



*Intentional Integration:
Christian College Student Development*

Doctor of Ministry Cohort

*"The precepts of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart;
The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight to life". Psalm 19:8*

Faculty Mentor: Rev. Dr. Steve Beers

Length: A 36-credit degree comprised of six in-person seminars over three years, in addition to the completion and defense of the Doctor of Ministry project.

Locations: Western Theological Seminary, Holland, MI
Southern California, Spring Term 2028 (Specific location TBD)

Seminar Schedule:

- February 22-26, 2027
- October 25-29, 2027
- February 2028 (Meeting in Southern California)
- October 2028
- February 2029
- October 2029

Guest Lectures/Presenters:

- Dr. Shirley Hoogstra, President Emerita of the CCCC, on the topic of Christian higher educational leadership.
- Dr. Daniel Pugh, Professor of Practice, Educational Administration & Human Resource Development, former Vice President at Texas A&M, former Vice Provost, University of Arkansas, speaking on the topic of Christian's navigating faith and integration in the State Universities.
- Dr. Shirley Roels, (Retired) Executive Director of INCHE (International Network for Christian Higher Education), on the topic of Christian higher education around the globe.

- Dr. Rick Ostrander, Founder and Executive Director for the Michigan Christian Studies Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on the topic of parachurch college ministries.
- Rev. Dr. Wesley Hill, Associate Professor of New Testament at WTS, on the topic of human sexuality.
- Dr. Emily Moore, Dean of the College of Education and Social and Behavioral Sciences at JBU, will discuss higher education research methodology.
- Kelli Wessels, Co-Founder of Ezekiel Rain, a ministry working to stop international child sex trafficking, on the topic of suffering.
- TBD various current and retired university vice presidents and chaplains

Purpose:

The Christian ministry for and with college students takes many forms. For example, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU), representing over 170 Christian institutions worldwide and working with over half a million students annually, reports that it is committed to...

“supporting, protecting, and promoting the value of integrating the Bible – divinely inspired, true, and authoritative- throughout all curricular and co-curricular aspects of the educational experience on our campuses, including teaching and research. We support a coherent approach to education in which the development of the mind, spirit, body, and emotions are seamlessly woven together in the quest not just for knowledge but also for wisdom.”

Beyond Christian universities, numerous parachurch organizations minister on college campuses, such as the University of Michigan’s *Michigan Christian Studies Center*. The Center’s purpose is to provide a

“Christian academic community embedded within a premier university where relationships can flourish among those who seek to take the life of faith and the life of the mind seriously.”

Furthermore, most churches in college towns have outreach programs and ministerial staff who work with college students. For example, the purpose statement from a Baptist Campus Ministry church’s website near the University of Arkansas states -

“To help students love God and make disciples, welcoming all students regardless of their spiritual journey.”

Therefore, this cohort’s purpose is to equip leaders to lead and flourish in these unique and essential spaces. Doctoral students will be supported and directed in their research regarding how to intentionally and more fully integrate relevant aspects of Christian spiritual formation and student development theory in developing and leading campus programming and facilitating mentoring relationships.

Rationale:

Currently, most faculty, staff, and administrators at the university level are trained in their specific disciplines without a theological or faith-development component. Conversely, most faculty and staff with theological training lack the critical perspective that relevant social science theories provide to guide students' developmental work. The specific rationale for this cohort is to teach doctoral students to intentionally integrate spiritual formation and developmental theory to maximize the impact of their current and future ministry.

Framework:

Each Seminar will consist of 5 days of meetings to cover the session content; therefore, full attendance and participation are required. In addition, each semester will include at least two 2-hour Zoom meetings needed for the group. Lastly, each student will be required to meet with the instructor via Zoom for at least 1 hour per semester, in addition to the weeklong seminar and group Zoom meetings.

Core Texts:

- *The Idea of a Christian College*, Arthur Holmes (104 pp)
- *The Idea of a Christian College: A Reexamination for Today's University*, Todd Ream and Perry Glanzer (149 pp)
- *An Introduction to the Christian College: Why College Matters to God*, Rick Ostrander (140 pp)
- *Building a Culture of Faith: University-Wide Partnerships for Spiritual Formation*, Cary Balzer and Rod Reed (224 pp)
- *The Soul of the Christian University: A Field Guide for Educators*, Stephen Beers (194 pp)
- *Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood: A Practical Theology for College and Young Adult Ministry*, David Setran and Chris Kiesling (239 pp)
- *Student Affairs Reconsidered: A Christian View of the Profession and Its Context*, David Guthrie (129 pp)
- *Reimagining the Student Experience: Formative Practices for Changing Times*, Brian Jensen and Sarah Visser (183 pp)
- *Christ-Enlivened Student Affairs: A Guide to Christian Thinking and Practice in the Field*, Perry Glanzer, Theodore Cackle, Elijah Jeong, and Briteny Graber (228 pp)
- *Campus Life: In Search of Community*, Drew Moser and Todd Ream (140 pp)

Selected portions of the following text

- *Theory of College Student Development: Integrations of Knowledge, Skills and Application*, Naijian Zhang, Phyllis McCluskey-Titus, and Toney Cawthon (~ 150 pp)
- *Stewarding Our Bodies: A Vision for Christian Student Affairs*, Perry Glanzer and Austin Smith (~120 pp)
- *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*, George Marsden (~ 35 pp)

- *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*, Richard Light (~ 35 pp)
- *Conceiving the Christian College*, Duane Litfin (~ 35 pp)

Students should anticipate reading approximately 2,000 pages for each of the six sessions, including the specific reading they choose related to their research. Assigned seminar readings progressively decrease in length to allow students to expand their readings for their research projects. The seminar readings will primarily focus on student culture, faith formation, and student development theory. Additionally, students will be required to provide a 250-word response to each assigned reading during the semester.

Year One: Orientation

Students will engage in the course topics and gain a better understanding of their ministry context and its needs. Additionally, they will begin to establish and narrow their research focus.

February 2027 Seminar 1:

- Topics – Ministry Context, Purpose, Mission, Vision, and Values, or the “Big Idea of a Christian University”
- Writing: Response to reading papers, along with two other papers: 1 A five-page paper on your own identity development during your undergraduate college; 2 A four-page paper describing a ministry context.
- Anticipated readings: See the reading list above, “Key Texts.”

October 2027 Seminar 2:

- Topics – Culture’s impact, Sin and the Modern Self, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, Epistemology, Human Sexuality, Apologetics, Spiritual Formation Practices #1, and Overview of Educational Research Practices
 - Writing: Response to reading papers, along with the dissertation writing schedule.
 - Anticipated readings:
 - *Strange New World: How Thinkers and Activists Redefined Identity and Sparked the Sexual Revolution*, Carl Trueman (187 pp)
 - *Washed and Waiting*, Wesley Hill (203 pp)
 - *Tenderness: A Gay Christian’s Guide to Unlearning Rejection and Experiencing God’s Extravagant Love*, Eve Tushnet (224 pp)
 - *Culture Makers: Recovering Our Creative Calling*, Andy Crouch (271 pp)
 - *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approach 6th ed.* John Creswell & David Creswell (320)
 - *The New Apologetics*, Matthew Nelson (240 pp)
 - *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis (190 pp)
- Selected book chapters and articles*

- *Articles TBD (~50 pp)*
- *The Universe Next Door*, James Sire (~ 50 pp)
- *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood*, Christian Smith (~ 50 pp)
- *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*, Parker Palmer (~35 pp)
- *Spirituality in College Students' Lives*, Alyssa Bryant Rockenback and Matthew Mayhew (50 pp)
- *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster (~ 50 pp)
- *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, Adele Calhoun (~100 pp)
- APPROVED RELEVANT READING (MINIMUM OF ~ 300 pp)

Year Two: Research

Students will continue to engage with the general course content and begin conducting primary research for their projects. Additionally, the student should assume that they will develop, deploy, and evaluate their program, ensuring relevant documentation is available for the dissertation.

February 2028 Seminar 3 (California):

- Topics - Identity Development, Faith Development, Focus on Specific Student Needs (Student Anxiety, Resilience & Managing Emotions), Spiritual Formation Practices #2, Case Study Visits
- Writing: Response to reading papers, along with the dissertation writing schedule.
- Anticipated readings:
 - *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness*, Jonathan Daidt (400 pp)
 - *Search for Significance*, Robert McGee (476 pp)
 - *The Pursuit of God*, A. W. Tozer (128 pp)
 - *The Self Examined: Christian Perspectives on Human Identity*, Jenny McGill (208 pp)
 - *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith*, Richard Foster (276 pp)
 - *Reading While Black: An American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope*, Esau McCaulley (184 pp)

Assigned book chapters and Articles

- *IGen*, Jean Twenge (~ 50 pp)
- *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster (~ 50 pp)
- *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, Adele Calhoun (~100 pp)
- *Articles TBD (~100 pp)*
 - *Growth Journal, Mental Health on Campus: Defining Challenges and Opportunities*, Stephen Beers, et. all (20 pp)
- APPROVED RELEVANT READING

October 2028 Seminar 4:

- Topics - Purpose, Virtues, Vocation, Spiritual Formation Practices #3, and Program Planning
- Writing: Response to reading papers, along with the dissertation writing schedule.
- Anticipated readings:
 - *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good*, Steven Garber (238)
 - *Virtuous Minds: Intellectual Character Development*, Philip Dow (193 pp)
 - *Calling & Clarity: Discovering What God Wants for Your Life*, Doug Koskela (117 pp)
 - *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence (112 pp)
 - *In the Name of Jesus*, Henri Nouwen (81 pp)
 - *Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus. Become like him. Do as he did*, Mark Commer (288 pp)
 - *Planning Programs for Adult Learners: A Practical Guide for Educators, Trainers, and Staff Developers*, Rosemary Caffarella (237 pp)

Assigned book chapters and Articles

- *Articles TBD (~50 pp)*
- *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster (~ 50 pp)
- *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, Adele Calhoun (~100 pp)
- *Decision Making & the Will of God: A Biblical Alternative to the Traditional View*, Gary Friesen (~100 pp)
- READING RELATED TO THE STUDENT'S RESEARCH

Year Three: Thesis

Students will complete all course requirements and write their thesis. In the final fall semester (2029), students will share their work in class and defend their thesis.

February 2029 Seminar 5:

- Topics - Power of Community, Experiential Education, Spiritual Formation Practices #4
- Writing: Response to reading papers, along with the dissertation writing schedule.
- Anticipated readings:
 - *Creating Campus Community: In Search of Earnest Boyer's Legacy*, William McDonald (192 pp)
 - *Paul's Idea of Community*, Robert Banks (200 pp)
 - *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (122 pp)
 - *A Calling to Care: Nurturing College Students Toward Wholeness*, Timothy Herrmann and Kristen Riedel (212 pp)
 - *Toughest People to Love*, Chuck DeGroat (184 pp)

Assigned book chapters and Articles

- Articles TBD (~50 pp)
- The Theory of Experiential Education, Karen Warren, Mitchell Skaofs, and Jasper Hunt (~100 pp)
- READING RELATED TO THE STUDENT'S RESEARCH

October 2029 Seminar 6:

- Topics - Personal Soul Care, Suffering, Ministry Leadership, Selected Topics, Presentations of Research, and Defense of the Thesis
- Writing: Response to reading papers, along with the dissertation writing schedule.
- Anticipated readings:
 - *The Wounded Healer*, Henri Nouwen (100 pp)
 - *The Mark of a Christian*, Francis Schaeffer (35 pp)
 - *The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction*, Justin Earley (196 pp)
 - *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, John Mark Comer (300 pp)
 - *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, Tim Keller (380 pp)
 - *A long Obedience in the Same Direction*, Eugene Peterson (192 pp)
 - *Experiencing the Depths of Jesus Christ*, Madame Guyon (165 pp)
 - *Assigned articles by doctoral students for their classmates TBD (~250 pp)*

Final Thesis Project:

Participants are expected to submit a final thesis project focused on one of the multiple aspects of Christian student development emphasized in this Doctoral program. The thesis project should be significant to the student's current ministry context. As noted in the learning sequence above, portions of this project will be developed over the three-year academic cycles of the Doctor of Ministry program.

The Doctor of Ministry Program Reference Guide states that thesis projects should, with appendices, range between 100 and 200 pages. The project proposal must be submitted to the faculty mentor for D.Min. committee approval before the student proceeds with the research.

Tuition, Costs, and Fees:

Tuition rates remain fixed for the duration of the three-year program, with an additional cost if students need further time to complete their final projects.

This cohort will be subject to the 2026/2027 tuition rate, which will be set in February 2026. For current D.Min. tuition and fees, please see [the WTS website](#).

Students are responsible for all travel, food, and lodging costs associated with attending the six required seminars, including the weeklong seminar in California.

Projected Schedule:

Course	Dates	Location
Launch <i>DM850</i>	February 22-26, 2027	WTS
2 nd Seminar <i>DM851</i>	October 25-29, 2027	WTS
3 rd Seminar <i>DM860</i>	February TBD, 2028	California
4 th Seminar <i>DM861</i>	October TBD, 2028	WTS
5 th Seminar <i>DM870</i>	February TBD, 2029	WTS
Final Seminar <i>DM871</i> Thesis Project <i>DM 940</i>	October TBD, 2029	WTS
Commencement	April 2030	WTS

Alternative Learning Site:

In February of 2028, the intensive weeklong session will be in Southern California (specific location and dates TBD). While in California, the cohort will meet to cover the topics and will also visit Christian universities along with church and parachurch organizations. The intention is to gain a “real-world” understanding of the depth and breadth of work being done. Costs for the trip to California are the responsibility of the students, and it is estimated that this cost could be slightly higher than the week in Michigan depending on where the students are originating from.

More information on the Doctor of Ministry at WTS is available on our [website](#).

Questions? Please contact the following:

Cohort Information

Rev. Dr. Steve Beers, steve.beers@westernsem.edu

Application & Admission

Drew Brown, drew.brown@westernsem.edu

D.Min. Program

Yoli Vega, yolanda.vega@westernsem.edu