to your problem and context?
- What theological disciplines and sub-disciplines are at the heart of your question?
- What social scientific or other disciplines (be specific) do you need to explore to understand the human dynamics of ministry?

The Process: State succinctly in one or two sentences how you will orient and focus your D.Min learning. How will you know that you achieve the integration of your

context, content, and problematic in the D.Min program? What do you hope to accomplish? Questions to consider:

- Will you be able to achieve this goal within the limits of the program?
- Is your goal about your own learning or is it dependent upon someone else (other pastors, the congregation, etc.) changing for its fulfillment?
- How does your goal contribute to the refining and extending of the practices in ministry?
- Does your goal integrate your own calling with your context?

D.MIN. PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

PROPOSAL FOR DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT
by [insert Candidate's Name]

Proposal draft # _____

Date Proposal submitted: _____

Signature of Candidate: _____

Signature of Cohort Leader: _____ Date: _____

The project proposal is the initial step towards the D.Min. project. The proposal is a substantial document that describes your planned research, analysis, and innovation related to an aspect of ministry. The proposal is the primary way you demonstrate to yourself, your project seminar leader, your advisor, and the D.Min. committee that you have clarity for your research and an expected trajectory of what you plan to accomplish and how you plan to do so. Proposals range from 12 to 30 pages.

D.Min. projects and, therefore, proposals are grounded in practical theology. Practical theology has a set of core values that cut across the diversity within the field. These include: the interpretation of human experience in light of theology and the social sciences; the ongoing formation and transformation of Christian practice in particular communal contexts; and, self-reflexivity. These values are enacted in four interrelated tasks of practical theology:

- *Descriptive-empirical task*, which asks the question, What is going on in this situation or context? Practical theologians answer this question by learning from or carrying out their own empirical research, usually qualitative research.
- *Interpretive task*, which asks the questions, Why is this happening? Practical theologians answer this question by interpreting their research using fitting theories from the arts and sciences.
- *Normative task*, which asks the question, What ought to be going in this situation? Here practical theologians turn explicitly to biblical and theological resources to help them interpret their situation or context, to help them develop new guidelines for ministry in their situation or context, or to learn from best

practices.

- *Pragmatic task*, which asks the question, How ought we act in this situation or context? Practical theologians, in this task, propose strategies for action in their given situation or context.

These core values and tasks of practical theology should be evident in all D.Min. proposals and projects. More specifically, each proposal should include the following components (all of which are related to the values and tasks of practical theology):

Clear, concise identification of the problem or question in ministry that the project will address. Include a description of the ministry practice that you are exploring and the context in which you are exploring it.

The purpose and/or significance of the project for you, for your community of faith, and, if applicable, the surrounding community and any other ministry settings that might benefit from your project. Draw (directly or indirectly) from key learnings and integration arising out of the submissions you've written throughout the D.Min. program. Include how this project will reflect your growing self-awareness and how it will demonstrate the personal growth and transformation you've experienced in the D.Min. program.

Description of the context(s) related to the problem or question that your project will address. This is related to the above categories and includes identification of the particular social, demographic, or political variables important for understanding the context.

Clear and thorough empirical research design. For most of you, this will be qualitative research. Necessary components of research design include the following:

1. Core research question (which may or may not be slightly different from, though related to, the overall question or problem that that project addresses)
2. Strategy of inquiry (for example, individual interviews, focus group interviews, participant observation and so forth)
3. Sampling strategy (who are the participants in your research and what is your rationale for choosing these particular people)
4. Data gathering and analysis (for example, using audio recorders, taking notes, transcription, identifying themes in transcriptions, and so forth)
5. Storing data (how long you will store data; who will have access to the data; when you will destroy the data)
6. Ethical issues in carrying out the research (for example, your relationship to the participants and how that might impact results; any ways in which participants

would be vulnerable in the process; how you will receive informed consent from participants; freedom of participants to participate, to not participate, or to terminate participation partway through without any negative repercussions)

7. Interview guidelines (if applicable)

Literature review. An overview of the primary social scientific (or philosophical or other scientific) sources and biblical and theological sources that will inform the project. This should include how these sources will be related to the empirical research and to one another. As you write your literature review, consider these kinds of questions (do not answer them all or answer them in a rote, linear fashion):

1. What are the primary and secondary social scientific (or similar) fields of inquiry for your project? What primary models, authors, or schools of thought inform your project? How do you plan to engage, use, critique, and integrate these fields of inquiry?
2. What biblical-theological questions are central to the project? How is your question understood theologically? How will you engage the theological questions in constructive ways throughout the project? On what theological ground does your project stand? How does it bring your theological tradition into fresh engagement with contemporary challenges and insights? What theological vision will your project imagine?
3. How do the biblical/theological sources and the social-scientific sources relate to one another? (This is a question about interdisciplinarity.) Are they in mutual conversation? How will you maintain conceptual distinctions while drawing connections among these fields of inquiry? Are they creatively brought together to construct new norms for ministry?

Project outline. This includes an outline of the chapters in the project, including, if applicable, the creation of any particular resources or products as a result of the project. The latter might include a manual, sermon series, curriculum, website, and so forth, as part of the pragmatic task of practical theology. Chapter outlines should be detailed and clearly identify how portions of the project are interwoven. Frequently, the project outline is included in an appendix.

Other appendices. Timeline for completion of the project. Budget for the project, if applicable. Letter inviting people to participate in your research. Informed consent form to be signed by research subjects.

Overall, all projects and proposals should adhere to doctoral level academic standards.

This includes, among other things, following the writing guidelines listed in the D.Min. handbook and reiterated in the project seminar syllabus. Along with this, you are required to follow the Manual of Style Supplement when submitting the proposal. You are also encouraged to seek feedback and support from the WTS Writing Studio.

Finally, the project seminar will provide opportunity for you to develop and revise your project proposal in conversation with your D.Min. cohort and your cohort leader.

COHORT LEADER EXPECTATIONS

The Cohort Leader selects the unifying theme for their D.Min. cohort and designs the learning pathway students will follow in pursuing the D.Min. degree. While adhering to fundamental expectations, degree goals and programmatic structures of the program, cohort leaders have flexibility in creating a formational and intellectual process unique to their theme, guiding students in centered study around the main theme and focused exploration generated by the participant's context and passions. The coherence of this work is a shared responsibility between the advisor and the student.

Expectations for D.Min. cohort leaders include:

1. Design and implement the cohort learning pathway, including theme, learning objectives, seminar experiences, peer relationship development, and key academic concepts.
2. Guide student through the program. Meet multiple times with students one-on-one, either in-person or via the web.
3. Attention to completion of residency projects, namely,
 - a. Check-in quarterly on progress toward completion.
 - b. Read student's written projects.
 - c. Notify the Registrar of completion of courses and projects, thereby assisting in keeping accurate record of student progress toward the degree.
 - d. Provide general accountability in drafting the projects toward coherence with the final project question.
4. Work with the student in preparing a project proposal, offering particular attention to theological perspective and project methodology
5. Walk with student in project phase, namely reading drafts, submitting a final draft to an assigned committee (Director, Internal Reader, and External Reader), and follow-through on revisions until completion
6. Participate in the Project Review and Public Presentation of Project (see **page 8** for details on the review and presentation).

BILLING POLICY AND DEFERRED PAYMENT PLAN

Students will receive a statement of their tuition before the start of the semester and payment is due 21 days after the first day of the semester by one of two ways:

- 1) Cash, check, credit card, or
- 2) a Deferred Payment Plan is available for a \$25 administrative fee that will be charged for each semester the student is on the plan. The outstanding balance will be assessed a 1% finance charge each month until it is paid off, which must be in 4 or less monthly payments.

Students cannot begin a new semester with balances still due on the previous semester.

Below is a sample enrollment form if you wish to pay your D.Min. tuition in monthly installments on our Deferred Payment Plan. Please contact Kerry Eshenaur in the Business Office to enroll in the plan for the current semester, or with any questions regarding payment, fees, or tuition. *Please note that deferred payment plans are only available to students paying tuition directly to WTS.*

Email: kerry@westernsem.edu
 Phone: (616) 392-8555 ext. 106
 Fax: (616) 392-7717

**WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
 ENROLLMENT FORM FOR
 DEFERRED PAYMENT PLAN**

Name of student _____

Academic period covered by plan (please circle): FALL 20XX SPRING 20XX

Please acknowledge each of the follow components of the plan with your initials

____ A \$25 charge will be charged to my account each semester in which I use the Deferred Payment Plan.

___ I will pay my bill in 4 or fewer monthly installments.

___ Each month a 1% interest charge based on the outstanding balance will be added to my account.

___ All balances must be paid in full by the end of the semester.

___ Payments can be made with cash, check, credit card or EFT.

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

Please return form with first payment by the due date.

COOK THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

Welcome to Cook Library!

Cook Library provides access to over 250,000 print and electronic books for theological study. Included in the collection are reference materials, over 1,300 periodical titles, media, and a unique collection of rare and foreign books. Whether you're on campus or off, library services are available to you as a Western Theological Seminary student each semester you are registered in WTS courses.

At the beginning of the school year, degree-seeking students may receive a student ID card. It is also your library card and gives you access to materials from both Cook Library at WTS and VanWylen Library at neighboring Hope College. If lost, the card can be replaced at reception for \$5.00.

Your Library Account

Your library account lets you request books and articles, renew books online, access ebooks and ejournals, save searches and favorite items, and access your reading history. To access your library account, go to the Cook Library home page at guides.westernsem.edu and under **My Account** in the left-hand menu, select **My Account**. Login using OneLogin, which is the same username and password as your WTS Gmail account. If you use 2-factor authentication for your Gmail account, you will need to turn it off in your Google account settings for OneLogin to work.

Access to Resources

You can access ebooks and online journal articles through the library catalog while logged in with OneLogin and can also request print books to be mailed to your home address.

To request print books: Find the item you want in the catalog and click **Request**. Choose **Home Address** as your pickup location, and the item will be mailed to you at no cost. Return shipping is at your expense, and the item will need to arrive back at the library by its due date to avoid overdue fines. The checkout period for DL students is 60 days, with one 60-day renewal available.

To request a scan of a journal article or essay: Find the item you want in the catalog and click **Digitization**. Fill out the form with the citation information and click **Send Digitization Request**. The scan will be emailed to you as a pdf attachment.

Tutorials: Helpful tutorials are available on the homepage of the **Cook Library Services** Canvas course.

Interlibrary Loan(ILL)

Interlibrary loan is available at no cost to you for books and articles not owned by Cook Library. To request a book or article, submit an **ILL Request**, which is a tab at the top of the main catalog page. Please submit as much citation information as you can, to ensure we get you the right item. It may take up to two weeks to acquire books through ILL, since the book must be mailed from the lending library to WTS and then mailed to you. Articles may arrive faster since they are scanned and emailed. A/V materials and books published within the current year are typically not available through ILL. The circulation period and number of renewals is determined by the lending library and will vary.

ATLA Reciprocal Borrowing Program

Some libraries belonging to the American Theological Library Association have agreed to grant free borrowing privileges to each other's off-campus students. This means that as an off-campus WTS student, you can go to any participating ATLA library, show your student ID as proof of current enrollment at WTS, and check out materials according to that library's policies. For more information and a list of participating libraries, go to our library home page, and under Services, select **WTS Students**, then **WTS Distance Learning**.

Assistance

For assistance with renewals, requests, and other library questions, call the circulation desk at 616-392-8555 ext.139.

For assistance with research questions, shipping requests, fines, interlibrary loan, and the ATLA Reciprocal Borrowing Program, contact Allison Van Liere, Circulation Supervisor.

Email: **allison@westernsem.edu**

Phone: 800-392-8555 x146

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Email: **steve@westernsem.edu**

THESIS/PROJECT CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM**Western Theological Seminary Digital Repository
Thesis/Project Consent and Release Form**

Western Theological Seminary retains one print copy of Doctoral of Ministry and Master of Theology projects/theses in the Cook Library Special Collections. One digital copy is retained in the Western Theological Seminary Digital Repository. These copies must be submitted to the appropriate library staff member as outlined in the degree handbook.

Thesis/Project Release form

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Permanent email address _____

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Year of project completion _____ Graduation date _____

Program completed Th.M. _____ D.Min. _____

Faculty Supervisor _____

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FORM FOR APPROVAL OF CANDIDACY STATUS

During the second residency, students will have a qualifying oral exam, conversational in nature, with their faculty mentor that focuses on the student's progress in the program. The faculty mentor will review student completion of all requirements to date and recommend whether he/she should continue in the program. Candidacy status is granted upon faculty mentor affirmation that the student has demonstrated a purpose and plan for completing the degree, and that the student is formally eligible to receive the D.Min. degree upon completion of the remaining work.

Student Name: _____

Upon review of progress by the above-named student, I affirm the following:

- The student has completed all requirements to date.
- The student has demonstrated a purpose and plan for completing the degree.
- The student is formally eligible to receive the D.Min. degree upon completion of the remaining work.
- The student should be granted candidacy status.

Additional comments:

Faculty Mentor Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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