SHEPHERDS
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DMin
Handbook

2020-2021

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DIRECTIONS: HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

1. Read through this entire handbook one time to get familiar with its contents.

   The Director of the DMin program at Shepherds Theological Seminary administers the academic policies and procedures expressed in this DMin Handbook. Shepherds reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to review, modify, amend, alter, rescind, abolish, or delete any provision of this handbook or of any other catalogs, policies, publications, or statements of the seminary, and includes admission or graduation standards, degree requirements, and accreditation of academic programs. The information in this catalog applies to the academic year 2020-2021 only.

2. In a second reading, get a good grasp of:

   - definitions
   - the relationship between problem statements, research questions, hypotheses, and research methods
   - the five models for Dissertation/research projects common in the DMin program

3. To lay the foundation for your project, write a first draft of the problem statement, research question, hypothesis and description of the research method on the "Up to Now" chart in the "Planning Your Project" section of this handbook.

4. Contact your faculty advisor to discuss your topic.
   Email:
   Phone:

Share Your Completed Work with Others!

Electronic Distribution and ProQuest Publications

Purposes of the DMin Dissertation or Research project include contributing knowledge about ministry to the larger ministerial community and making available to other professional Christian leaders' knowledge and understanding about critical areas of ministry. With ProQuest Publications, your work becomes available to students, theological libraries, ministry leaders and others in the Christian community.

If you wish to have your work published by ProQuest Publications, see the guidelines in Appendix 2. If you elect not to submit your work to ProQuest Publications, we ask that you fill out the **Exclusion Form** (also in the Appendix).

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is the highest professional degree for those engaged in local church and parachurch ministries. The DMin is structured to improve the leadership qualities of a ministry leader while sharpening their discernment and focus within their area of responsibility. Participants complete the STS Doctor of Ministry program in ministry rather than in residency and remain in their vocation—incorporating their studies directly and immediately.

Upon completion of the DMin, the student will be prepared to do the following:

- To exemplify Holy Spirit-controlled servant leadership following the model of Jesus Christ.
- To interpret Scriptures accurately from the perspective of historical-grammatical hermeneutics, understanding a text in relation to the teaching of Scripture in all of its parts.
- To apply theology as expressed in the seminary's doctrinal statement in teaching and preaching, discipling, counseling, and confronting with discernment contemporary issues that face the church.
- Increase their understanding of biblical, systematic, and pastoral theology, and relate this understanding to contemporary biblical, theological, and ministerial issues.
- To exemplify Christ-like service in a variety of vocational and non-vocational ministry settings.

- To serve both the body of Christ and society through scholarly contribution.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

All applicants must submit a completed seminary application. There is an online application available at www.shepherds.edu. The applicant can either fill out the online application or download the PDF and submit a physical application. The application process is as follows:

- Complete the entire online or physical application form (https://shepherds.edu/apply-now/. (***International Students*** must complete the physical application form and not apply online.) There are three different options. The first is for those applying to the Doctor of Ministry program. All other master's degree or diploma students complete the master's degree application. Those that just want to audit a course complete the audit application.

- Submit a $50 nonrefundable application fee.

- Request transcript(s) using the request form(s) for all academic work completed. International students may be required to have foreign academic work evaluated for

U.S. equivalency. Diploma Program applicants do need to submit high school transcripts.

- Provide three (3) letters of recommendation: pastoral, professional, personal. The pastoral reference should come from a Pastor of the local Christian Church where you attend. Those who are senior pastors must get a pastoral colleague to complete the reference. The professional reference should come from a Professor or Supervisor where you have been a student or are employed. The personal reference should come from a friend. Each reference should have known you for longer than one (1) year and not be a relative. If for some reason you cannot meet one of these requirements, contact the Admissions Department for possible alternatives.

- Provide a letter from your spouse stating their support if married.

- Provide a letter of support from your church leadership.

- Provide a personal ministry resume. This resume should be 5-10 pages.

- Make arrangements to take TOEFL (if English is not your native or birth language). Applicants must score 85 or higher overall, and 20 or higher in each skill sub-category.

- Complete an interview with the Doctor of Ministry Program Director.

- All students must complete the background check through the link provided.

A student can enroll in courses once the application process is completed and the student is officially accepted into the seminary.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

STS allows transfer of up to 8 semester credit hours from accredited graduate schools if the courses are comparable to Shepherds courses. The student must have earned a grade of B or better for a course to be considered for transfer. Transfer of credit is approved by the Registrar's office upon consultation with the DMin Director during the matriculation process.

DEGREE EQUIVALENCY

In the case of advanced graduate degree programs, such as the DMin, a student who did not complete an MDiv but who has completed a lower credit count Master of Arts degree program in Biblical Studies, Theology, Christian Education, or other ministry related field may request to have their degree evaluated by the Chief Academic Officer to see if degree equivalency credit can be applied. This is done on a case-by-case basis and requires individual evaluation based on such factors as: 1) the total number of completed units for the earned degree; 2) the total number of required units for the advanced graduate degree; 3) the comparability of units between the earned graduate degree and the advanced graduate degree; and 4) the institution where the earned graduate degree was awarded. For acceptance into the ThM, no less than 72 semester hours must be completed along with the completion of an MA degree.

DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT

A dissertation is a formal treatise or discourse that advances a proposition based on extensive scholarly research. This differs significantly from a Quantitative Research Project that many of the students in the DMin program will complete. In either case, this is the student's major research project. At Shepherds Theological Seminary the goal is that all DMin Research Projects/Dissertations must be related to ministry and must make a significant contribution to the ministry of others as well as the student's life.

Of the four tracks currently in the Doctor of Ministry program at STS, students in the *Advanced Biblical and Theological Studies* track may find researching and writing a dissertation more suitable to their interests and ministry than the quantitative research project. On occasion, a student in one of the other three tracks may likewise choose to write a dissertation. Before choosing this path, the student should speak with the DMin Director who may recommend a student advisor that the student should consult regarding possible topics and development.

Before accepting a dissertation for the Doctor of Ministry degree, the DMin Committee must be satisfied that it is clearly and effectively written, that its argument is maintained throughout, that it critically evaluates previously published works on the subject, and that it represents a significant contribution to learning and to ministry. Its contribution may be the discovery of new knowledge, the connection of previously unrelated facts, the development of an original point of view, or the revision of older views.

SUBJECT. The student is encouraged to give thought to possible topics for the dissertation from the beginning of his or her residency/matriculation in the program. A dissertation proposal should be developed with the DMin Director and the STS library staff consultant (librarian). Only then may the student propose the dissertation subject to the DMin Committee. On approval, the DMin Committee will appoint a dissertation committee for the student. The student will meet with the student's dissertation committee to discuss the topic, structure, and procedure for the work.

SYLLABUS. The student in consulting with his/her dissertation committee will prepare a syllabus for the dissertation, consisting of approximately 2,500 to 5,000 words (excluding bibliography in word count). One copy, in proper dissertation form, will be submitted to the DMin Director who will record the submission and send the copy to the student's dissertation committee for evaluation. The dissertation committee will then meet with the student to discuss its evaluation of the syllabus as well as the overall direction of the dissertation. If the syllabus is approved, a copy of the original syllabus (electronic or paper) will be placed in the student's file. The original is returned to the student. If the syllabus is not approved, the student may resubmit another syllabus on the same subject or may withdraw the original subject and purpose another according to the guidelines above for subject approval.

The function of the syllabus in a dissertation process is weighty and important. It should present, in summary fashion, the carefully researched and rationalized direction of the entire work clearly presenting the dissertation's thesis, the substance of the argument (including the

subdivisions of each chapter), and the majority of the sources for the entire work. A research bibliography must be attached. The completion of the syllabus should entail such research as to indicate the purpose, procedure, and accomplishments of the dissertation. Approval of the syllabus by the student's dissertation committee represents the acceptance of the dissertation and sanction to write the dissertation.

FIRST DRAFT. The first draft of the dissertation is to be written under the supervision of the advisers and one copy must be submitted to the Seminary Office. It must be judged acceptable by the student's dissertation committee with respect to content and thesis form. Chapters should be submitted consecutively so that the dissertation committee may evaluate the dissertation progressively. The first two chapters (not counting the introduction) must be submitted by September 15. The entire first draft must be completed by December 1 in order for the student to graduate the following spring. Failure to present the first draft on time will likely postpone graduation for the student. The schedule for spring graduation is only feasible if the dissertation committee finds the dissertation acceptable with minor revisions.

ORAL DEFENSE. On satisfactory completion of the first draft of the dissertation, the dissertation committee will ask the DMin Director to arrange for an oral defense of the dissertation before a committee of the faculty. Normally the committee will consist of no fewer than four members, including the Director and the dissertation committee. In the dissertation defense the student will be expected to articulate and defend the thesis, to argue convincingly on the specific points within the dissertation, and to demonstrate knowledge of the field of research and the pertinent literature, and the impact/contribution of the dissertation to ministry. The examining committee will discuss any further work that needs to be done before the final draft is submitted. The oral defense should be completed on or before February 15 if graduation is anticipated for spring. At the option of the examining committee, the student may be required to take another oral examination following the presentation of the final draft of the dissertation.

FINAL DRAFT. Two copies (including one original) of the final draft of the dissertation must be presented in proper form to the Seminary Office on or before April 1 preceding graduation. Failure to meet this deadline may necessitate postponement of graduation for the student. An abstract of not more than 350 words must be presented with each copy of the dissertation.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for the DMin, 32 semester credit hours must be earned with a grade point average of 3.0 or better.

DMIN CORE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CONCENTRATIONS

COURSE	TITLE	CREDITS
DM 800	Research Methods	2
DM 801	Spiritual Transformation & Servant Leadership	4
DM 803	The Ministry Leader as Theologian	4
DM 881 or DM 882	Contextualized Learning Experience The Geographical & Historical Setting of the Bible*	4
DM 885	Dissertation/Research Project I	3
DM 886	Dissertation/Research Project II	3
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* Students can elect to take another course in their concentration rather than DM 881/882.

ADVANCED BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

COURSE	TITLE	CREDITS
	DMin Required Common Core	20
Choose any 3-4 of the Following:*		
DM 813	Advanced Ecclesiology & the Practice of Ministry	4
DM 821	Contemporary Issues in Preaching from OT/NT Texts	4
DM 840	Advanced Hermeneutics & Biblical Interpretation**	4
DM 843	Teaching on the Life & Ministry of Jesus Christ	4
DM 845	Applied Theology	4
DM 847	Issues in Dispensational/Covenantal Theology***	4
DM 849	Advanced Pedagogy	4
DM 877	Biblical Manhood & Womanhood****	4
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* Students can elect to take another course in their concentration rather than DM 881/882.
** This class can be taken in conjunction with BE 705 in the ThM Program in the semester format.
*** This class can be taken in conjunction with TH 703 in the ThM Program in the semester format.
**** This class can be taken in conjunction with TH 715 of the ThM Program in the semester format.

BIBLICAL COUNSELING AND CARE

COURSE	TITLE	CREDITS
	DMin Required Common Core	20
Required		
DM 861	The History, Theology, & Philosophy of Biblical Counseling	4
Choose any 2-3 of the Following:*		
DM 813	Advanced Ecclesiology & the Practice of Ministry	4
DM 863	Congregational Soul Care	4
DM 867	Contemporary Ministry Care & Counseling Issues	4
DM 869	Biblical Concepts of Analysis & Diagnosis	4
DM 871	Counseling & Legal Issues	4
DM 875	Marital & Family Counseling	4
DM 877	Biblical Manhood & Womanhood**	4
		32

* Students can elect to take another course in their concentration rather than DM 881/882.
** This class can be taken in conjunction with TH 715 of the ThM Program in the semester format.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT AND MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

COURSE	TITLE	CREDITS
	DMin Required Common Core	20
Choose any 3-4 of the Following:*		
DM 811	Church Planting and Extension	4
DM 813	Advanced Ecclesiology & the Practice of Ministry	4
DM 815	Biblical & Contemporary Models of Christian Leadership	4
DM 817	Advanced Organizational Leadership & Management	4
DM 823	Leading from the 2nd Chair	4
DM 825	Church Boards	4
DM 827	Developing Leaders in Your Ministry	4
DM 829	Church Health, Vision, & Strategic Planning	4
DM 833	Legal and Practical Administration	4
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* Students can elect to take another course in their concentration rather than DM 881/882.

PASTORAL MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

COURSE	TITLE	CREDITS
	DMin Required Common Core	20
Choose any 3-4 of the Following:*		
DM 811	Church Planting & Extension	4
DM 813	Advanced Ecclesiology & the Practice of Ministry	4
DM 815	Biblical & Contemporary Models of Christian Leadership	4
DM 817	Advanced Organizational Leadership & Management	4
DM 819	Advanced Expository Preaching	4
DM 821	Contemporary Issues in Preaching from OT/NT Texts	4
DM 825	Church Boards	4
DM 827	Developing Leaders in Your Ministry	4
DM 829	Church Health, Vision, & Strategic Planning	4
DM 840	Advanced Hermeneutics & Biblical Interpretation**	4
DM 843	Teaching on the Life & Ministry of Jesus Christ	4
DM 845	Applied Theology	4
DM 847	Issues in Dispensational/Covenantal Theology***	4
DM 849	Advanced Pedagogy	4
DM 861	The History, Theology, & Philosophy of Biblical Counseling	4
DM 863	Congregational Soul Care	4
DM 867	Contemporary Ministry Care & Counseling Issues	4
DM 877	Biblical Manhood & Womanhood****	4
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Students can elect to take another course in their concentration rather than DM 881/882.
** *This class can be taken in conjunction with BE 705 in the ThM Program in the semester format.*
*** *This class can be taken in conjunction with TH 703 in the ThM Program in the semester format.*
**** *This class can be taken in conjunction with TH 715 of the ThM Program in the semester format.*

SOME DEFINITIONS

Applied: The project takes place in a context of real-life ministry.

Paper: A written report that describes the Dissertation/Research Project from its biblical-theological and theoretical roots to its results and implications for further study. Most DMin Papers follow the paradigm found in this handbook.

Project: A research undertaking that conducts and/or evaluates ministry.

Research: Within the context of the specific topic one will know how to minister better as a result of professional-doctoral level investigation according to recognized standards of inquiry.

RESEARCH PROJECT OVERVIEW

The following overview of the research project serves as a steppingstone for understanding all that is involved in planning and carrying out a research project as well as writing the Dissertation. A brief summary of expectations for the Director of the DMin program launches the overview of the research project. The explanation of the nature of the research project spells out the focus of the various types of projects as well as the steps to be taken and the skills to be developed during the process. This overview concludes with the overall schedule for the project and Dissertation process. Consequently, this overview provides the basic groundwork for planning and conducting the research project and writing the Dissertation.

Research Phase Progress Reports: All students in the research phase, regardless of status, must show satisfactory academic progress by submitting Research Phase Progress Reports which are due each semester (June 15 and December 15) while in the research phase. This form is emailed out to qualifying students one month before it is due. The Doctoral Studies Committee will consider students who fail to maintain contact for withdrawal from the program. Minimum contact is considered to be once a semester.

NATURE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project trains one to solve problems in the area of Christian service through extensive field research and hands-on experience. In this process, the DMin student learns to recognize challenges, needs, and opportunities related to his or her ministry setting and to engage them as efficiently and permanently as circumstances allow, while keeping in mind the special demands of Christian discipleship. Simply put, the research project should address biblical challenges, needs, and challenges—accompanied by a clear understanding of the context—using biblically compatible methods, thus enhancing a personal grasp of practical theology. Within this general picture one can identify tasks involved in conducting the project. First, the process of field research must demonstrate an understanding of the culture, context, and community in which the project takes place. Second, a clearly described plan designed to solve the problem or need is devised and implemented in such a way that others can evaluate the process and methods used after the fact. Therefore, each step of the project needs to be designed so that measurable or demonstrable results follow, whether positive or negative. Otherwise, one's colleagues and future researchers will not be able to see what, if anything, significant was accomplished. Third, the DMin student will analyze the results and evaluate his or her work and personal development in the form of a project Dissertation. Did the project make a difference? What kind of difference? Was this change anticipated or something unexpected? Notice that one should design the project so that it places the DMin student in a "win-win" situation results-wise: whatever happens—the expected or the unexpected, the positive or the negative—will contribute to and enhance an understanding of Christian ministry. Consequently, a project may demonstrate unexpected or negative results that will need to be successfully defended, clearing the DMin student for the conferring of the degree. The research project develops several professional skills. In demonstrating the need for the project, extensive field research will

require that the DMin student gain expertise in the culture of the ministry setting and of human nature. One will learn how to mobilize Christ followers under his or her leadership and how to coordinate the energies of co-workers to resolve church or ministry setting challenges, needs, and opportunities on schedule (ideally) and according to plan. During this process one discovers what it takes to work alongside other ministry professionals whose strategies and priorities may differ from one's own. Finally, the process of designing and implementing the project will develop the DMin student's ability to surpass conventional wisdom in strategic thinking. Consequently, the project experience will give the DMin student the opportunity to develop skills in research, mobilization, coordination, teamwork, problem solving, and strategic thinking.

THE TYPES OF DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECTS

The context for DMin projects is anything related to Christian Ministry or disciple making. The projects may be based on the challenges, needs, and opportunities related to a church, a group of churches, such as an association or state convention, or a denominational entity including universities, seminaries, publishing organizations, and Boards.

The DMin student has a choice of several types of research projects. With the challenge, need, and or opportunity to be addressed through the project in mind, the DMin student selects the type of project that best fits the problem solution process and/or need to be addressed through the project. Here are some basic types to choose from:

1. **Equipping Strategy** — Create a set of actions with materials to equip a group of believers for a ministry (e.g., train a ministry team to minister to families dealing with job loss and working with them in the early stages of implementation OR equipping Bible study facilitators to use healthy discussion teaching methods).

2. **Enhancing a Personal Ministry Skill** — Improve a personal ministry skill (e.g., the development of a set of actions for improving preaching skills or strategy development skills and the implementation and evaluation of those actions OR the development of a set of actions for improving skills required for leading congregations or other groups).

3. **Developing a Ministry Strategy** — Craft a strategy for a ministry directed toward a specific group of people including the early stages of implementation (e.g., a mobilization strategy to engage church members in serving God according to their giftedness and passions).

4. **Descriptive surveys of a ministry situation** — The survey is designed to report current ministry conditions or strategies in quantifiable variables. Going beyond the description (1) to criticize the survey's findings and (2) to suggest ways to improve the ministry situation are expected.

5. **Program development and evaluation** — The student will develop some ministry program or activity and evaluate its effectiveness. The ideal program is one that the

student's ministry seeks so that the program is not implemented solely for the sake of completing the research project.

6. **Program evaluation and response** — An *existing* program will be evaluated and modified.

7. **Case studies of ongoing ministry situations.** The student selects churches, denominations, leaders, etc., to study as cases to answer a descriptive research question. Going beyond the description (1) to criticize the survey's findings and (2) to suggest ways to improve the ministry situation are expected.

8. **Exegetical Research Methodology.** There are some who may desire to select a topic for research that falls more in line with the traditional Ph.D. model concerning biblical and theological studies. In this case, the research method involves more of an exegetical/expositional model with a theological orientation. However, the final paper must still relate to the research to a practical ministry situation.

PURPOSES OF THE DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT

1. To develop further the student's professional skills for ministry.

2. To contribute to the mission of the church through reflective praxis and actualized ministry in the student's current context.

3. To improve the student's self-directed learning skills and understanding of how ministry is accomplished.

4. To make available to other professional Christian leaders' knowledge and understanding in a certain area of ministry.

5. To develop further the student's ability to do field research on the level of a professional doctorate.

6. To contribute knowledge about ministry to the larger ministerial community.

EXAMPLES: THE LOGIC OF DMIN RESEARCH

Example 1			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
This study will address the association of the hiring decision-makers (1) praying and using best business practices and (2) for hiring full-time pastoral staff in selected large churches.	What are the associations between church hiring decision-makers (1) praying and (2) using best business practices for hiring full-time pastoral staff in selected large churches?	There is an association between those church decision-makers who consistently seek God's guidance in prayer and who consistently follow best business practices regarding who to hire for the church's fulfillment of its mission	Two **case studies** of churches collecting data through the church's public documentation and person-to-person interviews with key hiring decision-makers.

Example 2			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The issue to be addressed in this research is to examine the difficulties that evangelical church leaders experience concerning adiaphora (gray or debatable matters) and their relationship with local church unity.	What is the relationship between issues of adiaphora, as experienced by evangelical church leaders, and church unity?	1. Evangelical pastors and church leaders struggle distinguishing issues of adiaphora compared to issues of clear moral teaching or cardinal doctrines of the faith, which moves the church further from unity. 2. Compared to other causes of disunity, within evangelical churches, adiaphoristic issues cause tension at a greater frequency than other divisive issues.	**Descriptive survey** and focus group.

Example 3			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
This project evaluates the cognitive, affective, and behavioral benefits of experiential learning techniques used in marital enrichment programs	Do experiential learning techniques enhance the cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning aspects of marital enrichment programs?	Experiential learning techniques create heightened emotional and behavioral connectivity to the cognitive aspects of marital enrichment that yields higher levels of sustained marital satisfaction and behavioral transformation.	**Descriptive survey** and focus groups.

Example 4			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The issue of this research project is to evaluate the contribution of the Spiritual Leadership Internship to the discernment and development of ministerial calling among former interns at Grace Bible Church in College Station, Texas.			

Example 5			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The problem of this study is to evaluate whether the manual, "The Practice of Spiritual Disciplines" is effective in nurturing spiritual disciplines among selected lay leaders.	Does the manual, "The Practice of Spiritual Disciplines" help selected lay leaders to nurture spiritual disciplines?	Habits of practicing spiritual disciplines in daily life will be significantly increased for selected lay leaders after application of exercises in the manual as compared to that before this application.	Program Development and Evaluation using a pre- and post-test survey, with a third administration of the survey one month after the post-test survey.

Example 6			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The issue of this research is to determine the starting point of a preacher's sermon as either being the text or the audience.	What is the starting point in sermon preparation used by selected preachers as either the text or the audience	The preacher's sermons have traditionally begun with the text that they have sought to apply to their audience, but contemporary preachers are starting with their audiences' needs first and then finding texts that apply to their congregants. There is a relationship between what the preacher sees as his primary role (either being a shepherd or an expositor) and where he begins his sermon preparation (with the audience or the biblical text).	In-depth interviews with selected preachers to determine their starting point when it comes to preparing sermons.

Example 7			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
This study evaluates the relationship between the iDisciple workshop experience and changes in beliefs, attitudes, and actions of older women at Irving Bible Church regarding intergenerational discipling.	What is the relationship between the iDisciple workshop experience and changes in participant belief, attitudes, and actions of older women at Irving Bible Church regarding intergenerational discipling?	Older women who participate in the iDisciple worship 1) have a better understanding of biblical discipleship, 2) are more intentional in initiating discipling relationships with younger women, 3) have a better understanding of generational differences that inhibit and promote intergenerational discipling, 4) have greater confidence in their ability to employ relational techniques to disciple younger women, and 5) are more motivated to implement an organic model for discipling younger women.	A pretest, posttest, and second posttest survey was given to participants before the workshop, immediately after the workshop and one month following the workshop.

Example 8			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
Evaluating the Zaporozhe Bible College as a model for providing Bible College education in modern-day Ukraine	Does Zaporozhe Bible College provide an acceptable educational model for Bible college education in modern-day Ukraine?	Given the religious and political history, language and churches of modern-day Ukraine, Zaporozhe does provide an acceptable educational model for Bible college education in modern-day Ukraine.	**Case study** on Zaporozhe Bible College that includes needs of the Ukrainian church, educational options, evaluation of ZBC curriculum and ZBC graduates, etc.

Example 9			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The influence of the father-child relationship in Evangelical ministers' families on the child's church involvement as an adult	What influence does growing up in the home of an evangelical minister have on one's adult church involvement?	H1 The minister's child who reports a positive relationship to his or her minister-father as a child will also report high church involvement as an adult. H2 The minister's child who reports a negative relationship to his or her minister-father as a child will also report little or no church involvement as an adult.	Two surveys that compare (1) factors of the paternal childhood relationship and (2) factors of adult church involvement

Example 10			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The influence of the father-child relationship in Evangelical ministers' families on the child's church involvement as an adult	What influence does growing up in the home of an evangelical minister have on one's adult church involvement?	H1 The minister's child who reports a positive relationship to his or her minister-father as a child will also report high church involvement as an adult. H2 The minister's child who reports a negative relationship to his or her minister-father as a child will also report little or no church involvement as an adult.	Two surveys that compare (1) factors of the paternal childhood relationship and (2) factors of adult church involvement

Example 11			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
The apparent shift from expository preaching to "current topic" preaching of pastors who were trained in expository preaching	Have a significant percentage of Shepherds Theological Seminary alumni who serve as preaching pastors changed their philosophy of preaching from expository preaching to "current topic" preaching?	Less than 25% of Shepherds Theological Seminary alumni who serve as preaching pastors have changed their philosophy of preaching from expository preaching to "current topic" preaching.	**Descriptive survey** that seeks information about current and former preaching philosophy (and whether there has been a change in philosophy)

Example 12			
Research Problem Statement	**Research Question**	**Hypotheses/Propositions**	**Method/Project**
Measuring the value of Murray Bowen's family systems theory to increase the effectiveness of Christian & Missionary Alliance Women Counselors in Taiwan	Will teaching Murray Bowen's family system theory and therapy to Taiwan Christian & Missionary Alliance Women counselors enable them to become more effective family counselors?	Post-test scores on a counseling questionnaire to measure participants' understanding of Murray Bowen's family system theory and therapy will be significantly higher than pre-test scores.	Program development and evaluation: Develop 12 sessions for teaching Bowen's family system theory and therapy. Pre- and post-test participants

RECOMMENDED TEXTS FOR SPECIFIC PROJECT TYPES

DESCRIPTIVE SURVEYS OF A MINISTRY SITUATION

Bourque, Linda B. and Fielder, Eve P. *How to Conduct Self-Administered and Mail Surveys (Survey Kit 3) (v. 3)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002.

Fink, Arlene. *The Survey Handbook 2nd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002.

Fowler, Floyd J. *Improving Survey Questions: Design and Evaluation.* Sage Publications, 1995.

Fowler, F. J. Survey Research Methods. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014.

Hebert, Terry. "Assessing Readiness for Ministry of Graduating Students at Dallas Theological Seminary from Selected Profiles of Ministry Personal Characteristics Criteria" (DMin diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010).

Mertens Oishi, Sabine. *How to Conduct In-Person Interviews for Surveys*. Sage Publications, 2002.

Developing and Using Questionnaires. U.S. General Accountability Office. 1993. Item no. PEMD- 10.1.7. http://www.gao.gov/search?q=developing and using questionnaires

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

Altschuld, James W. and J. N. Eastmond. Needs Assessment Phase I: Getting Started (Book 2) (Needs Assessment Kit). Sage Publications, 2009.

Ballard, Jeanne. "An Evaluation of an Intergenerational Discipling Workshop Developed for the Women's Ministry at Irving Bible Church" (DMin diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2013).

King, Jean. A. and Morris, Lynn L. and Fitz-Gibbon, Carl T. How to Assess Program Implementation (CSE Program Evaluation Kit) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1987.

McMillan, Jim. Research in Education: Evidence Based Inquiry (6th Edition). Indianapolis, IN: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers, 2005.

Tarbell, Evelyn. "The Development and Evaluation of a Discipleship Curriculum for Incarcerated Women" (DMin diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2013).

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESPONSE

Fisher, Brian. "The Contribution of the College Ministry Internship Program at Grace Bible Church in College Station, Texas to the Former Interns' Discernment and Development of Ministerial Calling" (DMin diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 2010).

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Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology, edited by Joel B. Green and Max Turner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Erickson, Richard J. *A Beginner's Guide to New Testament Exegesis: Taking the Fear Out o
Critical Method.* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2005.

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Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Interpreting the New Testament Text: Introduction to the Art and Science of Exegesis, edited
by Darrell L. Bock and Buist M. Fanning. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

RECOMMENDED READING

The following texts have been helpful to many during their Final Research Paper preparation and research. They are recommended to you as important resources in addition to those required above.

Bryant, Miles T. *The Portable Dissertation Advisor*. Corwin Press; 2003.

Creswell, John W., *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design (3rd edition).*
Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2013. ISBN: 978-1412995306

Zerubavel, E. *The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses and
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The following sources may be useful in addressing aspects of research design.

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Barzun, Jacques, and Henry F. Graff. *The Modern Researcher*. 6th ed. Belmont:
Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004.

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You're Doing It*. Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1998.

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Reference Works, and Methods*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

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Meltzoff, Julian. *Critical Thinking About Research: Psychology and Related Fields*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1997.

Miller, Donald E., and Barry J. Seltser. *Writing and Research in Religious Studies*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1992.

Murphy, Nancey. *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1994.

Myers, William. *Research in Ministry: A Primer for the Doctor of Ministry Program*. Rev. ed. Chicago: Exploration Press, 1997.

Rudestam, Kjell Erik, and Rae R Newton. *Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process*. 2nd ed. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 2001.

Tucker, Dennis. *Research Techniques for Scholars and Students in Religion and Theology*. Meford, NJ: Information Today, 2000.

Vyhmeister, Nancy. *Your Indispensable Guide to Writing Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

DISSERTATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GRADING AND EVALUATION POLICY

Students will be evaluated on Dissertation progress upon the completion of each academic year of The DMin program. If the student has not made satisfactory progress, the Chair of the student's committee, should document the student's problems and give a written copy to The DMin Program director. The Committee Chair and program director will make an administrative decision as to whether the student should receive additional time to complete assignments or be evaluated for program continuance. Students not completing assignments by the end of the semester will not receive credit for the courses. One 30-day extension may be requested if applied for immediately after the course has ended.

WRITING REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete an acceptable Dissertation as part of their candidacy. This means that a standard of academic writing style and formatting must exist to fulfill Seminary requirements for the Dissertation. The student's writing will be assessed by the faculty and Dissertation Chair during the first year of courses. Students will be directed to further writing resources if there is a need to enhance their writing skills.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

The primary function of the IRB is to help assure that risks to human subjects are minimized and are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits, that there is informed consent or confidentiality assurances, and the rights and welfare of the subjects are maintained. The IRB consists of four members: Vice President of Academics, Director of The DMin Program, and Faculty (2). The IRB may withhold approval to begin, suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted in accord with IRB requirements, or that has been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects.

"Human subject," means a living individual about whom an investigator conducting research obtains:
1. Data through intervention or interaction with the individual or group, and/or

2. Identifiable private information

"Research" means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, even if they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.
Federal regulations which govern research with Human subjects conducted or supported by the Federal Government, including the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, 45 C.F. R. Part 46, the NIH Guidelines on the Inclusion of Women and Minorities as

Subjects in Clinical Research and the Belmont Report of April 18, 1979, form the basis of this policy.

The individual researcher is responsible for ethical practice, including activities by collaborators and assistants, all of whom incur parallel obligations. The Seminary is responsible for helping to safeguard the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in all research projects conducted either:

1. Under the direction of an employee or agent in connection with his or her Seminary responsibilities or recognizing his or her affiliation with the Seminary.

2. By a student for any course, degree, credential, or activity directly related to his or her Seminary affiliation; or by an outside Agent

Specifically, to approve research, the IRB will determine that all of the following conditions exist:

1. Risks to subjects are minimized.

2. Risks are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to subjects and to the advancement of knowledge.

3. Selection of subjects is equitable.

4. Informed consent and confidentiality are obtained / documented.

5. Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provision for monitoring collected data to ensure subject safety.

6. There are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and maintain confidentiality of data.

7. Where any of the subjects are likely to be vulnerable to coercion or undue influence, additional safeguards have been included in the study to protect subjects.

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING TO THE IRB FOR REVIEW & APPROVAL

Research activities involving no more than minimal risk to the subjects and in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the categories listed in the section on expedited re view may be reviewed by the IRB through the expedited review procedures. Research proposals which are not eligible for expedited review must undergo full committee reviews. Expedited review proposals are recommended by the student's Dissertation Committee to the Director of The DMin Program and will include a three-person review by the Chair, a designated faculty member, and DMin Program Director.

HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH (HSR) ETHICAL GUIDELINES

When research conducted by members of Shepherds Theological Seminary involves human subjects, the paramount responsibility of those members is to the human subjects they study. When there is a conflict of interest, these subjects always come first. It is essential that the rights, interests, and sensitivities of those being studied must be safeguarded. Among other things, research subjects have the right to remain anonymous; the right to understand the nature, purpose, and intended use of the research; the right to understand the possible consequences of the research; and the right, if any, to fair compensation for their services. *(Adapted from the Statements on Ethics of the American Anthropological Association)*

DMin. students are the most likely candidates to engage in Human Subject Research (HSR) in this institution. In keeping with the Ethical Guidelines for Human Subject Research, *all doctoral research anticipating involvement with human subjects requires the pre-approval of the seminary's Internal Review Board* (IRB) for HSR. Shepherds' IRB has been formally designated to assure appropriate steps are taken to protect the rights and welfare of humans participating as subjects in a research study. The board has authority to review and approve or disapprove of any research project by students involving human subjects that does not pass or comply with standards meant to protect human subjects from abuse or ethical treatment. Research projects involving human subjects may not proceed without the approval of the IRB. The IRB is based on established requirements for the ethical conduct of human subject research:

• Respect for persons (involving a recognition of the personal dignity and autonomy of individuals, and special protection of those persons with diminished autonomy).

• Benefice (entailing an obligation to protect persons from harm by maximizing anticipated benefits and minimizing possible risks of harm).

• Justice (requiring that the benefits and burdens of research be distributed fairly).

The decisions of the IRB are informed by these three requirements and are governed by IRB Policies and Procedures, and by the Federal Policy (the "Common Rule") codified at Title 45 Part 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

The required forms, policies and procedures for research involving human subjects are available through your advisor and the Director of the DMin program.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION

To obtain this approval the candidate must follow these steps:

Doctoral candidates planning to do HSR as part of their research process will submit an *HSR proposal* to the Internal Review Board (IRB) of the Seminary.

The proposal will include:

1. A statement which:

a) For expedited review, describes the reasons no/minimal risk exists; or
b) For full committee review, addresses specific at-risk concerns.

2. A 2-5-page summary of the proposed research which includes the following aspects:

a) Objective of the study
b) Proposed beginning and ending dates, pending IRB approval
c) A brief description of the subjects participating in your research, including any factors that may increase vulnerability to stress, or distress (such as age, disabilities, psychological disturbance, institutional status, etc.)
d) A description of recruitment techniques (How do subjects enter the study?)
e) Any laws or regulations that the student knows are relevant to the special nature of the population (e.g., minors, patients in psychotherapy, child abuse victims who may require reporting breach of confidentiality). If there are these special situations, include a discussion of how the procedures address these issues
f) General procedures (including all persons having contact with the subjects)
g) Method of obtaining informed consent (see section on informed consent below)
h) A description of procedures for protecting confidentiality of participants
i) Justification for any use of concealment or deception
j) A description of procedures for protecting confidentiality of subjects
k) A description of the potential risks related to the study/procedures
l) An evaluation of the risk/benefit ratio in any case other than no risk (In what ways do the perceived advantages or benefits, both to the subjects and generalizable knowledge, of the research outweigh the risks?)

3. The researcher's assessment, survey forms, or description of a commercially published instrument, if used.

4. The consent form, if required.

5. A written statement of approval from the appropriate agency or institution research department or administrator, official stationery, clearly stating that approval for the proposed research activities has been granted, where applicable.

The researcher must submit six full copies of the application to the IRB staff at least fourteen (14) days before the next regularly scheduled IRB meeting for a full committee review. For expedited review, the researcher need only submit three copies of the application to the IRB staff.

All applications for research involving human subjects for the doctoral Dissertation must be reviewed by the student's Dissertation Chair and DMin program director who will assess the management of potential risk to subjects and to ensure the use of proper procedures. After completing this review, the research advisor will assign a risk assessment and sign the signature sheet. Upon approval by the research advisor, the

student submits completed documentation to the IRB.

6. The candidate must receive explicit, written approval of any HSR outlined by the candidate in the proposal before any HSR may begin. This approval can only come from the Internal Review Board. **Conducting HSR without approval by the IRB will be grounds for dismissal from the DMin program.**

7. Should a proposal for HSR be rejected by the Internal Review Board, said proposal may be modified and resubmitted up to two more times for approval. Any additional reviews may be offered to the candidate at the discretion of the Internal Review Board.

8. Additions to HSR methods or substantive changes to Board-approved HSR strategies made during research must be approved before implementation. **Failure to receive such approval may be grounds for dismissal from the DMin program.**

OUTCOMES OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The IRB forwards its disposition of the application to the researcher and the research advisor if the researcher is a student. If the application is not approved, the researcher must address the concerns of the IRB and resubmit the application for a second review, redesign the research project, or withdraw the application completely. The IRB must be informed by the researcher which alternative will be pursued. If the researcher is a student and the application is not approved, the research advisor should meet with the student to review ways in which the project might be altered to address the concerns of the IRB and become eligible for resubmission. Alternatively, the student may redesign or withdraw the research project. The student must convey to the research advisor his or her decision regarding the returned human subject documentations. The research advisor must pass this information to the IRB staff for record keeping purposes. The research advisor must ensure that the student understands the follow-up reporting procedures.

EXPEDITED REVIEW

The IRB Chair will review the application for completeness. If all documents are present and criteria for expedited review are met, the IRB Chair will forward the packet to a committee member for review. The reviewer will return the packet, along with a written comment regarding approval or necessary revisions, to the IRB Chair who will notify, in writing, the student researcher and Dissertation Chair of the application status. If the application is not complete, the IRB chair will indicate in writing deficiencies that need to be addressed before the application can be reviewed.

RESEARCH CATEGORIES FOR EXPEDITED REVIEW

Research activities may be reviewed through expedited review procedures when risk is minimal, and children are not involved.

If, upon initial review by The DMin program director, it is determined that the student should attend the IRB meeting, the program director will notify him/her in writing of the next regularly scheduled meeting. Within one week of the committee meeting, the program director will notify the researcher in writing of the committee's determination. All students may present their topic in person to the IRB.

Research involving the direct dealing with children and when they are the subjects, must adhere to the same review process. Because of the vulnerability of the population, expedited review for research proposals is not possible. "Children" refers to individuals under the age of 18 years. Parental permission is an acceptable onset for working with children.

THE DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT

DMin. studies at Shepherds Theological Seminary culminate in the completion of a Dissertation/research project submitted as a Dissertation. Note that the term "research project" refers to the entire project as described in the five models below. The term "paper" refers to the actual written document.

The student's Dissertation/research project and paper will be evaluated by three people: (1) the Advisor, (2) the Reader, and (3) Director of The DMin program (*Dr. Dave Burggraff*). The Director of the DMin program assigns the Advisor and Reader based on the student's topic and input. The Advisor assumes responsibility to direct the entire project and serves as the "point person" with whom the student will have regular contact during the course of the project. The Dissertation/research project is a Pass or Fail (P/F) project.

DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT SCHEDULE

Before commencing the research project, all doctoral seminars must be completed. Only at this time has the DMin student received the formal training needed to complete a research project. This requirement exists to keep DMin students from the disappointment of false starts and backtracking. A research project includes the following two phases— the project and the Dissertation. The following information provides an overview of the project phase and the Dissertation phase steps with some detail.

A paper that reports on your Dissertation/research project has a specific format to follow. Your own research paper will *normally* consist of the chapters below. In unusual cases, the order or number of chapters may vary, if approved by your Advisor and the Director of the DMin program.

Most DMin Dissertation/Research Projects are expected to be from 150-200 pages in length. More is not necessarily better. The page length is determined by what is required to present the study with high quality. There is no page minimum or maximum. The estimates above are just that -- estimates.

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The purposes of the Dissertation/Research Project are to:

1. Further develop the student's professional skills for ministry.

2. Contribute to the mission of the church through reflective praxis and actualized ministry in the student's current context.

3. Improve the student's self-directed learning skills and understanding of how ministry is accomplished.

4. Make available to other professional Christian leaders' knowledge and understanding in regard to a certain area of ministry.

5. Develop further the student's ability to do field research on the level of a professional doctorate.

6. Contribute knowledge about ministry to the larger ministerial community.

CRITERIA FOR AN ACCEPTABLE DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT

The project:

1. When completed, will inform our understanding of ministry and how to minister better.

2. Clearly relates to the student's current ministry (a "front burner" issue or need) or ministry interests.

3. Develops from an adequate knowledge of biblical theology, ministry theory and praxis.

4. Employs an acceptable research method(s) with which the guided student has sufficient competence to attain validity.

5. Is sufficiently focused to allow a concentration of effort and to avoid trying to cover so much ground that the results are superficial.

6. Gives evidence of careful planning and execution.

7. Incorporates an honest evaluation of the process and results of the project based on well-defined criteria and valid evaluative procedures.

8. Is submitted in the form of a Dissertation, written in clear, correct English and is in correct format as defined by this handbook, avoiding polemic or exaggerated claims.

9. Is written with careful attention to the correct use of source material, documentation, and research standards.

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DEVELOPING YOUR RESEARCH STRATEGY

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

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The DMin "Dissertation/Research Project" begins with a clearly defined **research problem.** By "problem," we do not necessarily mean something wrong that needs to be fixed. A research problem provides the **rationale** for the Dissertation research project. (Some research literature refers to the research problem as a "problem statement" or "purpose statement"). A research problem may be:

- a ministry that needs to develop (why it needs to develop is actually the problem).
- a descriptive study of what and why various ministries have succeeded or failed in selected contexts.
- a particular ministry skill, philosophy, or issue that needs improvement, development, or resolution.
- a reason for a descriptive-evaluative study (how we will know better how to minister).

NOTE: Four sample research problem statements appear in the following pages.

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THE RESEARCH QUESTION

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Most research questions in DMin studies come as a "grand tour" (Creswell, 1994, p. 70). That is, the research question gives in its most abstract form what will direct the study or what the researcher wishes to know, learn, explain, or clarify as a result of the project.

Typically, the research question will use wording that points to the research method that will be employed or at least to its *quantitative or qualitative* nature.

e.g., **qualitative:** What influence do interracial leadership, relevant expository preaching and blended music have on the racial integration of Caucasians into Peoria Community Church?

e.g., **quantitative:** Will teaching selected doctrines of systematic theology to CBS students improve their ability to understand and evaluate the false doctrine of the WOF Movement?

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DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL

PURPOSE

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The purpose of the project proposal is to provide a blueprint for the student's Dissertation/research

project. The blueprint needs to be precise enough so that another researcher could follow and work through your plan, but not so precise that it becomes redundant or verbose. Once your Topic Approval Form has been approved and your project Advisor assigned, you must begin work on your Project Proposal.

DESCRIPTION AND PROCEDURE

THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

By June 1 of the year before graduation the student must submit a proposal that defines the project and outlines the Dissertation to his/her advisor and second reader. Once it is revised and in final form, the student must send it to your advisor and the Director of the Doctor of Ministry program via email for filing. The proposal should follow the chapter divisions of the Dissertation and summarize the key elements. These elements are (1) definition of the problem or issue, (2) research question, (3) hypothesis or hypotheses, (4) data sources and methods for collection, (5) analytical procedures, (6) probable conclusions and recommendations for further study, and (7) a preliminary bibliography. Typically, the proposal should be, but not exceed thirty double-spaced pages. The student must obtain approval of the project proposal before proceeding to write the first two chapters of the first draft of the Dissertation. More specifically: The proposal previews the project and Dissertation and will look very much like the first chapter of the Dissertation by delineating the following sections as subheadings for the proposal. NOTE: The proposed length of each section below is only a suggestion, not a requirement.

INTRODUCTION (CHAPTER 1)

Provide the rationale for the project, why you are interested in it, and how it fits your ministry. Give a precisely worded problem statement and research question, and the "big picture" of the project. How will this project help others to do ministry better? Who could benefit from this besides you? What is the research problem, the research question, and the hypothesis or hypotheses? This is the most general section of the proposal (1–2 pages).

SECTION HEADINGS

- Introduction
- Purpose of the Study
- Topic and Research Problem
- Significance of the Study
- Methodology
- Delimitations/Assumptions
- Definition of Terms
- Summary

PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND LITERATURE REVIEW (CHAPTER 2)

A literature review in a DMin Dissertation/research project is one of the first steps of research to accomplish two primary goals: 1. Learn and document what prior research says about the subject. Carefully evaluate conclusions stated in relevant research in the evaluation of your hypothesis or hypotheses. 2. Learn and document what requires more research and articulate how your project will fill some of that gap. In so doing, you should identify the strengths and limitations of your own research project.

Your literature review is designed to make you the expert in your topic area. This means your pool of literature, web, and other sources is to be *exhaustive*. This will mean visits to more than one library. It means both religious sources and secular sources bearing on your topic/field. It may also include sources not in English. Yes, you must find them all and be aware of their contents.

Preview the literature review in broad categories. By the time you write the proposal, you will have done much of the work on the literature review, so you should at least be able to talk about the broad categories of your literature review and why this literature is relevant for your project. The previous research and literature review should be structured around your hypothesis or hypotheses. Provide at least one paragraph describing how your project will build on or extend this line of research (10–15 pages).

HOW TO DO A LITERATURE REVIEW

"Review of the Literature" is a meaningless phrase until you specify which part of the vast literature of Theology, Administration, Counseling, etc., you are looking at. You must determine which specific area you plan to review, and then focus your literature review on that area. For instance, if you planned on writing your Dissertation/research Project on the leadership style of Jesus, you would not review the entire vast amount of literature on leadership. Instead, you would review the literature that specifically discusses the leadership style of Jesus.

Your literature review should be a map that allows you to see where your study is located in relation to what has been done before.

A good review of the prior writings or studies that bear on your topic will make clear to the reader what part of the vast field of knowledge is being investigated.

You might think about the prior literature as medieval maps that had many details of land and seas, and also think of the blank spaces as "unknown" regions. You want to locate an area at the edge of an unknown section, a jumping off point, which will provide a foundation for your study from which you will launch into the unknown. Then your study can push knowledge a little way into the blank (unknown) area and fill in a bit of the map.

Your literature review should identify the principal work and authors, spell out the main

ideas dealing with your topic, indicate generally accepted concepts and explanations, and identify any uncertainties or controversies.

Your review should be organized by themes, systematic propositions about the studies covered, historical sequences, or other important ideas. **It is not a file of books or articles reviewed, but a coherent, intellectual analysis of an area of study.**

You should make the organizing ideas explicit and show the development and enhancement of those ideas as your review proceeds.

There are likely to be partial summaries as you complete aspects of your total review. There must be a thorough summary at the end, which reminds the reader of principle points that are relevant to your study and leads into formal procedural statement of your problem of research question.

A literature review is <u>never</u> a collection of articles or book reviews, or a catalog of prior writing. It is an exposition of the state of knowledge, theory, and ideas in the appropriate segment of the field you are investigating.

Literature Review Procedure:

1. Locate the relevant literature through library, database, index, and Internet searching. Build the initial bibliography. Skim the more recent works because they will lead you to earlier works. Because you cannot read everything, focus on your hypothesis or hypotheses.

2. Identify four to five recent sources of the highest quality and begin reading them. Focus on your hypothesis or hypotheses.

3. Make notes on materials read by writing a paragraph to half-page abstract on a book or one paragraph on an article. The summary should include (1) the author's thesis, (2) the project's research question(s), (3) the research method employed, (4) the chief findings (two or three) of the research, (5) key terms or concepts with definitions, and (6) key questions that emerge from this source. NOTE: Not every source will be a piece of "scholarly" research with these clear divisions. More popular sources may be included, but the nature of such sources should be noted. Note the page numbers of the source so you can find the material again as you write your literature review. Zotero is a helpful database for collecting and making notes on this initial bibliography so that searchable fields and keywords can be categorized, and repeated themes noted.

   a. This initial bibliography is a preparation tool for retaining a summary of material read. It will not be submitted as part of your literature review. Essentially, it will serve as your study notes.

b. Begin reading the items that you have located (books, articles, other media), starting with the most recent works. Remember to focus on your hypothesis or hypotheses.

4. Group the sources under common themes where it is clear that there is a connection (e.g., "Jones's study in 1996 followed up on Meyers and Briggs's studies in the 1970s because they were both dealing with 'personality indicators in the workplace.' ").

5. Write your findings in paragraph form (as a chapter) moving from one group to another, starting with the most recent findings in each group. Begin with an introductory paragraph that will preview the structure of the chapter that you are about to write. Compare and contrast sources and their contributions. Criticize the contribution of each work. Work from an integrated perspective within the groups.

The primary structure of your literature review is formed around your hypotheses. Following your introduction of the chapter, provide a heading based on your first hypothesis. Under this heading, discuss the literature relating to the concepts and relationships included in the hypothesis. As you do the review of the literature on each of these concepts and on their relationships, you should describe, evaluate, analyze, and give your opinions about the meaning of the body of literature you cite. Do not merely summarize books and put these summaries under the various topics. You need to integrate the materials from the various sources, point out the differences and similarities of their approaches and positions, and give your personal assessment of them. Do not focus on popular books. Find those books, articles, Bible references, and other materials that address the relevant issues of each hypothesis. Continue this process for each subsequent hypothesis.

The following is an example of the structure for the literature review: The research question is: What are the factors that contribute to ten years of successful ministry for an English-speaking pastor serving in a Chinese church?

The hypotheses are as follows:

1. A contributing factor for the longevity of ten years of pastoral ministry for English-speaking pastors in a Chinese church involves the relationship between calling and ministry.

2. A contributing factor for the longevity of ten years of pastoral ministry for English-speaking pastors
in a Chinese church involves personal character through crisis.

3. A contributing factor for the longevity of ten years of pastoral ministry for English-speaking pastors in a Chinese church involves effective use of communication skills.

Based on these hypotheses, an outline for the literature review chapter might be as follows: Topic headings for the literature review chapter are:

- Introduction to the Literature Review
- Relationship of Calling and Ministry
- Relationship of Personal Character to Crisis
- Effective Use of Communication Skills
- Summary and Conclusions of the Literature Review

 Finally, it is suggested that as you review the literature for each hypothesis, give attention to the concepts you will want to measure with your research instrument. Write down statements that you find or that are suggested to you by the literature. As you develop the instrument, some of these statements may be turned into items in the survey or questionnaire which will be explained and defended in chapter three of the Dissertation.

6. Write a summary or conclusion for the literature review. It should include at least one full paragraph that summarizes what we know as a result of this literature review and at least one paragraph on what we do not know and what other studies need to be done. A paragraph must contain at least 3 sentences. The final conclusion of the chapter should be a short paragraph describing how the present study will build upon this literature review and add to the "what we know" section. Appropriate subheadings for this one-page summary are as follows:

   - Conclusions from the Research
   - Additional Research Needs
   - The Appropriateness of the Current Project

7. After the literature review is written, use the following checklist (Birley & Moreland, 1998):

   - Has the emphasis been on the most important and relevant authors and works?
   - Are the sources up to date?
   - Have you documented the sources properly leaving no dangling claims?
   - Is the review critical of authors and their work, where appropriate?
   - Does the literature review focus on the research concerns and questions without deviating from them?
   - Does the chapter argue and read well?
   - Could you summarize, in a five-minute lecture, the findings of your literature review?

Birley, G., and Moreland, N. *A Practical Guide to Academic Research*. London: Kogan Page Limited, 1998.

The Dissertation must uphold copyright requirements. Failure to do so may subject the student to financial and other penalties that courts may assign. United States copyright law governs the protections and limitations in sections 107 through 118 of the Copyright Act (title 17, U. S. Code). Limited quotation of copyright materials is permitted under the provisions of "fair use," which have been established by court decision and codified in section 107 of the Copyright Act. Information on copyright and "fair use" may be found at

the following websites:

- http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html
- http://fairuse.stanford.edu/Copyright_and_Fair_Use_Overview/chapter9/9-b.html
- http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/permissions.html

PROCEDURE AND RESEARCH METHOD (CHAPTER 3)

The discussion of research method in the introduction is a very brief statement that merely summarizes the research method in a general way. The research method in chapter three provides detail about the procedures, instruments, and processes used in collecting the data. Explain how you are going to conduct this project (with whom, when, etc.), and how you are going to evaluate it. Be specific with the research design, including hypothesis, implementation and evaluation, program evaluation, case study, etc. If you have developed an instrument for evaluation such as a questionnaire, survey, or interview, note that the instrument appears in the appendix of the proposal. Also describe the feasibility of this study. That is, can you do it in the allotted time? Are the subjects for study available to you? This section of the proposal is probably the most specific and requires precise thinking and wording (2–5 pages).

SECTION HEADINGS

- Research Design/Methodology
- Research Site
- Researchers' Role
- Population and Sample Selection
- Data Collection Procedures
- Managing and Organizing Data
- Data/Statistical Analysis Procedures
- Measures of Validity
- Summary

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

DEVELOPING A SURVEY FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The following is a procedure for the development of an evaluative questionnaire that can unfold as a result of a careful literature search. Obviously, a person doing a literature search will want to take careful notes that are documented with full bibliographic detail, including page numbers.

1. An additional step can produce a measuring instrument that will allow the student the benefit of accurately evaluating results. Each time a measurable concept is surfaced, the student should write a question concerning it that could be answered on a five-point scale (such as an agree/disagree scale).

For example, in researching pastoral staff relationships a student may find that many associate pastors are in the process of seeking a senior pastor role. This could be addressed with the statement: While I enjoy my work as associate pastor, my real goal is to be a senior pastor. A cross-check question might be: I have no desire to be a senior pastor because I feel I am gifted for an associate's role.

2. Each time this issue surfaces in the literature, the student should write the appropriate questions (or statements) concerning it. This should be done no matter how many times the concept surfaces. Computer macros might be constructed so that often repeated questions could be inserted with a keystroke.

3. Read until you start hearing echoes. In other words, when you find yourself reading the same ideas repeatedly, you may have gained an appropriate level of subject mastery.

4. At that point, a simple tabulation of the questions should show you the principles that dominate the literature. This should give you a rough draft of your questionnaire. Your next step would be the validation and field testing of the instrument as discussed in the document under that heading.

5. It is important that the student be aware of the major divisions of the subject matter. In reporting the results, these major divisions will allow a broad-stroke summary of results rather than simple line-item tabulation.

RESEARCH INTERVIEWS PURPOSE

Interviews provide a valuable means to assess experiences, learning, etc. As with all self-reported research, responses to interviews can provide only "responses to interviews" rather than "this is true in ministry." Nevertheless, responses to interviews provide valuable insights, anecdotes, and "qualitative data." Interview responses are valuable in supporting data from a more empirical study.

PROCEDURES

1. The key to any good interview is to develop good questions that measure or evaluate what you really want to know and thus help to answer the research question.

2. Schedule convenient appointments with those that you would like to interview. Also schedule 15–30 minutes after each interview so that you can be alone to process responses.

3. As you meet with them, establish good rapport through friendliness, genuineness, etc.

4. Recording the interview assists the note-taking process and guarantees the

documentation of valuable insights that will come up during the interview. However, prior approval from the interviewee will be necessary. Be aware that recording sensitive issues can inhibit the respondent's answers.

5. Always take copious notes. Do not depend completely on the recording.

6. Immediately after the interview, find a quiet place: the car, outside, etc. From the recording, add to your notes for a complete record of the interview. Be sure to note exact quotes.

7. Place the transcribed documents into a database or word processor that can search for key words. This will allow you to tabulate the responses and "hear" repetition.

8. Carefully read the transcripts of the interviews to discern who said what about what. Are there differing opinions? Why? Why not? Has sufficient evaluation been supplied? What are the "raw results" of the interviews? What conclusions can the researcher draw from the results?

9. Record the date, place, and time of the interview for footnoting dates.

USING FOCUS GROUPS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSE

Focus groups may work well to gather information or data when you have only a small number of people in your subject group.

DEFINITION

A focus group is a group of no more than ten people who are qualified to answer a researchable question or group of interview questions that will answer the researchable question. Members of the group may or may not know each other. The focus group meets with the researcher. Interaction is permitted, even encouraged. That is, participants are encouraged to piggyback on other participants' comments. The session should be recorded and transcribed.

EXAMPLE

Let us say that the researchable question is: "When your church built its building, how did you maintain the attendance and momentum of the ministry?" There are no rigid criteria for qualifications for such a question. Probably a cross section of people would be valuable, such as a pastor, an elder, several members-at-large, or a chairperson of the building committee.

DIRECTIONS

1. Participants, including the researcher, will sit in a circle, if possible. The researcher will have a pad of paper on which to record responses. An audio

recording device of some kind should also be used where possible.

2. When all members of the focus group are present, the researcher (interviewer) will give the following instructions:

    a. I will ask you a few questions. The answers to these questions come from your perceptions or opinions. There are no right or wrong answers. I will write your answers in my notes so that I can remember them. The session will be recorded, but you will not be identified by name in the transcriptions. You will not be identified with your answer. Be sure to use open-ended questions that will generate discussion and comments rather than yes/no questions that will stifle comments. If you have used a research questionnaire for individual interviews previously, the same questionnaire may be used for the focus group session.

    b. Please answer candidly unless your answer might hurt another member of the group.

    c. After reading each question, I will call on one of you to respond first. When that person has finished responding, in no particular order, others may chime in. However, only one person speaks at a time.

    d. Please speak loudly enough for all members of the group to hear you.

3. When the session is complete, use a word-processing program to transcribe the recording and
    your notes into a list of responses to the questions you asked. If answers repeat, type them again.

    a. Using the search tool of the word-processing program, search for repeated answers.

    b. Make the following lists: (1) answers that appear five or more times, (2) answers that appear two to four times, and (3) answers that appear only once. Obviously, those that appear several times seem to have the group's consensus of importance and thus will be considered more reliable answers.

    c. After you have the three lists described above, attempt to explain why some answers appeared several times and why some were mentioned fewer. This is guesswork to some degree, but it is educated guesswork. Go out on a limb to try to account for the variation.

Krueger, Richard A. and Casey, Mary Anne. *Focus Groups*. 5th ed. Thousand Oakes, CA: Sage, 2015.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS (CHAPTER 4)

Based on the hypothesis(es) of the previous section, what do you expect to find as answers to your research question? Granted, you can make only an educated guess at this point but be sure that it is educated (1-2 pages).

SECTION HEADINGS

- Presentation of Analysis
- Description of Findings
- Summary

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY (CHAPTER 5)

This is probably the most difficult section of the proposal to write because you have not yet conducted the research and therefore you do not yet know what conclusions, questions, or further studies the project will generate. Simply preview the fact that the Dissertation's final chapter will draw conclusions from the results, make generalizations for broader ministry, and discuss implications for further inquiry (1 page).

SECTION HEADINGS

- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Implications
- Application
- Limitations
- Suggestions for Further Research
- Summary

REFERENCES

Include all academic sources referenced or used in the study.

APPENDICES

Include any research instrument such as a surveys, interview protocols, or curriculum that you may have used in conducting the study. NOTE: DMin Dissertations are typically 150–250 pages in length. More in quantity is not necessarily better in quality. The appropriate page length is determined by what is necessary to present the study according to high academic quality as it relates to the area of research.

DISSERTATION COMPLETION

The final Dissertation version will include all the above chapters as well as the completion of the following:

- Title Page
- Certification Page
- Acknowledgements
- Abstract
- Table of Contents
- List of Tables
- List of Figures
- References
- Appendix

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE PROPOSAL

1. This is a piece of academic writing, not a sermon manuscript, and not an undergraduate essay. Therefore, the student should adhere to the following:

   a. Write in an academic style, demonstrating the ability to write a formal Dissertation. Employ active voice as is standard practice for U.S. academic writing.

   b. Employ the Turabian style for documentation, format, etc. The student may use Zotero or another bibliographic database.

   c. Document your claims. Do not make sweeping generalizations or state claims that do not show up in the literature. Avoid seeing the readers' comments, "Says whom?" in the margins.

   d. Anticipate some revision. Most proposals are approved on the second or third submission.

   e. Be succinct. If it can be said in a paragraph, do not use a full page. If it can be said in a sentence, do not use a full paragraph.

   f. Do not be subtle; say it explicitly so the readers can discern exactly what you plan to do.

   g. Realize that a significant percentage of the work on your project will be completed when you submit your proposal. Much of the literature review and the crafting of the research design (the grunt work), including initial development of an instrument, will be complete when you write the proposal. So, develop your proposal with care. When the proposal is approved, your readers are telling you, "Work the plan according to the way you've proposed it, and we'll likely approve your Dissertation." An approved proposal is like a contract. That is why you must give sufficient evidence that you have done sufficient work to submit the proposal.

2. If you are stuck, contact your advisor (first choice) or the Doctor of Ministry Director (second choice). Do not let time get away from you while you are wondering, "What do I do now?" If you do not hear back in two or three weeks, contact the DMin office to check on your readers.

3. Pray. This too can be a spiritual exercise. Shalom! Reference Creswell, J. W. *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014.

THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

ROLE OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The Dissertation Committee members will meet with the student outside of classroom time to provide guidance, suggestions, corrections, and encouragement. Committee involvement is to ensure quality control and graduate-level work in the Dissertation process. All committee members must hold an earned Doctor of Ministry degree or other doctoral degree in a related discipline. Committees should meet at least twice each trimester. Other contacts may be made through e-mail or Chair contact. They are contracted by the Chief Academic Officer per STS policies.

ROLE OF THE DISSERTATION CHAIR

The Chair is the key person in the Dissertation process. The Chair will support, encourage, and assist the student throughout the Dissertation research and writing process. The Chair is assigned based on student requests, faculty availability, and topic interest. He/she convenes full meetings of the committee to read, review, and critique the Dissertation writing and content. The Chair also meets periodically with the student or communicates via e-mail to validate their chapter progress throughout the term of the Dissertation. The Chair facilitates the oral defense meeting by making sure that each person on the committee has an opportunity to ask questions, encouraging an in-depth dialogue. The Chair communicates on a regular basis with the Dissertation Coordinator to make sure all policies are adhered to, including communicating completion of chapters and the binding of the Dissertation.

ROLE OF THE DISSERTATION READER

The Reader meets with the full committee to discuss the progress of the student's writing and organization. Readers support, encourage, and assist the student. They read all chapters of the Dissertation and may submit additional suggestions and/or critiques through the Chair. The Reader attends the Oral Defense and contributes a list of questions to facilitate the dialogue. Both the Chair and Readers must complete a contract with the Vice President of Academics before participating on the committee.

ROLE OF THE DISSERTATION OUTSIDE READER

The outside Reader is a person asked to read the final version of the Dissertation and attend and take an active role in the Oral Defense. The outside Reader's role is to support and assist the student in the final phase of their Dissertation completion. This position is only used when there is not a third reader on the committee. Outside Readers are contracted by the Vice President of Academics per SCS policies.

REPLACEMENT OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Dissertation student may file a written request for a Dissertation committee Chair or Member to be replaced. The reasons must justify the request and must be approved jointly by the Vice President of Academics and the Doctor of Ministry program director. All Dissertation students must be ready to adhere to the strict standards and expectations of their committee. There must first be an attempt to resolve any problem between the student and any member of the committee within the committee through discussion and writing.

TOPIC APPROVAL & WRITING THE PROPOSAL
Procedure and Deadlines

Students may begin their Dissertation/research project before they finish their course work only with approval of the Director of the DMin program. Students should give thought to possible topics for the project early in their DMin program. The thought process needs to start during your Research Methods class. Students will receive instruction concerning how to conduct the project and to prepare the Dissertation.

Students must complete their final project within three years of finishing all coursework. If the student does not successfully complete their Dissertation/Research Project within those three years, they will be removed from the Doctor of Ministry program. If a student registers for their final project and then abandons it, failing to complete it within the allowed three years, they will be removed from the program and they will be assigned a failing grade for the project. If they wish to resume their research project at a later date, they will need to reapply to the program, re-register for the final project, and pay any applicable registration and reinstatement fees, and tuition. Such reapplication will require completing a new DMin application form and provide an up-to-date ministry history, as well as a ministry supervisor recommendation.

The Project Topic. To have the project topic approved, the student will submit a DMin *Dissertation Topic Approval Form* (TAF) to the Director of The DMin program. If approved, the Director will appoint an Advisor and a Reader to the project. **The TAF must be submitted by March 15 of the year preceding graduation before the student enrolls in the DM-885 Dissertation/Research Project I course.** For example, the student who wishes to graduate in May 2023 should submit the form no later than March 15, 2022. Failure to secure approval may result in the postponement of graduation.

Registration. Once the TAF is approved, the student must register for *DM 885 Dissertation/Research Project I* and pay 100% of the registration fees/tuition or enroll in the payment plan**.** This is done by using the standard online registration through Populi.

Extensions. If the student fails to complete the final paper by April 15th, they may register for a 6-month extension, however, they will not be allowed to graduate in the May ceremony. If an extension is approved, it must be registered with the Registrar and the appropriate extension fee *($300 for each extension request)* paid in full at that time. No student will participate in graduation without first completing all of the graduation requirements, no exceptions.

The Project Proposal. *By June 1, the student must submit a proposal that defines the project and outlines the Dissertation/Research Project to the Director of the DMin program.* The proposal should follow the chapter divisions of the research paper and summarize the key elements. These elements are:

(1) Definition of the problem or issue, research questions, and hypothesis(es)
(2) Literature review, data sources
(3) Procedures and method of data collection
(4) Anticipated results
(5) Probable conclusions and recommendations for further study
(6) Preliminary bibliography

Typically, the proposal should not exceed twenty double-spaced pages. The seminary provides a sample project proposal. The proposal should be emailed to The DMin Office and the assigned Advisor.

Often, candidates are required to revise and resubmit their proposal, sometimes two or more times, before it is approved. **The Proposal must be approved by the Advisor and the Director of The DMin program before the candidate may proceed writing the first two chapters of the first draft.**

Please see the *Project Schedule of Submissions* for other important dates and deadlines.

The following is a sample schedule that serves as a guide in your completion of the project. The specific dates indicated may not be applicable to you but will nevertheless give an idea on the typical duration of the project.

PROJECT SCHEDULE OF SUBMISSIONS (MAY GRADUATION)

Feb 1st	• Submit general topic for project (via phone call or meeting with the Director of the DMin program (Dr. Burggraff).
Mar 15th	• *Topic Approval Form* (TAF) due to the Director of the DMin program (Dr. Burggraff). • Literature review should be *in process.*
Apr 15th	• Registration materials due to The DMin Office and the Registrar with payment for tuition plus registration fees. • Begin preparation of *Dissertation Research Paper Proposal.*
June 1st	• *Dissertation Research Paper Proposal* due to The DMin Director (Dr. Burggraff) and your Advisor (if assigned). • Human Subject Research (HSR) proposal (if applicable) is due to the seminary *Internal Review Board* for approval by this date. • Literature review should be substantially complete and should accompany your *Proposal.* • Registration for *DM-885 Dissertation/Research Project I* & payment of tuition fee for the course.

July 1st	• Reviewed proposal is given back to the student.
August 1st	• Start of *DM-885 Dissertation/Research Project I*
Sept 15th	• First draft of the first two chapters due to your Advisor.
Dec 15th	• First draft of the third & fourth chapters due to your Advisor.
Jan 15th	• Registration for *DM-8871 Dissertation/Research Project II* & payment of tuition fee for the course
Jan 30th	• The draft of all chapters should be complete
Feb 1st	• First draft of *all* chapters due to the project Advisor and Reader.
Feb 15th	• Arrange for the oral presentation of your research to a group that includes professional peers. Documentation forms for this presentation are available from The DMin Director (Dr. Burggraff) and must be submitted from observers of your presentation as instructed.
Mar 15th	• Second draft that includes any required changes is due to the Advisor and Reader for their review and approval. An electronic copy shall be sent to the Director of the DMin program (Dr. Burggraff) as well. ***It is the student's responsibility to have a professional editor who will evaluate and fix any formatting errors, footnotes, etc. based on the SBL guidelines found in the SBL style manual.*** • A grading form will be provided to your Advisor/Reader for evaluation of your Dissertation/research project. It must be completed and submitted to The DMin Director (Dr. Burggraff) before the April 15th submission deadline. • Please note that the Dissertation/research paper is a Pass or Fail (P/F) project.
Mar 25th – 30th	• Oral presentation of the research
Mar 26th to Apr 1st	• Submission of paper to Academic Affairs Editor (AAE) for institutional evaluation. The AAE will not fix edit for content or form. If the paper has significant errors on it, it will be given back to the students for them to fix.
Apr 25th	• Submit two originals of Dissertation/Research Paper, with all corrections approved for binding. *These two unbound originals must be printed on the required paper as specified.* • If you wish to obtain the services of ProQuest Publications (copyrighting service included), request for the detailed process and Agreement Form from the Office of the DMin Director • ***It is the student's responsibility to obtain advisor and reader signatures on both copies of the approval page. If they are resident faculty physically located at the Seminary, Dr. Burggraff can help you obtain these signatures.*** • If the Dissertation/Research Paper is not complete by this date, an extension must be approved by The DMin Director and filed with the Registrar at this time.
May Graduation	• Receive Doctor of Ministry Degree.

PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

Directions: Complete every section below. Write <u>neatly</u> in black ink.

Problem Statement	Research Question	Hypothesis	Method/Project

HOW TO WRITE THE DMIN DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT

TOPIC APPROVAL FORM

The Topic Approval Form (TAF) that follows this page communicates to the Director of the DMin program the student's initial conceptual intent for the Dissertation/Research Project. The Topic Approval Form is essentially a "learning contract" that specifies a brief summary of the project and its significance, a very early and foundational bibliography, and the fit of this project for the student and his or her ministry context.

If the student and Dean have discussed potential advisors, the advisor should guide the student in the completion of the TAF. When the TAF is approved, the DMin Studies Committee officially assigns an Advisor and Reader, but often a faculty member has discussed the project with the student and therefore can (and should) be involved as early in the process as possible.

The questions on the form are self-explanatory *if you have done the required reading* and should be answered with as much detail as possible. The following three pages show the general format of the Topic Approval Form.

Once you have turned in the Topic Approval Form, please watch these videos which are designed to help you start with your Dissertation/Research Project.

Introduction to DMin Dissertation/Research Project: https://vimeo.com/313898988
Process of Writing: https://vimeo.com/322072944

DMin Topic Approval Form

Instructions: Fill out one copy of this form (single space type) and send it to The DMin Director. The DMin Committee will review the TAF and communicate with you as to its acceptability or the need for changes. Please know that it is uncommon for a TAF to be approved without required revisions.

Name of Student

Anticipated Graduation Date

1. Dissertation/Research Project Interim Proposed Title

2. Briefly state the significance of this topic for your personal ministry context (church, mission field, etc.) and its significance for others in similar ministries:

Shepherds Theological Seminary Topic Approval Form
(Continued)

3. Briefly state the relationship of the topic to your DMin goals and post-graduation goals:

4. Give a summary description of your Dissertation/research project, including its rationale (why you want to do this project):

5. <u>On a separate sheet</u>, list at least 10 major books, 10 major journal articles, and 10 other sources (such as internet sources or other publications) with which you can start your research. It is expected that you will use *complete bibliographic entries in SBL format*):

6. Describe the compatibility of this topic with your capabilities, the availability of information, your limits of time, and limits of money (is this project "doable?")

7. Provide one sentence for each of the following Items, as you currently understand them:

Problem to be addressed:

Research question to be answered:

Research method (program, survey, case study, etc.):

Hypothesis(es) to be tested:

CANDIDATES SHOULD NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

For Committee Use

Topic Approved:

_____ _____
DR. DAVID BURGGRAFF   DATE

Does the Candidate need to submit a proposal to the Shepherds Theological Seminary
Internal Review Board for Human Subject Research?

(circle one) Yes No

DMin Committee Appointments:

_____
ADVISOR ASSIGNED

_____
READER ASSIGNED

DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT

GENERAL PROTOCOL

SUBMISSIONS

1. FINAL COPY

   a. Your final copy is submitted to your Advisor and may be printed on a high -quality laser printer. It must be carefully proofread so that it is grammatically accurate and free of typographical errors.

   b. Your Advisor and/or Reader may require revisions to your paper. Make these and resubmit to them.

   c. When your Advisor makes his final approval, your oral presentation will be scheduled.

2. DEFENSE/ ORAL PRESENTATION
   Once you have successfully passed your defense / oral presentation, you may begin the Final Editing process so that your work is suitable for binding.

3. FINAL EDITING:

   a. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they have done their best to format the document correctly and eliminate all grammar mistakes before sending it to the editor. It must be in Turabian format established by GRACE. The project will be formatted with sufficient margin space suitable for binding (at least 1.5" on the binding edge and 1" on all other margins).

   b. The student will send the document to a third-party editor who will ensure that the document is in correct SBL format. This can be on a thumb/flash drive or by attachment.

   c. The student is responsible for paying their editor. The amount charged is an agreement between the student and the editor and does not involve STS. Cost may vary depending on length and the inclusion of charts and tables, and any other special appendices.

   d. The student will then send a soft copy (attachment or on a thumb/flash drive) to the Dissertation chair for its final review. The chair will make any minor corrections as needed, but not major changes. In those cases, the chair will send the project back to the student for revision. An example may include page numbering sequence and location, consistent footnote errors, block quoting, etc. All of these and others should be already formatted by the student.

   e. Once the project is reviewed and approved by the chair, he will send the document back to the student for final printing.

4. FINAL PRINTING

a. When the document is returned to the student, the student is responsible to print 2 originals in the appropriate weight paper: 8 ½" x 11", acid-free, white 25% cotton fiber, fine business paper, 20 lb. weight.

b. It is preferable to have a local FEDEX or office store (OFFICE DEPOT/MAX) do this, not on a private printer/copier. This cost is borne by the student.

c. These will be printed on one side, ensuring that all pages have a sufficient margin (1.5") for the binding, left edge.

5. SIGNATURES

a. The student will have EACH original approval page (already printed out on the appropriate paper) signed by the members of his committee. This is best accomplished by having the pages sent 'round-robin' to each member. The Student bears the cost of postage and handling, not the signers.

b. The final signer will send the executed pages back to the student and be incorporated into his final project that has been printed on the appropriate paper.

6. BINDING

a. This cost is borne by the student and will be paid directly to the bindery.

b. The student will send the TWO originals of the signed document to STS after binding.

7. CATALOGING and COPYRIGHT

a. The library will catalog STS's copy.

b. The student is responsible to have his work published and copyrighted (through ProQuest Publications). Please note that these are optional. See Appendix 2 for more details.

PROJECT ORAL PRESENTATION AND EXAMINATION

Once the candidate's Dissertation/Research Project chair and reader agree that the student has reached the end of their research and writing process, an oral presentation/examination will be scheduled by the student in conjunction with the Advisor. A research project oral presentation is a requirement for the Doctor of Ministry degree. As a general rule, the student will present their findings to an audience consisting (at a minimum) of the Advisor, the reader, and one person designated by The DMin Studies Committee. We strongly encourage the candidate to have present for this presentation leaders and members of his ministry, colleagues in ministry, interested seminary faculty and seminarians.

The goals for the demonstration are:

1. To articulate clearly that which the student has learned about ministry as a result of the research and writing for the Dissertation/Research Project.

2. To enable the audience to understand the student's work and specifically to explain concisely the principles explored in the research paper.

3. To enable the audience to strengthen the practical aspects of their respective ministries.

The student will be expected to assess the audience and prepare materials for presentation in a manner suitable for the occasion. The student should recognize that the research paper demonstration is a component of the overall research process, and that a poor-quality presentation may affect approval or disapproval of the project as a whole. The demonstration may involve such things as lecture, visual aids, media materials, handouts, enactment, question/answer, and the like. It should answer the following:

- Why this subject? (Research problem and question)
- How was research done? (Be brief and concise. Do not rehash your research paper.)
- What was the research designed to test? (Your hypothesis)
- What is the research *not* designed to show? (Limitations of the study)
- How did theology and Bible inform the research? (Theological context)
- What conclusions can be drawn?
- What other research questions were uncovered by this study that others may pursue?

The oral presentation will ordinarily be held at STS Main Campus or the student's place of ministry. **The student may be required to bear the expense of bringing the Advisor and Reader to the demonstration if travel is required**.

If the candidate's place of ministry is distant from the seminary campus, *adjustments to the oral presentation may be made with the approval of the Director of the DMin program.*

A presentation will be no more than **<u>one hour</u>** in length, and will be judged by the Advisor, Reader

and/or other observers according to the following criteria:

1. Evidence of thorough preparation.

2. Clarity of presentation and presentation materials.
3. Sensitivity to audience in both planning and presentation.

PROQUEST PUBLICATIONS GUIDELINES

Our first recommendation to begin the submission process would be to read and complete the attached publishing agreement form. Please note that ProQuest publishes Dissertations and theses from graduates of accredited universities.

Below is a list of requirements:

1) An electronic version of your manuscript copied to a CD/flash drive. The format must be PDF; the file must be non-encrypted, and all fonts must be embedded. Please make sure that security settings allow printing and that there is no password protection on the PDF. If you require additional resources in creating your PDF, please contact our Author and School Relations (ASR) department at the contact information listed at the bottom of this email.

2) The completed and signed ProQuest/UMI Publishing agreement form. The Agreement Form will be sent to you by the Office of the DMin Dean once requested.

3) Payment for services in the form of money order or check made payable to ProQuest LLC. We cannot accept credit card payments for publishing services. We accept credit card payment for bound copy orders only. PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU ARE SUBMITTING YOUR DISSERTATION OR THESIS IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT THE COST FOR TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING IS $25.00.

4) Proof of degree: a copy of your diploma, transcripts or an official letter stating completion of all graduate requirements from the university are all acceptable.

5) A hard copy of your title page and abstract

These materials can be sent together in one package to be submitted directly to ProQuest at the address below:

ASR Department/ProQuest LLC
789 E Eisenhower Pkwy (PO Box 1346)
Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346

Publishing with paper submissions carries a turnaround time of eight to 12 weeks. Students hand in a complete paper manuscript, signed agreement forms and payment. All materials are then shipped to ProQuest for processing. It is important to review all submissions for accuracy and completeness in order to ensure the quickest possible turnaround time for publication. Please ensure that all forms are filled out completely, all signatures are present, and all payments are included. Please note that

payments, if sent separately, must arrive BEFORE manuscripts. If we begin to process without payments some options (e.g. copyright) can no longer be applied. It is extremely helpful if each shipment is accompanied by a school letter and list identifying all students sent in the current shipment.

Please feel free to contact any representative in our Author and School Relations Department should you have further questions. We can be reached by phone at 800-521-0600 or by email at disspub@proquest.com.

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APPENDIX A
PROQUEST PUBLICATIONS EXCLUSION FORM

Shepherds Theological Seminary

I hereby state my decision not to include my DMin *Dissertation/Research Project* in ProQuest's publication program.

Name and Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B
DISSERTATION/RESEARCH PROJECT SCORING INSTRUMENT

Instructions

The purpose of this instrument is to evaluate the quality and completeness of Doctor of Ministry Dissertation/ Research Project submissions at Shepherds Theological Seminary. The use of this rubric is intended to provide on-going and flexible evaluation and re-evaluation of the proposal and research paper drafts as they are developed.

Use by Advisor/Reader: Upon submission of a final draft, the candidate's assigned Chair and Reader should complete the rubrics and submit them to the Director of the DMin program for retention for institutional assessment purposes.

Consensus: Consensus between the Chair and Reader in scoring a research paper is not required.

Using the rating scale: A four (1 – 4) level rating scale is used for scoring each of the quality indicators in the rubric. *In general, ratings of 3 or above are considered satisfactory, while rates of 1 or 2 do not achieve minimal standards for passing.* An "NA" (not applicable) category is also used when an indicator on the rubric is not relevant to the manuscript.

A space for comments is provided for quality indicator. This space can be used to provide specific guidance for revision, and it should also be used to praise strong work or noteworthy improvements. More extensive notes can be submitted as a separate attachment or as a marked-up copy of the manuscript.

Definitions of Ratings for Quality Indicators

4 = Clearly meets this competency with a pattern of excellence.

3 = Consistently above average performance in this competency.

2 = Approved, though in most areas competency is of average quality or, rarely, below average quality.

1 = Candidate has failed to exhibit this competency.

Dissertation/Research Project Scoring Instrument

Date _____ Candidate Name _____

Criteria	Rating
1. Abstract contains a concise description of the study, a brief statement of the problem, exposition of methods and procedures, and a summary of findings and implications. Comments:	
2. The Introduction section has a clear statement demonstrating that the focus of the study is on a significant problem that is worthy of study. Comments:	
3. There is a well-organized review of the literature surrounding the subject, including a well-articulated summary of research literature that substantiates the study. Comments:	
4. The *nature of the study*, the r*esearch question*, *hypotheses*, or research *objectives* are briefly and clearly described. Comments:	
5. Operational definitions of technical terms, jargon, or abstractions are clearly provided. Comments:	

6. The significance of the study is described in terms of
      a. knowledge generation
      b. professional application
 	
 Comments:	

7. The literature review is clearly related to the problem statement as expressed in
      a. research questions and hypotheses, or
      b. study questions and study objectives
 	
 Comments:	

8. The review of related research and literature includes
      a. comparisons/contrasts of different points of view or different research outcomes,
      b. the relationship of the study to previous research
 	
 Comments:	

9. The content of the literature review is drawn from acceptable peer-reviewed journals or sound academic journals, or there is justification for using other sources. Comments:	

10. The role of the researcher in the data collection procedure is described. Comments:	
11. The process by which the data were generated, gathered, and recorded is clearly described. Comments:	
12. The systems used for keeping track of data and emerging understandings (research logs, reflective journals, cataloging systems) are clearly described. Comments:	

13. The findings
    a. build logically from the problem and the research design, and
    b. are presented in a manner that addresses the research questions.
 	
Comments:	

14. Discrepant cases and nonconforming data are included in the findings. Comments:	
15. Patterns, relationships, and themes described as findings are supported by the data. All salient data are accounted for in the findings. Comments:	

16. The Dissertation/Research Project
    a. follows a standard form and has a professional scholarly appearance
    b. is written with correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling
    c. includes citations for direct quotes, paraphrasing, facts, and references to research studies
    d. does not have over-reliance on limited sources
    e. in-text citations are found in the reference list
 	
Comments:	

17. The Dissertation/Research Project is written in scholarly language (accurate, balanced, objective). The writing is clear, precise, and avoids redundancy. Statements are specific and topic sentences are established for paragraphs. The flow of words is smooth and comprehensible. Bridges are established between ideas. Comments:	
18. The Dissertation/Research Project is logically and comprehensively organized. The chapters add up to an integrated "whole." Subheadings are used to identify the logic and movement of the paper, and transitions between chapters are smooth and coherent. Comments:	

_____   _____

Signature of Evaluator   *Date Scoring Completed*

_____

Print Name of Evaluator

APPENDIX C
ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY OFFICE WITHIN 5 DAYS AFTER THE ORAL PRESENTATION IS CONDUCTED	Ref. ATS Degree Program Standards -- F.3.1.3.2 Upon completion of the doctoral project, there shall be an oral presentation and evaluation. The completed written project, with any supplemental material, should be accessioned in the institution's library.

Determination by Oral Examiner

(Print candidate name: _____ made his/her oral

presentation to the undersigned on (date) _____. In my judgment the candidate has

(check one) □ *Passed the oral presentation*
 □ *Has failed the oral presentation*

Explanatory comments are required in case of a failing grade. Add pages if required.

_____

_____

_____

Print name: _____ Signature _____
                                         Observer

Acknowledgement by Candidate

I have seen the evaluation rubric attached to this form as completed by my oral presentation observers. (Signing below does not imply agreement with the observers' evaluation marks or conclusion regarding certification.)

Candidate signature _____ Date: _____

To be completed by observer of the Project Oral Presentation

(Observer: Please return completed form by emailing to the Director of the DMin Program.)

<u>**Poor**</u>   <u>**Excellent**</u>

Evidence of thorough preparation   **1 2 3 4 5**
Comments:

Clarity of presentation   **1 2 3 4 5**
Comments:

Organization of materials   **1 2 3 4 5**
Comments:

Appropriateness of methodology   **1 2 3 4 5**
Comments:

Sensitivity to audience   **1 2 3 4 5**
Comments:

Overall Presentation   **1 2 3 4 5**
Comments:

APPENDIX D
INFORMED CONSENT

You have been selected to participate in a research study being conducted as part of a doctoral Dissertation project at Southern California Seminary. The researcher is conducting this study under the supervision of the Dissertation chair whose name and contact information appear below. This research study involves _____. The purpose of the study is _____. The interview should take approximately ____ minutes to complete.

I, _____, agree to participate in this study with the full understanding that:

1. No individually identifying information will be part of the written documentation. All information about the participants will be protected by assigned code   numbers and held strictly confidential. Any quotes used in the written documentation will be either anonymous or the participant's identity will be carefully disguised.

2. If at any time I am uncomfortable with a question or simply do not want to answer it for any reason at all, I do not have to respond.

3. I am free to terminate my participation at any time for any reason and do not have to state my reason to the researcher.

 4. A copy of the signed consent form will be provided for my records.

5. I can request a copy of the final written documentation.

6. The written documentation will be available to members of the researcher's Dissertation committee, but no individually identifiable information will be accessible to anyone except the researcher.

 If I have any concerns about the research, I can contact the Dissertation chair to express those concerns identified below.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

E-mail address: _____

Researcher	Dissertation Chair
Student Name	Name
Student Phone Number	Title
Student Email	Shepherds Theological Seminary
Phone Number	Email