

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM
THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICUM PROJECT

Guidelines

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DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

Perkins School of Theology
Southern Methodist University

The Professional Practicum/Project Guidelines

I. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICUM/PROJECT (DM9396 /DM9398)

It is based on research, design, execution and evaluation of an aspect of ministry uniquely related to the candidate's personal goals and setting of ministry. These guidelines are applicable to all Perkins' D-Min degrees.

A. Description

Projects are varied and cover every possible ministry assignment. Projects need not be something no one has done before. If it is new to the candidate and his or her ministry, then it is acceptable. Those in the Evangelism concentration will need to relate their practicum/project to evangelism.

B. Purpose and Aim

The format followed is chronological, as far as possible, so that the candidate may sense when things should be done. The candidate is responsible for taking the initiative and meeting the deadlines in the process. The Practicum/Project should be designed to do the following:

1. Be relevant to the candidate's own ministry.
2. Make a contribution to the practice of the candidate's ministry.
3. Equip the laity to fulfill their calling to ministry.
4. Bring to bear upon that ministry a component of objectivity and critique. Include substantive biblical and theological reflection.
5. Develop critical, reflective skills that focus on the practice of ministry. While the minister's task has significant elements of advocacy (e.g., sermons, teaching) the project is intended to develop critical, reflective and investigative skills, and in that sense, move beyond reporting and description.
6. Show evidence of genuine new learning by the candidate.

C. Criteria for Acceptability

A project is acceptable when it adequately demonstrates the following:

1. Research (biblical, theological, and theoretical) designed to summarize what others have learned about this aspect of ministry.
2. Ministry design.
3. Work done in a setting of ministry with others.
4. Evaluation of theory, design and leadership.

D. Approval of Practicum Project Proposal

The Practicum/Project approval process is composed of two stages.

The topic stage will normally be complete by the end of the first project seminar (DM9014) that meets during May of the first year for those in the regular D Min Program. It will be completed during the time a candidate is on campus for the next-to-last seminar in the concentration. This stage defines the purpose of the practicum/project.

The prospectus stage is completed as a rule by the end of the second project seminar (DM9019), which meets during May of the second year for those in the regular D Min program and during the final on-campus seminar in the Evangelism concentration. This stage develops the working plan of the practicum/project.

Candidates who are unable to gain approval at these sessions must have their topic and/or prospectus approved by the Director of the D. Min. Program or a person(s) to whom the Director has delegated that responsibility. Should a candidate change his or her practicum/project to an area of ministry other than the one approved, a new topic and prospectus must be submitted to the Director for review by the appropriate persons for approval. **It is mandatory that these approvals be made prior to beginning the practicum/project.**

II. TOPIC – (DM 9014 Topic Seminar)

A. Aspect of the Ministry Stage

Six months before the topic stage seminar, the candidate should begin serious reflection on the selection of his or her topic. In this regard, the first task of the candidate is to select an aspect of ministry in which practicum project is to be done. That selection may be used for several reasons such as a desire to explore or improve knowledge and skills, the need to develop and carry out a distinctive ministry in a particular situation, or a combination of both.

The Topic development is one of the most crucial stages of the project. The candidate should meet with the proposed advisor to review the practicum/project, prior to developing a topic. The candidate in consultation with the proposed advisor should then develop a draft of the topic. The focus of the topic is to be clear, sharp, and specific. The topic must not be too broad, vague, lengthy, or general.

B. Description

The topic is a formal statement by the candidate of what his or her project entails, why the project is worth doing, and briefly how the candidate intends to execute the project. It should be about one and one-half typed single spaced pages in length and contain the following:

1. **Title**: Should be very specific using ten to fifteen words.
2. **Problem**: There should be a clear description of the problem to be engaged. It should relate to the project in very specific terms: the need in the setting of ministry, the skill to be developed, and/or the knowledge to be acquired. It is important that the problem be described as a problem and not as a conclusion at which the candidate has already arrived.
3. **The Purpose**: This should be one concise, sharply focused sentence. The intent of this sentence is to serve as the critical guiding goal of the project.
4. **Major Steps**:

This should briefly state:

- a. The areas of research;
- b. The type of planning to be done;
- c. The action steps or periods to be taken;
- d. An evaluation phase that will examine theory, design, execution of the project, and the leadership of the candidate;
- e. A writing period.

Successful topics depend upon prior background reading and exposure to an issue. A topic cannot be developed without care, reflection, and effort. Preparation of a topic is integral to the execution of the project. Time, work, and effort expended on the topic will pay off in the execution of the project.

The purpose of the careful, precise writing of the topic is to insure an adequately conceived project. A successful topic can be stated effectively in a few words if those words are carefully honed and arise from a background of substantial preparation. If the topic does not achieve these standards, then the candidate is not yet prepared to go ahead with the project.

The candidate should not be surprised or dismayed if the topic is not approved upon the first presentation. Getting started well is essential to success, and those who work with the candidate are concerned to help prevent potential problems at the outset, rather than encourage or approve marginal or poorly conceived proposals that will be problematic at a subsequent phase of the project.

C. **Topic Approval** (see page 20 also)

The approval of the topic is arrived at through a consultative process involving the candidate, the proposed advisor, the candidate's peers, the colloquium leader, and a committee of colloquium leaders. The process is as follows:

1. **Topic Proposal**: In consultation with the proposed advisor, the candidate must draft a topic proposal of his or her intended professional project. (For a guide see a sample topic in Appendix A).
2. **Submission of Topic Proposal**: The candidate must submit one copy of the topic proposal to the colloquium leader at least 10 days before the topic seminar. At this time, the candidate should also submit copies of the topic to those proposed to serve on the candidate's project committee. After the seminar, a final graded copy supplied by the colloquium leader will be placed in the candidate's file.

3. **Colloquium Presentation**: The candidate must bring to Perkins eight additional copies of the topic proposal for use in his or her first colloquium session. During that session the candidate will have about 30 minutes for discussion of his or her topic proposal. Based on the discussion the candidate usually revises or modifies his or her topic proposal.
4. **Colloquium Leader**: The colloquium leader plays a crucial role in the approval process. His or her functions are:
 - a. Facilitate the group process, provide feedback, offer suggestions, and decide when the topic proposal is ready for approval.
 - b. Represent the topic proposal at the colloquium leaders' committee, make notes of the committee's suggestions and recommendations, and determine if the proposal is acceptable, or needs revision.
 - c. Consult with candidates, when necessary, to explain suggestions and recommendations of the colloquium leaders' committee.
 - d. Receive revisions and approve them.
5. **Colloquium Leaders' Committee**: The Colloquium Leaders' Committee is advisory to the colloquium leader. Its functions are to review topics and prospectuses during the colloquium process, the candidate will rework the topic, in consultation with his or her advisor, and submit it to the Director of the D. Min. program for evaluation. **The key for the approval of a topic is the candidate's clarity about what he or she wishes to achieve in the project.**

Note: Candidates will submit the names and supporting documents for approval to the D. Min. office prior to the first topic seminar DM9014. In addition to approving the Topic at this seminar, the colloquium leaders will approve the candidate's D. Min. committee. For those proposed to serve on the committee it will be necessary for the candidate to submit a vita or resume of non-Perkins committee members.

III. PROSPECTUS – (DM 9019-Prospectus Seminar)

A. **Preparation**

The candidate should plan to use the time after the approval of the topic to begin determining what writings (books and articles) will need to be included in his or her research. He or she will also want to investigate settings of ministry known to excel in ministry that will be the focus of his or her practicum/project. It will be a time to consult with the advisor and the field supervisor regarding the design of the practicum/project. The candidate will also want to think ahead to the third year of the program in order to negotiate necessary arrangements in his or her setting of ministry to carry out the Practicum/Project. It is strongly urged that the candidate use the summer to work on many of these concerns.

During the second year the candidate will prepare a prospectus in consultation with his or her advisor and field supervisor. One copy of the written prospectus is to be submitted to the Colloquium Leader no later than 10 days before the Prospectus Seminar of the second year. A final graded copy of the prospectus will be submitted by the Colloquium Leader to be kept on file in the D.Min office.

B. Description

The prospectus is the plan for the project and the contract of what the candidate will do in the project. The candidate in the execution and writing stages of the project should keep these two concerns in mind. It should include the following elements:

1. **The Title**, from the Topic;
2. **The Problem**, from the Topic;
3. **The Purpose**, from the Topic;
4. **Scope**: This is the fine print of the contract. It must show what the candidate is going to do and what he or she is not going to do. It is the place to define terms so that readers know the candidate's meanings. It is also important that the candidate ask what aspects of the practicum are within his or her control. It is important that the candidate not have to rely on others who would give the project a low priority.
5. **Methodology**: This should build on the major steps from the topic and be spelled out in detail with specific indications of what will be done and how. Vague, general statements will not be acceptable. This is your plan for the project. It should include research, planning, action, evaluation and writing phases. (Be sure to indicate

how you will get data for self-evaluation and how others will provide evaluation of your leadership.)

6. **Timetable:** This should interface with your method. Dates should be by the calendar. For example: evaluation-December 15 to December 31. The schedule to follow in preparing the timetable will be determined in part by whether the candidate plans to graduate in May or December. Usually the May date will be selected. However, there may be personal reasons or project considerations that lead the candidate to plan for a December graduation. There are specific deadlines in this process that carry certain obligations of the part of Perkins and the candidate. In preparing the timetable please consult the deadlines for the graduation date you select. (See section VI. Approval - Professional Project dates).
7. **Bibliography:** This is a representative bibliography. It should be divided into categories: Theoretical (theological and theory related to the project), subject or issues (project subject areas, religious sources, secular sources), technical (methodological resources, evaluation) and other areas that may be pertinent to the project. The bibliography is normally two to 3 pages and should have author, title, and city of publication, publisher and date. It should begin on a new page so that it is separate from the rest of the prospectus.
8. **Contribution to Ministry:** It is not only important that the project be done well, but that it is significant for the setting of the candidate's ministry. It must not be an activity just to get a degree. It must make some worthwhile and significant contribution to the candidate's ministry.

C. Approval of Prospectus

The prospectus approval process will follow the same steps as that of the topic. Because the advisor may not be available to the candidate during the summer session, consultation with the advisor during the May session is not required. The candidate will

work on the prospectus in consultation with his or her peers, the colloquium leader, and the colloquium leaders' committee.

NO CANDIDATE SHOULD BEGIN THE ACTION PHASE WITHOUT AN APPROVED PROSPECTUS (during class DM 9019). Should a candidate proceed without that approval, it will be his or her problem if the prospectus and project are not acceptable. This will not be the problem of the advisor or Perkins School of Theology.

D. Implementation

The candidate must check with the advisor and field supervisor when adjustments or changes become necessary as the project unfolds. Any substantial adjustments will require the submission of a revised prospectus for approval by the director of the Doctor of Ministry Program.

IV. THE WRITTEN PRACTICUM (DM9396) /PROJECT REPORT (DM9398)

A. Word Processing

It is strongly recommended that the candidate use word-processing equipment for the written project. The ease of editing and revising will be greatly enhanced for the candidate. If a word processor is used, it is our suggestion that the candidate makes two backup disks of the project and keeps them in at least two locations. **SAVE YOUR WORK OFTEN.** Likewise, we would urge candidates to make hard copies of written materials frequently and always to retain one hard copy in his or her files, especially when copies are mailed to members of his or her committee and/or the D. Min. office.

B. Final Draft

1. It should be approximately 100 to 125 pages, excluding notes and appendices. Please adhere to this guideline as closely as possible.
2. It should be free of grammatical, spelling and typographical errors. It is not the advisors, readers, or field supervisor's task to be a proofreader. Therefore, it is advisable to have someone other than yourself proofread your project report.
3. The advisor of the candidate's D. Min. committee must give approval that the final draft is ready for the candidate to precede to negotiate the time and place for the oral exam on the project and the candidate's work in the program.
4. It is the policy of Perkins School of Theology to require inclusive language for all theses and doctoral project reports.

C. Mailing Written Projects

Use registered mail or other special delivery services when sending in your project report and insure it for the cost of copying it. Some project reports have been lost! We will acknowledge receipt of your project report; so if you do not hear from us in a reasonable time, please call.

D. Format

Perfect copies of your project report must be on acid free, opaque bond paper, or 25 percent rag content. If copies are xerographically reproduced, 20 lb. weight bond paper must be used. The D.Min. office does not provide the paper, please try SMU Images Copy Center (214.768.3898); Kinko's or Alphagraphics, etc. Word processors may be used, but the printer must produce formed character copy. Dot matrix printers are not acceptable.

Typewriter ribbon should be BLACK. If cloth ribbons are used, 3 new ribbons should be used interchangeably throughout the manuscript so that the text on all pages is equally black. Typewriter keys should be clean.

Typeface must be uniform throughout! If not, the project report will be unacceptable. Handwritten material such as Greek, Hebrew and drawings must be in India ink. Minor corrections permitted by the examining committee should meet the same standard of clarity, neatness, and suitability for photographic reproduction.

Kate Turabian, A MANUAL FOR WRITERS OF TERM PAPERS, THESES AND DISSERTATIONS, 5th Ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) should be used, with the following notations:

1. The project in its final form is to be typewritten on one side only of 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper.
2. When inserting papers smaller than 8 1/2 x 11, secure them on a piece of 8 1/2 x 11 paper before inserting. If a four-page pamphlet is included, each page of the pamphlet must be mounted separately.
3. The spacing of the text must be double, or space-and-a-half.
4. Margins must be 1 1/2 inches at the left of each page to allow for binding, 1 inch at the top of the page, 3/4 - 1 inch at the right, and 1 1/4 inches at the bottom (from end of footnotes). The title page must conform to the sample in Appendix B.
5. Footnotes may appear at the bottom of each page, separated from the text by a line, or at the end of the text.
6. Quotations of two or more sentences which run to four or more typewritten lines should be set off from the text: single-spaced, indented four spaces from the left and right margins, and with no quotation marks at the beginning or end (Turabian 5:2).
7. The project shall contain the following (in order):

- Two blank sheets
- Approval page for committee to sign (Page 41)
- Abstract for presentation to the faculty (Page 42)
- Title page (Page 40)
- Table of Contents (including tables, appendices, etc.)
- Text of project, including footnotes
- Appendices
- Bibliography
- Vita (Page 45)
- Two blank pages

In addition to the two copies of the project, the following items are required:

- A one-page, single-spaced typed abstract to be distributed to the Perkins faculty ten days prior to the oral examination (page 42) due before setting oral exam.
 - General Information Page (page 48) due before setting oral exam.
 - A précis (abstract) of 100 words or less, to be sent to the American Theological Library Association Index Board (page 44)
 - the submission form to be signed by the candidate and mailed directly to ATLA (page 43)
 - A biographical sketch of 100 words or less (page 45).
 - The date on the project is the month of graduation (May or December)
 - The date on the oral examination Approval Page (page 41) is the date of the oral examination.
8. Projects must follow the ordinarily accepted standards of composition and style. They should ordinarily avoid colloquialisms and a style that is excessively “breezy.” Because it is difficult to avoid the use of the first person singular, the candidate may use the pronoun “I.” The basic resource to follow is The Elements of Style, by William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White. (Third Edition: published by Macmillan, 1979).
9. Writers should avoid sexist language through such means as employing the plural and, where the third person singular is used, by using the dual “he or she,” “him or her,” and so on. Since the excessive use of the dual pronoun is awkward, other alternatives should be followed if possible.

E. Form of Writing

Since the project form of writing is relatively new, it is not easy to define. It may be easier to say what it is not than what it is. It is not, for example, a dissertation. That is, it is not an exercise that explores fully and in depth a single hypothesis, using only biblical, historical, theological, ethical, and/or social science methodologies. Nor is it

simply a report on an experience of ministry. Rather, it combines theory and practice, experience and reflection, doing and thinking.

The key to the difference between a D. Min. project and an M. A. thesis or Ph. D dissertation is that the project always involves a problem in the practice of ministry, theoretical research is related to that problem. It involves more than reporting what others have written and bringing those statements into some new form or proposition. Since not every facet of the theory involved in the act of ministry can be thoroughly explored, assumptions may be stated with as much support as possible within the limits of the essay.

The kind of theoretical material will depend on the candidate's practicum, its form, content, and nature. It will usually involve data from the "human arts and sciences." In all cases theological reflection is necessary with regard to the practicum/project as a unity.

As has been noted already, the project is an essay in practical theology. Practical theology is understood as the critical reflection on the life, mission, and ministry (general and representative) of the church from the standpoint of the "Christian witness of faith" as that witness is known through biblical, historical, theological, and ethical sources. Practical theology also includes material from the "human arts and sciences" (for example, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, educational theory, communication theory). The task of the candidate is to engage in critical reflection on the acts of ministry involved in the practicum and on ministry as a whole using the kinds of resources named. To summarize:

- (1) The project is a professional essay.
- (2) It is an essay in practical theology.
- (3) It involves the statement of a problem in ministry.
- (4) It involves appropriate theoretical material from the various theological disciplines as well as from the human arts and sciences.
- (5) Its basic approach is that of praxis; it is contextual in nature in that it involves the examination of a problem in context.
- (6) It is a contextual essay that deals with the Christian witness of faith in a particular setting.
- (7) It involves critical reflection on ministry with regard to a series of acts of ministry, from an understanding of ministry as holistic.

F. The Structure of the Project

Like all writing of any length, the project is divided into chapters, sections, paragraphs, and complete sentences. The principle to follow is that each part -- chapter, section, paragraph, sentence -- has its own integrity, makes a contribution to the whole, and is related to what comes before and after. Tables, charts, and other forms of illustrative material may be placed in the body of the essay if they contribute to the essential meaning of the essay. If they are illustrative but not essential, it may be wise to place them in an appendix. It may be desirable to use portions of materials from charts, but only necessary to include the entire chart in the appendix for those who wish to consult that material in more detail.

Overall Structure: The project should be conceived in terms of an introduction, the theological and theoretical assumptions, and the report on the action phase of the project, the critical evaluation of the practicum/project, and a brief conclusion.

Introduction: The purpose of the introduction is to prepare the reader for the journey through the project. It is a short overview of what will follow. It charts the course but does not need to go into detail. It can set the stage by defining the problem and/or purpose of the project, the basic theological and theoretical assumptions at the beginning of the project, a summary of what was done in the action phase, and what will be evaluated in the final chapters of the project. It is not necessary to relate conclusions at this point.

Theological and Theoretical Section: There should be two chapters at the beginning of the project and these should be written before the action phase takes place. One chapter should examine the Biblical and theological issues that are raised or are critical to the project. It may draw on particular Biblical themes or primary theological doctrines. For example, a project dealing with death and dying would look at this theme from the Biblical literature as well as the doctrine of the resurrection and the last things. This would not be a general survey, but an examination of the issues that are crucial to the project. This means this chapter would lead to certain conclusions that would be at the center of the action phase of the project. A second chapter would examine theoretical issues important to the project. Using the above illustration, the candidate would want to explore the material dealing with death and dying. If the project were related to pastoral care, an examination of pastoral care issues would be included. If it were a project related to education, then educational questions would come to the forefront. If the project included training others, then these concerns would be addressed. The chapter would end with the issues to be addressed, explored, and tested.

It is important for the candidate to understand that this part of the write-up sets forth the approaches to ministry the practicum will be exploring. The process may validate some while others will have to be revised or abandoned in terms of recommendations at the conclusion of the process. It is not required that the

assumptions of these two chapters be confirmed by the subsequent work on the practicum.

Project Report Section: This part of the project seeks to describe what transpired in the project. It would be helpful to the reader to have one brief chapter that lays out the design of the project before going into the details of what happened.

Keeping a journal and accurate records as the practicum takes place will prove very helpful in writing up the practicum.

The report will need to cover the planning and preparation stage in one's setting of ministry. One chapter can focus on the critical factors in that stage of the practicum. It is important to guard against two tendencies: either making vague generalizations that leave the reader guessing as to the content or detail of what happened or overloading the text with so much detail that the reader does not know what the writer believes to be the critical and crucial details.

It is essential to remember in writing up this section that the reader does not have the benefit of participating in the practicum. Therefore, it is important to give information about participants, settings, and sessions that will help the reader to have a feel for what took place. If the practicum was composed of presentations by the candidate, simply sharing those presentations does not constitute a report. The candidate should share the general outline and major points made and methods used, but should also give information of those with whom he or she was working. Vague comments such as "it was helpful" or the "session went well" should be avoided. The report should indicate what was helpful and why the session went well. Specific details are needed in the report section.

Finally, it will be helpful to describe the evaluation process that was followed in the practicum. It is not necessary at this point to begin to evaluate and draw conclusions. Evaluation is a task that can be reported as well as conclusions that can be drawn. The former is the content of this part of the written report. The latter is the major subject of the next section.

Critical Evaluation: The candidate now has to report the critical reflections that have emerged from the project. There are several important issues to be addressed: a) theological rationale, b) theoretical assumptions, c) practicum design, d) practicum planning, e) practicum action, f) your leadership in the practicum, g) evaluation process. Each of these issues should be explored.

There are two sets of questions one can use to reflect on these issues. One would be to ask of each step what one would keep, change, delete, and add if this practicum were to be undertaken again. Another way to get at this question would be to have an

imaginary or real conversation with another minister who comes to you for advice on how to carry out a similar ministry project.

Conclusion: The conclusion will want to highlight the key learning's of the experience, to share the most important recommendations, and to make suggestions as to where future research will need to focus its attention.

While 100 to 125 pages seems to pose the question of how one could write that much on the practicum/project, by the time the writing begins many feel they need to write more. This is normal since one has been involved in great depth for some time with this concern. A good guideline to follow would be to keep the theological chapter to 15 to 20 pages; the theoretical chapter to 15 to 20 pages, the project description section to 50 to 60 pages, and the evaluations section no less than 20 to 25 pages. The most frequent problems are to be found in writing too much for the theoretical chapters and too little for the evaluation chapter.

Aids for the writing process: It will often be useful to outline each chapter before writing it. This outline may later be revised, but this will serve to help organize your thoughts as well as to see if they flow in a logical order to help the reader move with you from step to step. The important part of the process is to begin to see each section of the written report as a whole. The writer can ask whether or not each part contributes to advancing the case being made by the total project. One can ask if something is missing or if what is being included is really germane to the project. Does this help the reader to know my position, my view, what happened, and how the writer evaluates what has happened? Chapters longer than five pages probably need to be divided into sections that can be clearly identified with section headings. These will help the reader to see the structure and the flow of the presentation.

The candidate is urged to work at clear transitions to aid the flow of the writing, help the reader, and forge a coherent continuity to the project that gives the final written document a sense of unity. This does not mean that the writer has to go back to the theological and theoretical chapters and revise them to conform to the results of the evaluation. Nor is it necessary to make extensive evaluative comments in the reporting section indicating what revisions should have been done or will be done. This is the burden of the evaluative section of the paper.

Three features will distinguish the written project as doctoral work. In the first section a clear precise statement of the assumptions and rationale for the project that informs it and is the basis upon which it is undertaken. The second section will seek to describe as accurately as possible the salient aspects of the practicum, which will provide the data for the subsequent evaluation. Finally, the evaluation section will demonstrate the ability of the candidate to critically reflect on both theory and practice

of ministry along with candidly assessing his or her execution of ministry in the practicum.

G. Binding

The manuscript of the copies submitted for evaluation and the two perfect copies submitted by the candidate prior to the last faculty meetings of the term must be carefully collated and securely fastened in BLACK THESIS SPRING BINDERS. PROJECTS SUBMITTED FOR GRADUATION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED IN ANYTHING BUT BLACK THESIS SPRING BINDERS. Binders may be purchased at most stationery stores or through the SMU University Bookstore at 214-768-2435.

V. CANDIDATE'S PRACTICUM/PROJECT COMMITTEE

A. Committee Composition

A candidate's practicum/project committee will be composed of 3 persons: an advisor, a reader, and a field supervisor. The advisor assumes the major responsibility of working with the candidate to help shape, guide, and direct the project from inception through the completed written report. The advisor determines when the candidate is ready to take his or her oral exam. The reader has the responsibility of reading the written document as it is developed and offering comments and suggestions to perfect this document. The field supervisor is someone who has experience and skills with the ability to help the candidate design and evaluate the practicum component of the process. The field supervisor should be near enough to the setting of the candidate's ministry to be able to observe the candidate in the action part of the practicum/project process.

B. Selection and approval of the committee

It is the responsibility of the candidate to propose persons to serve on his or her committee after consultation with the Director of the D. Min. program. Candidates should only propose persons with whom they have discussed the project and ascertained their willingness to serve. The candidate will need to be sure that either the advisor or the reader is a member of the Perkins faculty. It is generally assumed that most field supervisors will not be from the Perkins faculty. For those proposed to serve on the committee it will be necessary for the candidate to submit a vita or resume of non-Perkins committee members.

Candidates will submit the names and supporting documents for approval to the D. Min. office prior to the first topic seminar (See Section II). In addition to approving the Topic at this seminar, the colloquium leaders will approve the candidate's D. Min. committee.

C. The Work of the Project Committee

The Committee

The committee is composed of 3 persons who have distinct roles and responsibilities in the project. All of the persons on the committee are expected to be available to offer a candidate advice and counsel at all stages of the professional project.

Advisor

The advisor has the primary and major responsibility for working with and guiding the candidate. This begins with discussions that take place when the candidate begins to think through the project that will be undertaken.

During the first years of the program, a candidate will be working on deciding the precise focus of his or her professional project. The project process begins with a decision about what it is that the candidate wants to learn and in what ways he or she wants to develop his or her effectiveness in ministry. Only when these purposes are clear for the candidate is it possible to begin to explore how the project can be carried out to test and/or achieve these goals.

Each May in the first two years of the regular program and during the next-to-last and last seminar on campus in the Evangelism concentration, the candidate will participate in a two-day event dedicated to the project development process. The topic stage seeks to develop clarity about the focus of the project. The candidate will work with the advisor to develop his or her topic primarily with the concern for determining the learning goal of the project. During the topic seminar at Perkins, the candidate will explore his or her topic statement with a group of peers and a faculty leader. The desired outcome is the ability of the candidate to state the problem to be addressed and the thesis to be tested in the project. In addition, a brief listing of suggested steps to do this will be made.

Once the topic has been approved, the candidate is asked to work with his or her advisor to explore what will be involved in the major steps of the project (research, planning, action, evaluation, and writing). In the course of working with the candidate to develop a detailed plan for the project, several things may happen: the focus and purpose of the project may shift or change; literature to be researched, persons to be consulted, and programs to be examined will be identified; a realistic time-table will be created; methods to be used will be spelled out in detail; and what to evaluate and how to evaluate will be determined. All of this work will culminate in a written document called a “prospectus”.

During the second year in the program (or concurrently with the last seminar in the Evangelism concentration), the candidate will again meet with peers and a faculty leader. At this time this group will work with the candidate to help him or her refine, sharpen, and enhance the project proposal. The goal of this session is for the candidate to have the prospectus approved. This becomes the basic contract between the candidate, the committee, and the school. The candidate will be responsible for fulfilling the plan outlined in the prospectus and submitted to the advisor for final approval, and held accountable by his or her

D. Min. Project committee. Minor changes can be made as the project process is underway in the third year of the program. Major changes or changes in substance must be submitted to the D. Min. office with the advisor's approval to be placed on file in the candidate's records.

The advisor is expected to be available to the candidate as the project gets underway. However, the basic obligation for this relationship is the responsibility of the candidate, and it is expected that the candidate shall take the initiative in setting up meetings and arranging for consultations with the advisor.

The candidate is expected to complete the theological and practical theoretical chapters of the project prior to beginning the action phase. Since the professional project is testing theoretical and practical knowledge, it is not expected that every position, assumption, or thesis will be validated by the project. Satisfactory completion of the project does not require that the candidate's thesis be confirmed. The issue that matters the most is the candidate's capacity to reflect critically upon what is done in the project.

Candidates are required to submit written work to the Advisor as it is completed so the work can be read and retained with comments and recommendations. This will generally be in 3 stages: the theoretical chapters, the chapters reporting the action stage of the project, and the evaluation chapters of the project. These chapters should be read and returned with comments and recommendations for any changes or revisions that are necessary.

The content of the theoretical chapters should cover the following; the biblical/theological rationale that supports the project; the theoretical assumptions from relevant disciplines that have shaped the project; and the practical premises that are impacting the choice of methods, the design of the project, and how one will proceed with the project. The chapters reporting the action component of the project should provide the reader with a detailed report of what took place, when and how it took place, and enough specific detail to provide the reader with a clear picture of what took place. It is not necessary to report every detail. The major facts need to be in the chapters while some of the detailed information about what was used in the action phase can be placed in an appendix. The evaluation chapters will test the validity of the theological and theoretical assumptions, the design, the evaluation of the design, and the conclusions and adequacy of the evaluation.

The advisor can ask for changes in the written report. This can range from stylistic changes to major substantive issues.

When the advisor has indicated that the project is completed (by submitting the "Project Thesis Release Form" page 50), then the candidate and the committee will arrange for a time and place to hold the oral examination. Once the date is decided this information should be given to the D. Min. office in time for an announcement and abstract to be circulated to the faculty. It must also fit the timeline found in the Guidelines.

It will be the responsibility of the advisor to chair the oral examination (see oral exam in "Guidelines") and approve the abstract and submit two copies of the signature page for the

project with the signatures of the examining committee when the project document has been approved.

Reader

The reader is to be available to the candidate for advice during the development of the prospectus and while the project is underway. While the reader does not have the primary obligation to guide the candidate through the process, the reader may have many helpful suggestions to make that will be of service to the candidate.

The primary responsibility of the reader is to read the written text as it is completed and to participate in the oral examination of the candidate. The candidate is required to submit the written chapters of his or her draft as they are completed so they can be read and retained with comments and recommendations. Since the reader will not have as much contact with the candidate, it is assumed that this will be an advantage in helping the candidate write a clear professional project report. Because others in the future may turn to a candidate's written project report, it is important that someone read the project with a more limited knowledge of it to insure that the text is complete and clear.

The reader can ask for the text to be revised. This can include both style and substance. The reader should seek to determine that the candidate has made a clear case for his or her position, has given adequate information for a reader to know what was done in the action phase, and to see that the candidate is able to defend the evaluation of the project on the basis of data given in the project and the ability to support his or her analysis with cogent analysis and reasoning.

Field Supervisor

The field supervisor, like the advisor and reader, is asked to be available to the candidate for consultation and advice. This is especially the case in terms of the action phase of the project.

It is expected that the candidate will be turning to the field supervisor to gain help and guidance for matters related to designing the action component, methods to be used, and ways to evaluate this part of the project.

Wherever appropriate and possible it is recommended that the field supervisor arrange to observe the candidate as he or she is engaged in the project. In some cases this may be in person while in others it might be by video or audiocassette. Verbatim or detailed reports may be another way to examine the practical side of the project. The role of the field supervisor is to provide feedback on the candidate's leadership in the action phase of the project. This feedback can and will help the candidate during the project as well as being one source of data the candidate will use in the evaluation of the project.

The field supervisor is also expected to read the project as it is being written and offer suggestions to strengthen the written document in terms of style and substance. The candidate

is required to submit the chapters as they are written so they can be retained with comments and recommendations. As with the advisor and reader, the field supervisor will participate in the oral examination to explore the candidate's learning's from the project and their implications for the candidate's ministry in particular and the church's ministry in general.

Director of the D. Min. Program

The Director of the D. Min. program is available for consultation with any member of a candidate's committee to help clarify these guidelines as well as answer questions that may arise in working with a candidate on his or her D. Min. project.

D. Oral Exam

The oral exam can be scheduled when the candidate and all members of the committee agree that the action phase and the written report are ready to be defended. This does not mean a candidate may not be asked to make further revisions of the final draft. The committee will sign the Approval Page (page 41) at the end of the oral examination.

The oral exam will deal with 3 issues: (see page 50)

- 1) The Committee will engage in a critical conversation with the candidate on issues related to the professional project.
- 2) The Committee will explore with the candidate the learning's he or she has experienced from the D. Min program and the implications of these learning's for their ministry.
- 3) At the end of the oral exam the committee will determine what, if any, changes the candidate will need to make in the written project. It will then be the responsibility of the candidate to follow up with changes requested, and the committee member(s) who have agreed to approve any changes requested.
- 4) The oral exam will usually take place at Perkins with the candidate in attendance. Exceptions will require the approval of the D. Min. Director. Under special circumstances the oral can be held off-campus or by conference call. All exceptions will need to be negotiated far enough in advance for all parties to make arrangements in their schedule. If a candidate is going to request on off-campus oral or a conference call oral, this request will need to be submitted in writing four months prior to their anticipated graduation date. For off-campus orals, the student will be charged faculty travel expense. As a rule candidates living within Texas and surrounding four states or who have access to using Southwest Airlines will be expected to hold their oral at Perkins. In some cases where it would be difficult for non-Perkins faculty to come to Dallas for the oral, the director in consultation with the Perkins faculty committee member may arrange for an off-campus or conference call

oral exam. The order of preference for the oral exam will be (1) a meeting in Dallas, (2) a meeting off-campus, and (3) a conference telephone call.

Note: It is recommended that you reserve the conference room for several possible times and dates before setting the final date of the oral exam. Only one seminar room at Perkins is equipped with a conference phone. Schedule well in advance. The reservation can be cancelled, if need be.

E. Work load and stipends

Normally Perkins faculty will serve on D. Min. committees as part of their regular teaching load. In some cases where the director and the faculty person agree to work with a candidate as an overload, then faculty would be compensated with a stipend. It will be calculated in the light of stipends paid to those who are not regular faculty at Perkins.

The stipends for non-Perkins committee members would be \$450 for the advisor, \$100 for the reader, and \$250 for the field supervisor. These are paid directly by Perkins to members of the committee. These stipends will be processed at the end of the semester when the candidate graduates; one should allow 3-4 weeks for processing.

VI. APPROVAL PROCESS

Because of workload of the D. Min. project committee members at the end of semesters, these dates have been designed to enable the members of the committee to respond adequately to the candidate. If the candidate does not meet these deadlines, Perkins is not obligated to complete work on the project approval process in order for candidates to graduate. At the same time Perkins will meet its commitments to this schedule for those candidates who keep these deadlines.

These deadlines take into account that the candidate may need time to make revisions as well as the fact that the committee members must work the project reading into a full schedule.

VII. APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION (ACG)

Candidates must submit an ACG to the registrar's office at the beginning of the semester in which the candidate intends to graduate. Applications submitted after the university deadlines will incur late fees. A form is found at the back of this booklet on page 46 and online at www.perkins.smu.edu the Registrar. The program is Theology and the plan is D.Min.

PROFESSIONAL PROJECT DATES

December Track May Track

Completed working draft submitted to committee members	4th Friday in September	2nd Friday in February
Working draft returned by committee members	2nd Friday in October	4th Friday in February
Final draft submitted to advisor/reader & abstract submitted to D. Min. office faculty circulation	4th Friday in October	2nd Friday in March
Oral defense set	2nd Friday in October	1st Friday in March
Oral defense completed	1st Friday in November	1st Friday in April
Revisions completed and returned to advisor/reader	4th Wednesday in November	4th Friday in April
Faculty meeting to approve	See Perkins Academic Calendar	
*All documents necessary for processing final project due in D. Min. office	Last Faculty Meeting of the term (see Perkins Academic Calendar)	

- Doctor of Ministry candidates are expected to supply all documents, signatures and phone calls required by these Guidelines in order to complete the completion of the degree for graduation.
- The candidate should not ask anyone to assemble, insert pages or make phone calls on their behalf.
- All work must be in and all accounts paid in order for a candidate to graduate.
- Failure to meet these obligations will postpone graduation to the next term and the candidate will be charged an additional term continuation fee equal to one semester credit hour charge at the current rate for the applicable academic year.

APPENDICES

Professional Project
Doctor of Ministry
Perkins School of Theology

May, ____
W. Gerald Neff

Topic

Title: Develop and Field Test an Alternative to the Rural Social Science by Extension Project
Designed to Strengthen Ministry in the Small Town and Rural Church

Problem:

The majority of churches in the Texas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church are small town and rural churches. They are primarily served by local pastors and young seminary trained pastors. A number of these pastors come into the rural parish from an urban background and the resulting culture shock has had an impact on the quality of ministry in these churches. A need for a method to help ease the transition from urban to rural seems self-evident.

Purpose:

The purpose of this project will be to take the material developed by Texas A & M's rural sociology department and propose an alternative system of delivery. The material will be condensed into a more manageable format with the intention of testing this new format by conducting a 3-day Town and Country Conference in which this information can be evaluated and shared.

Major Steps:

1. General Research:

- a. Investigate total number of churches that fall into the small town and rural church category in the Texas Annual Conference. (A small town is defined by this project as a population of 40,000 or less.)
- b. Investigate this category's participation in the life and ministry of the Texas Annual Conference; i.e. average attendance, percentage of conference apportionments paid, total membership gain or loss, number of baptisms, number of confession of faith, and number of deaths.
- c. Read the text and facilitators guidebook for the RSSE project.
- d. Investigate fifty randomly selected small town and rural churches for the background of their present pastor. Collate information obtained to determine if need for this project exists.

2. Planning:

- a. Establish a task force of seminary-trained pastors serving in the small town and rural church of not less than six and not more than nine.

- b. Schedule individual meetings of the task force members evaluate assigned units of the RSSE project.
- c. Each member of the task force will be responsible for reading and condensing one unit of the RSSE project. They will also be responsible for the material as a whole. Members of the task force will be recruited with this information understood.
- d. Gather data on 3-day conference formats.

3. Action:

- a. Meet individually with each member of the task force. The candidate will be responsible for the unit the task force member has been assigned and each will present a condensed version of the unit assigned. The two condensed versions will then be reduced to a single version.
- b. Meet with the task force as a whole and present single versions for input and evaluation.
- c. After analyzing the input and evaluation, formulate the core material.
- d. With the help of the task force, formulate a 3-day conference in which the core material is used.
- e. Develop and hand out an evaluation form to the participants of the conference to regain critical feedback on the material presented and the format used.

4. Evaluation:

The task force will evaluate the theory and design of the project and the scope of the material. They will evaluate the usefulness of this material in this format as well.

5. Writing Phase.

Professional Project
Doctor of Ministry

September 28, 1998
Andrew D. Kinsey

PROSPECTUS

Title:

“Equipping the Saints for the Ministry of Evangelism: Christian Believer and Alpha as Forms of Catechetical Training in the Life of Community United Methodist Church.”

Problem:

A need exists in the church to assist short-and long-term members to grow in their faith and live out their discipleship in the world.

Purpose:

The purpose of this project will be to design with the laity of Community United Methodist Church a foundational process for helping persons in the church grow in their faith and live out their discipleship through the Christian Believer and Alpha programs.

Scope:

What I plan to do:

- A. Discern theological needs of the laity
- B. Create a Task Force to develop foundational process
- C. Present to selected leaders of the Task Force the rationale for this process
- D. Share how discipleship is key to living the Christian life
 - include biblical understanding from synoptics
 - include examples from church history
 - include catechesis
- E. Conduct research on catechetical formation and initiation
- F. Clarify the steps of process with Task Force
 - state purpose, objective
- G. Create two Trial Groups of selected person in congregation who will represent both short- and long-term members with Christian Believer and Alpha
- H. Use the two Trial Groups to test the foundational process as created by the Task Force
- I. Evaluate the process utilizing both verbal and written forms

What I will not do:

- A. Force persons to participate
- B. Force my own views of discipleship onto others
- C. Emphasize that this process is to gain more “members” in the church
- D. Equate this process with a new member class

Within My Control:

- A. The size and composition of the Task Force
- B. The amount of time for participation, i.e., stating how long the process will take for the Task Force to develop the foundational process
- C. The size and composition of the two Trial Groups

- D. The amount of time for participation of Trial Group members
- E. The evaluation forms and questions (verbal and written) at the end of the process for both Task Force and members of Trial Groups

Beyond My Control:

- A. Commitment level of Task Force members
- B. Commitment level of members in Trial Groups
- C. Theological outlook of persons involved in Task Force
- D. Theological outlook of persons involved in Task Groups
- E. Insights gleaned from persons as a result of going through foundational process

Definition and Clarification of Terms:

- A. Task Force-persons whom I will select to help develop, design, and shape foundational process of how Christian Believer and Alpha will be used in the life of the congregation
- B. Trial Groups-persons whom I invite to participate to go through foundational process for the first time; it will consist of both short- and long-term members, it is designed to test how Christian Believer and Alpha will be implemented in the church
- C. Foundational-the content of the process; the final portions or elements as agreed on by the members of the Task Force and Pastor
- D. Feedback-the information persons in both the Task Force and Task Groups will give after completing the process
- E. Process-the steps that the Task Force will work to develop for the Trial Groups

Methodology:

I.Research:

I believe that the key to evangelism in the life of the church is grounding persons in the foundations of the faith. I have a deep concern that persons understand what it means to live as disciples of Christ and know how to share their faith with others. In short, I have a deep desire to create a process with the laity to instill what is foundational in the Christian life. I can see this happening by implementing two forms of catechetical training as represented in the Christian Believer and Alpha.

Therefore, I will focus on the following areas of research:

- A. Read and study the foundational programs of churches that are seeking to ground persons in the Christian faith-e.g., RCIA, Alpha Study, John Chrysostom, Nicene Creed by Abraham, early Wesleyan Class Meetings
- B. Study key synoptic New Testament texts and books on the nature of Christian discipleship
- C. Read and study books dealing with the ways persons come to faith and understand the life of faith – e.g., Jim Fowler’s stages of faith, Carol Gilligan, John Westerhoff, Cheryl Bridges Johns, Thomas Groome, William J. Abraham

- D. Read and study books dealing with ways of teaching and knowing – e.g., reciprocal and complementary ways of knowing and how this may alter how foundational elements are taught and experience
- E. Read books which highlight and understand the pastor as teacher, equipper, and spiritual director and which understand the laity as disciples
- F. Read and understand how Christian Believer and Alpha contribute to this foundational process for persons who are wanting to grow in faith
- G. Gain feedback at the end of the process

II. Planning

A. Phase 1

- 1. Recruit a Task Force who will work together to develop, design, and shape the foundational pieces of the process that will involve Christian Believer and Alpha

B. Phase 2

- 1. Invite and recruit persons for Trial Groups who will go through the classes
- 2. Teach the Trial Groups
- 3. Evaluate the Trial Groups at the end process

C. Phase 3

- 1. Begin writing of project

III. Action

- A. Give members of the Task Force units of what to study and share as part of the process: discern what is foundational
- B. Meet with Task Force to begin to develop, design, and shape process
- C. Complete foundational process with Task Force
- D. Invite Trial Group members to complete Christian Believer and Alpha
- E. Evaluate the Trial Group after completing foundational process

IV. Evaluation

- A. The Task Force will evaluate the theory and overall scope of the foundational material
- B. The Task Force will share findings with the Trial Groups
- C. Pastor will evaluate process

V. Writing

I will follow the Guidelines as set forth in the *Doctor of Ministry Program: The Professional Practicum Project*

Contribution to Ministry:

The project I am proposing to do will help to make a vital contribution to my present ministry setting in the following ways:

- A. It will provide an opportunity for me to work closely with laity as we focus on the foundational elements of the Christian faith and discipleship.
- B. It will provide a process by which both laity and clergy will come to understand the foundation elements of the Christian faith
- C. It will provide an opportunity for me to see my role in terms of equipper, teacher, and spiritual director.
- D. It will provide the laity with the understanding that evangelism is wholistic in nature
- E. It will provide the church with an understanding of the unique forms of catechetical training through the Christian Believer and Alpha courses.

I pray that this project will help persons get beyond the notion of membership and move the level of discussion and action to discipleship.

Timetable

September 30 th	Send out Prospectus to team.
October 15 th	Set up meeting with Field Supervisor.
January 15 th	Organize Material for study.
June 1 st	First meeting of Task Force. Continue to gather information.
June 15 th	Conduct first meeting of Task Force.
July 6 th	Conduct second meeting of Task Force.

July 12 th	Begin to write Theological and Theoretical Chapters.
July 31 st	Complete research at SMU. Invite persons to participate in Trial Groups.
August 15 th	Complete and submit Theological and Theoretical Chapters.
August 22 nd	Publicize Christian Believer and Alpha to congregation.
September 1 st	Trial Groups meet for initiation in Christian Believer and Alpha.
November 30 th	Alpha Class ends. Begin surveys with Group members.
January 10 th	Complete and submit action and evaluation chapters for review to committee
January 24 th	Receive chapters back from committee
February 7 th	Submit application to graduate to registrar's office in December.
February 14 th	Submit drafts on Alpha Course to committee.
February 28 th	Working draft returned by members of the committee.
By March 13 th	Final Draft submitted to advisor/reader/field supervisor. Abstract Submitted to D.Min office for faculty circulation. Oral Defense set.
April 9 th	Oral Defense completed.
April 24 th	Revisions completed and returned to advisor.
May 1 st May 8 th	Faculty meeting to approve. Completion and submission to D. Min office of all documents necessary for processing final project.
May 16 th	Graduation.
	Revised Timeline (December)
June 30 th	Submit drafts on Christian Believer Course to committee.
July 30 th	Working drafts returned to committee.
September 4 th	Entire Project (First Full Draft) submitted to committee.
October 12 th	Working Draft returned by committee.
October 27 th	Final Draft submitted to advisor/reader and final abstract

Submitted to D. Min office.
Oral Defense set.

November 20 th	Oral Defense in Nashville, Tennessee.
November 29 th	Revisions completed and returned to advisor/reader.
December 1 st	Faculty meeting.
December 8 th	All documents in to D. Min Office.
December 15 th	Graduation.

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THE USE OF SMALL GROUPS IN SERMON PREPARATION

A Professional Project Submitted to
The Faculty of Perkins School of Theology
In
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree
Of
Doctor of Ministry

By

John F. Allen, Jr.

B.S., Southern Methodist University, 1977

M. Th., Perkins School of Theology, 1981

Dallas, Texas

April 19__

John F. Allen, Jr.

The Use of Small Groups in Sermon Preparation

April 20, 19__

Approved:

/s/ Virgil P. Howard

/s/ Richard T. Murray

/s/ Dudley Danzel

(Note to Candidate: Bring your pages to the oral exam for committee signatures)

ABSTRACT

John F. Allen, Jr.

B. S. Southern Methodist University, 1977

M. Th. Perkins School of Theology, 1981

“The Use of Small Groups in Sermon Preparation”

In the book The Miracle of Dialogue, Reuel Howe presents a case for the importance of dialogue in relationships and in true community. Relationships depend on the dialogue that exists as two people share significant hurts, hopes, dreams, and expectations. The church’s mission is dependent upon the willingness of its members to be in dialogue with each other and with the world. Further, the sermon that arises out of the context of worship cannot be preached in a vacuum, but must first listen to the cries of those who hear the proclamation of God’s Word. If the hearer is given the opportunity to speak, to share, to be heard, and to be involved in the sermon before it is preached, then the hearer will have a greater chance of hearing a sermon that speaks to his or her own experience and life.

The purpose of this practicum/project is to develop a sermon preparation process by which the hearer can be involved with the preacher. The hearer is given another perspective from which to ponder the preaching event. This practicum/project takes seriously the pastoral aspect of preaching within the church and uses this general pastoral approach to preaching. Preaching in this respect attempts to address the personal aspects of communication. It examines the process by which the listener is involved in the preparation phase of preaching and how the relationships with the preacher, with other group members, and with the preaching material can make a difference in the impact of the sermon on the hearer.

The practicum was conducted over a six-week period of time. A small group of nine laity were recruited from a suburban United Methodist Church in Rowlett, Texas. This small group met with the pastor weekly to consider the sermon text for the Sunday morning worship. 3 sermons were preached from narrative text in the book of Genesis. Although the main goal of the group was to explore the biblical text, special care was taken to make sure that relationships were developed in the small group experience for each participant. The group emphasis was on sharing ideas, feelings, hurt, hopes and life expectations that grew out of the study of this material.

This practicum/project has established the relationship between small groups that work regularly on the sermon material before it is preached and the increased hearing of that sermon in the worship setting. Without exception every member of the small group had an increase in their awareness of the preaching event during practicum. Although, there is some question about the effectiveness of this type of small group work in a large church when it is pastor led, the recommendation is that some type of pre-worship preparation for the laity is extremely helpful.

*Submit with “General Info. Pg 48” to DMIN office before oral exams are set.

ATLA

RESEARCH IN MINISTRY AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INDEXES

Research in Ministry (RIM) an index to Doctor of Ministry and Doctor of Missiology project reports and theses, is an abstracting and indexing service that uses author abstracts to provide a useful access tool for clergy, students, and others on practical aspects of religious ministry. If you wish to participate, please submit an abstract of the project to RIM.

The Research in Ministry (RIM) online form can be found at the website below.

<http://www.altalibrary.org/products/rim/rimsubmitform.html>

**RESEARCH IN MINISTRY
AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION INDEXES**

RESEARCH IN MINISTRY: AN INDEX TO DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECTS REPORTS AND THESES is an abstracting and indexing service that uses author abstracts to provide a useful reference guide for clergy on practical aspects of parish ministry. Should you wish to participate, please submit an abstract to their address.

ABSTRACT GUIDELINES:

- Write in complete sentences, preferably in third person and active voice.
- Be brief. An abstract longer than 100 words cannot be printed.
- State your thesis.
- Describe the method of study or research.
- State the result of the research or the conclusion reached in the study.
- Mail to the address listed or submit online at <http://www.atla.com/products/rim/rimsubmitform.html>
- Please do not send it to the DMIN office.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION

Vita

Reverend John F. Allen, Jr. received the B. S. degree from Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, in 1977, and the M. Th. from Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas, in 1981. He served as associate pastor at First United Methodist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas from 1981 to 1983 and served as the founding pastor of the Hopkins County Cooperative Parish in Texas from 1983 to 1986. Presently, he serves as pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Rowlett, Texas. He is married to the former Tanya Fairburn and has two children, John Franklin and Loren Kaley.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR
FILING STUDENT APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY TO GRADUATE

The Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG) form must be completed in order for a diploma to be ordered for you and for you to actually graduate. The deadline for filing are found on the PST academic calendar at www.perkins.smu.edu; go to “Registrar”. Return your ACG, signed by the Director of the Program, to the Registrar’s Office. If you do not plan to graduate on the date indicated on the form, return the form anyway so that our records may be changed accordingly. Review your ACG for the following information and make changes according.

- 1) State the month and year of your graduation.
- 2) Name - unless modified, this is the way the name will appear on the diploma. Please check for proper spacing and capitalization. Name changes that do not meet the criteria for acceptable expansions must be supported by a legal document or signed affidavit. Affidavits can be obtained from the University Registrar in the Blanton Building.
- 3) Degrees- Program is THEOLOGY Plan is D.MIN.
- 4) Address - Diplomas are mailed to all December graduates (even if you are attending the ceremony). If you wish your diploma to be mailed to a different address than your Home Address, please login to Access.smu.edu and enter a Diploma Address.
- 5) No honors are expected in the D.Min. program
- 6) Check the appropriate box.
- 7) Previous degree(s) - be specific with degree abbreviations; include periods and upper/lower case letters as appropriate and the date of degree.
 - Student signature - SIGN THE FORM.
 - All tuition and fees are payable before ACG will be processed.

Check the SMU Registrar’s webpage for graduation announcements at www.smu.edu/registrar. This is where information about ordering a gown and other important details will be found. The DMIN office does not receive this information; the letters are mailed directly to the student’s home address listed in Access.smu.edu.



Graduate/Professional Student Application for Candidacy to Graduate

Please print legibly. Confirm the accuracy of your information.

Student ID _____

1. Check one box and enter year for graduation: May August December Year _____

2. Student Name: Print your name as it should appear on your diploma. Enter all hyphens, accent marks and spacing.

First Middle Last Suffix

3. Degree(s) for Which You Are Filing as a Candidate: A separate application is required for each diploma earned. Enter all requested information in the appropriate spaces provided below. Check with your advisor for assistance.

Program: **Theology**

Plans: **DMIN**

4. Address Information: If your diploma is to be mailed to you, it will be sent to your Home Address that is in the SMU Access system.

If you wish your diploma to be mailed to a different address than your Home Address, please login to Access.smu.edu and enter a Diploma Address.

Correspondence and notifications are mailed to your Mailing Address. Please keep your addresses current in the system so that your mail will arrive promptly.

5. Honors Expected: Please check the box next to the honor(s) that you expect to receive upon graduation.

No Honors Expected Summa Cum Laude Magna Cum Laude Cum Laude

Honors only apply to students in the Law and Theology careers.

6. Commencement and Graduation Ceremonies: Indicate your graduation ceremony by checking the appropriate box.

May Candidate: May Ceremony In Absentia Law Hooding

August Candidate: May Ceremony (Walk-thru) December Ceremony In Absentia

December Candidate: December Candidate In Absentia Following May (See advisor.)

7. Previous Degrees Received: List degree abbreviation including periods (ex., M.S.E.E.) and full institution name. Foreign institutions must include country.

Degree Abbreviation	Institution which conferred the Degree & Date of Degree	Country (if applicable)
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

8. Additional Comments: _____

9. Note: Diplomas will be issued to only those candidates who have met all requirements for graduation and cleared all financial obligations to the University.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dean's Signature: _____ Date: _____

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY DEGREE

Information for Candidate Approval by Faculty

ADVISOR'S RECOMMENDATION OF CANDIDATE

(75-100 word paragraph with comments focused on professional project)

CANDIDATE:

PROJECT TITLE:

ADVISOR:

Signed: _____

RETURN TO:

**Perkins School of Theology
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM
P O Box 750133
Dallas, TX 75275**

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

**Perkins School of Theology
Doctor of Ministry Program**

Project Thesis Release Form

(Please type or print)

Candidate's Name

Project Thesis Title:

Reference Format Follows _____

I have inspected the Project thesis and certify that it conforms with the accepted University and Doctor of Ministry Program standards. This includes checking for the correctness of style, content, and bibliographic data and seeing that it conforms to accepted grammatical and stylistic conventions. The student is ready to move forward for the Oral Examination of the Project.

Project Advisor

Date

Receipt and Approval

Director of Advanced Studies

Date

Please return to the Doctor of Ministry Program Office, Perkins School of Theology, Kirby Hall 109.
Doctor of Ministry Oral Examination Room Request

When the advisor has indicated that the project is ready for submission, the candidate and committee will arrange for a date and time to hold the oral examination. The candidate must attend the oral exam in person at Perkins School of Theology; the committee may participate by conference call. Once a date is decided this information is submitted by the candidate to the D.Min.Office by email to ljhamilt@smu.edu.

The candidate must submit the following to the D.Min.Office before the oral will be scheduled:

- An advisor approved abstract (D.Min. Guideline page 42)
- General Information pages (D.Min. Guideline page 48)

D.Min. Candidate

Name:
Phone Numbers:
Emails:

Oral Exam Info

Dates:
StartTime: (allow 3 hours)

Conference Call Instructions:

The D.Min. candidate must attend the oral exam in person at PST; the committee may participate by conference call.

- It is recommended that you reserve the conference room for several possible times and dates before setting the final date of the oral exam. Only one seminar room at Perkins is equipped with a conference phone, please schedule well in advance.
 1. You will be given a toll-free number and a host access code and a participant access code by email from the D.Min. Office. Distribute these to the conference participants.
 2. At the time of your conference, each party will dial the toll-free number and input the appropriate access code. The AT&T operator will come on if a problem arises during the dialing process.
 3. AT&T Operator assistance is available during the call by dialing #0 for the menu and the 0 to be connected to an operator. You may cancel the call within 2 hours of the call by contacting the D. Min. office at 214-768-2124 or 214-768-4808.

Contact information for Conference Call: LIST ONLY THE PERSONS WHO ARE PARTICIPATING BY PHONE and ONLY THE PHONE NUMBER THEY WILL BE USING FOR THE CONFERENCE CALL. It is not helpful to list several phone numbers.

Advisor:	Phone:	Email:
Field Supervisor:	Phone:	Email:
Reader:	Phone:	Email:

Guidelines for the Doctor of Ministry Oral Examination

Revised February 2, 2006

It is recommended that you reserve the conference room for several possible times and dates before setting the final date of the oral exam. Only one seminar room at Perkins is equipped with a conference phone, please schedule well in advance.

1. All members of the D.Min. Project Committee must participate in the oral examination.
2. The Director of Advanced Studies may sit in as an additional examiner for the oral examination.
3. All members of the Perkins faculty may attend and participate in the oral examination.
4. Normally the oral examination will take place at Perkins on the SMU campus. Candidates are expected to be in attendance at Perkins School of Theology. Exceptions require the approval of the Director of Advanced Studies in response to a written request submitted four (4) months prior to the anticipated graduation date. The order of preference for the oral exam will be (1) a meeting in Dallas, (2) a meeting off-campus in the Dallas area, and (3) a telephone conference call or videoconference.
5. The project thesis Advisor will chair the oral examination.
6. The Committee will work critically with the student to evaluate the project thesis, examining
 - a. coherence of theory and practice,
 - b. the nature of the research and/or practicum experience
 - c. the design of the project
 - d. clarity of theological reflection, and
 - e. the value of learnings and conclusions as a contribution to the knowledge about ministry.
7. The following is a suggested Order for the Oral Examination of D.Min. Candidates
 - a. The examiners, i.e., the Project Committee, and student assemble.
 - b. The Advisor as Director of the Project takes the chair and requests that the student withdraws from the exam room.
 - c. The Advisor and examiners agree on the format of which the following is a paradigm:
 - i. The Advisor asks a general question about the contribution of the project to practical theology.
 - ii. Examiners take it in turns to pursue a network of questions about the project.
 - iii. Other examiners are permitted to intervene as this proceeds even though one examiner has the floor.
 - iv. There is a final call for "any further questions.
 - d. The student is brought back in and the examination format is explained.
 - e. After the oral examination is completed, the student will withdraw from the exam room to allow the Project Committee an opportunity to consult and determine its evaluation. The Committee may decide on one of the following three options:
 - i. Pass
 - ii. Pass with Honors
 - iii. Fail
 - f. The Committee will determine what, if any, changes the student will need to make in the final version of the written project thesis. The student is responsible to follow up with changes required. At this stage these are minor revisions to prepare the document for final submission to the Office of Advanced Studies.
 - g. The student will be invited to rejoin the Committee and be informed immediately of the Committee's decision.
8. The Project Advisor, after consulting with the Committee, will summarize the evaluation for and submit the *Advisor's Recommendation of Candidate* form to the Office of Advanced Ministerial Studies. This form will provide the Perkins faculty information regarding the Committee's assessment of the project.
9. If the project thesis is acceptable and all requested corrections to the text have been made all members of the committee must sign the Committee Approval Page and return this signed form to the Office of Advanced Ministerial Studies.

Perkins School of Theology Advanced Studies Doctor of Ministry Catalog Pages

PURPOSE-The Doctor of Ministry degree provides the opportunity for advanced study that integrates theological reflection and ministerial practice with a contextual focus for persons in professional ministry within the church.

AREAS OF STUDY-The four areas of concentration within the Doctor of Ministry program are: Evangelism, Parish Leadership, Spiritual Formation, and Urban Ministry. Students in Parish Leadership, Spiritual Formation, and Urban Ministry typically will attend seminars during the Fall and Spring terms. Evangelism students will attend seminars during July and January. Every student will complete a project practicum and a project thesis that focuses on an aspect of ministry within their selected concentration.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS-The professional nature of the Doctor of Ministry requires that students have leadership responsibilities in their ministry setting. Applicants must have all application material completed no later than two months before the beginning of the program. Applicants wishing to enter the Doctor of Ministry program must have:

1. An ATS-approved M.Div. degree or equivalent with a cumulative grade-point average in the master's level program of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (B or 80). In cases of demonstrated extraordinary ability in the practice of ministry, applicants with a lower grade average may be considered for conditional admission with the requirement to complete the first term with a grade of B or better in order to be granted full admission and continuation in the program.
2. Significant experience and demonstrated competence in ministry, as attested by 3 references. A minimum of 3 years of full-time experience following completion of the M.Div. degree (or its equivalent) normally is required.
3. The ability to reflect theologically and communicate effectively as reflected in a short essay addressing the proposed area for study. The essay should include: (a) a statement of objectives in pursuing the D.Min. degree; (b) a statement of the proposed area of study for the professional practicum and project thesis; and (c) the anticipated contribution of the professional practicum and project thesis to the applicant's ministry.

International applicants who hold an R-1 Visa may be considered for admission. International applicants must demonstrate proficiency in English with a minimum score of 600 paper-based or 250 computer-based TOEFL score. Because the Doctor of Ministry is a degree given in the context of ministry, generally no transfer credit is accepted.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- I. DM 9370 *The Person and Role of the Minister* (3 term hours), and DM 9380 *Seminar in Practical Theology* (3 term hours) taken together at the beginning of the program in either June or January.
- II. DM 9014 *Professional Project I* (1.5 term hours) and DM 9019 *Professional Project II* (1.5 term hours), taken in sequence. The purpose of *Professional Project I* (Topics Seminar) is to identify a problem, question, issue, or thesis that the student wants to develop into a practicum experience that can be explored in his or her practice of ministry. The second seminar, *Professional Project II* (Prospectus Seminar), will help the student define the necessary research to undertake a ministry practicum, design effective strategies and methods to use in a practicum, and to develop ways to evaluate this experience. Students must have the practicum proposal approved before participating in the Prospectus Seminar where the Professional Project is formally approved for implementation.
- III. Twelve (12) term hours in four seminars, one each term. Each seminar emphasizes the integration of theological disciplines with the practice of ministry. Prerequisites for participation in any of these seminars are the successful completion of the DM 9370 *The Person and Role of the Minister* and DM 9380 *Seminar in Practical Theology*.
 - A. The seminars for Parish Leadership, Spiritual Formation, and Urban Ministry concentrations meet in intensive time periods 3 times each term, in 3-day blocks, with four-week intervals between sessions. The seminars for the Evangelism concentration meet for two-week periods in July and January and are followed by assignments to be completed in the candidate's ministry setting.
 - B. Each seminar will consider a topic relevant to the practice of ministry in the contemporary church and world that will enhance the student's ability to reflect critically on ministry and to develop the student's initial ideas on the project practicum and project thesis.
 - C. Only course grades of B or higher will qualify toward meeting the requirements for graduation.
- IV. DM 9396 *Doctor of Ministry Practicum*. The Project Practicum is the supervised experience in ministry in an agreed upon setting. 3 term hours.
- V. DM 9398 *Doctor of Ministry Project (Thesis)*. Building upon the Project Practicum the written Project Thesis is a contribution to the practice of ministry through the completion of doctoral-level project/ thesis. 3 term hours.

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY COMMITTEE- During the first year of study the student will invite, in consultation with the Director of Advanced Studies, 3 persons to serve on a committee to supervise the approved project practicum and the written project thesis. The committee will consist of an Advisor, a Reader, and a Field Supervisor. Either the Advisor or the Reader must be a member of the Perkins faculty. The Field Supervisor should be recognized as having gifts and experience in ministry that are applicable to the practicum and be available to consult with the student during the practicum as well as to evaluate the student's practicum. The entire committee will guide, read, and evaluate the student's professional practicum and project thesis. When the professional project is completed satisfactorily as determined by the committee in consultation with the Director of Advanced Studies, the student will participate in an oral evaluation by the committee on the professional project thesis.

PROJECT PRACTICUM AND THESIS-The professional project practicum and thesis combine research, a designed ministerial field experience, and a written doctoral-level project that addresses both the nature and the practice of ministry and has the potential for application in other ministry contexts.

1. The professional project is an approved practicum experience and written thesis that articulates the theological and theoretical rationale for the practicum with theological reflection on the experience.
2. The professional project in both its parts (practicum and written thesis) should demonstrate the student's ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, organize an effective research model, use appropriate resources, evaluate the results, and reflect the student's depth of theological insight in relation to ministry.
3. The written project thesis must be submitted in an approved style and format.
4. Upon completion of the professional project and with the student's Doctor of Ministry committee's permission, the student will sit for an oral examination administered by the project committee and open to the public covering the project and the student's integration of her or his theology and practice of ministry. Ordinarily this will take place on campus. For those living a great distance from Dallas, it is possible to do the oral exam by conference call or at their own site if it is arranged in advance.

At completion of the doctoral project and successful oral evaluation, the completed written project thesis will be accessioned in Bridwell Library.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION-The Doctor of Ministry degree requires twenty-seven (27) term hours total for graduation: twenty-one (21) term hours of course work, the project practicum (3 term hours) and a professional project thesis (3 term hours). Successful completion of the Doctor of Ministry will (1) demonstrate an understanding of the theological disciplines informing the exercise of ministry in the contemporary church and world, and (2) written and practical demonstration of the integration of theory and practice through seminars, the practicum, and the professional project. The D.Min. can be completed in 3 calendar years. All degree requirements must be completed within seven calendar years from the time of initial registration. Under special circumstances, the Director of Advanced Studies may be petitioned in writing for an extension. All financial obligations must be met before graduation.

COSTS-Students in the Doctor of Ministry Program will make Fall and Spring term tuition payments during each of the first 3 years of their program for a total of 6 terms of full tuition payments in the course of the degree. If a student requests and is granted an extension of time for completing the program, a continuation fee will be assessed equal to one term hour's tuition for each additional term. Extension must be requested in writing annually before the semester begins. Students granted a leave of absence in any term will be required to pay a continuation fee for that term in order to remain enrolled in the program.

Questions may be addressed to the Director of Advanced Studies, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas TX 75275-0133. Appointments can be made by calling 214-768-2124 or writing to dmin@smu.edu.