

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

OF

COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

STUDENT MANUAL

2011 - 2012

Advanced Professional Studies
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(Revised 6/11)

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APPENDIX: “Guide to Style for the D.Min. Project Report” (9 pages)

INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to give you information to assist you throughout your work as a Doctor of Ministry student at Columbia Theological Seminary. It guides you through the steps you must follow. You should refer to it whenever you have a question about your responsibilities for your work. It will guide you in making plans for completing your Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree. This manual supplements Columbia's Catalog, published bi-annually. You may obtain a copy of the catalog from the Advanced Professional Studies Office, or it is available at Columbia's website (www.CTSnet.edu) by following the "Current Students" tab to "Academic Catalog" under "Academic Affairs." An electronic version of the manual is also available by following the "Current Students" tab to "D.Min." under "Degree Programs" to "D.Min. Manual."

In addition to this manual, the Office of Student Services publishes an on-line "Student Handbook" containing information about campus life and seminary policies and services. The CTS Student Handbook is found at the CTS web website (www.CTSnet.edu) by following the "Current Students" tab to "Student Life" to "Student Handbook." Among other important matters, the "Student Handbook" says this about student honor and plagiarism: *Each student bears the responsibility for honor and honesty in taking examinations, writing papers and fulfilling all other academic requirements. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on exams and plagiarism (representing another's ideas or words as one's own), and either can lead to dismissal from the seminary.*

If you have questions, which are not addressed in the manual, please have the manual by your telephone or your computer when you request clarification from:

Mike Medford

Registrar

Telephone 404-687-4576

Fax 404-687-4575

MedfordM@CTSnet.edu

or **Office of Advanced Professional Studies**

Campbell Hall, Room 107

Azizi Awolana

*Administrative Assistant for
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Telephone 404-687-4534

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Awolanaa@CTSnet.edu

The degree is taken on the campus; however, Columbia offers introductory seminars and some electives in the Church and Ministry approach to Doctor of Ministry studies at other locations as the situation dictates. The degree consists of four parts: (1) introductory seminar, (2) elective courses, (3) practicum, and (4) final research project. The following pages tell you about each step and how they all fit together.

TRANSFER CREDIT

With prior approval from the Office of Academic Affairs, a student may receive up to six (6) hours of transfer credit from another ATS accredited institution. Each course must be at the advanced degree level and the grade must be at least a B (3.0 on a scale of 4.0). A course submitted for advanced standing must have been taken no more than five years before entrance into the program. Students may not receive credit for academic work applied toward another degree. Independent studies and enhanced basic degree courses will not be considered for transfer credit.

In order to transfer credit into Columbia, the Office of Academic Affairs must receive a petition and your official transcript or, in the case of CPE or certified status, the certificates or certification documents. Please send these to the attention of the Associate Dean of Faculty.

COURSE WORK

Courses in Decatur, Georgia

The Introductory Seminar and Electives are taught on the Columbia campus each academic year. The Church and Ministry introductory seminar is taught jointly with Interdenominational Theological Seminary three consecutive days in September, October, November, and December. The Gospel and Culture, Christian Spirituality, and Church Planting and Transformation seminars are two-week residential courses. Housing is available on the Columbia campus.

Electives: Elective courses are taught in five different ways.

1. **January**. Intensive two-week courses (three hours per day in class for five days each week) may be taken during two weeks in January, the winter term.
2. **June & July**. Two blocks of intensive two-week courses are also offered during two summer sessions. Students may take one course each two-week period.
3. **Fall and spring semester-long courses**. Courses are offered one or more days a week for thirteen weeks. Classes meet for approximately three hours each week.
4. **Fall and spring intensive courses**. Two-week electives are offered periodically. In the recent past, the pattern has been to offer an elective the last two weeks in October and the second and third weeks of February.

5. **Courses in Other Locations.** Columbia makes some of the required course work available in off-campus locations. The Seminary brings the Introductory Seminar and one or more electives to the off-campus site. However, at least three electives must be taken on the campus.

D.Min. Elective Credit for M.Div. classes

A M.Div. class may be used as an elective course in the D.Min. program if the course can provide an opportunity for advanced theological thinking and additional course requirements which bring it to the level found in other D.Min. courses.

In order to pursue this option, a student must:

- a. Fill out the M.Div. Conversion form and have it signed by the director of Advanced Professional Studies **and** the professor, then submit it to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- b. The form should outline the additional requirements, assigned by the professor, such as readings, book reviews, case studies, reflection papers, classroom presentations, creative applications, and/or a major research/project paper which demonstrates an advanced level of engagement with the course materials.
- c. The form should include the due date for these assignments, particularly if the date extends beyond the end of the term.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Email Accounts**

In an effort to be good stewards of Columbia's resources, we require D.Min. students to get information from their Columbia email account.

You may access your account by typing:

<http://www.google.com/a/mail.ctsnet.edu>

Type in your user name and then your password

**If you have technical difficulties, please email to
PCHelp@CTSnet.edu.**

2. **Registration**

Before each academic term, D.Min. students will receive, at their Columbia D.Min. email accounts, course and registration information for both on-campus and off-campus courses. Registration forms should be completed and mailed to "The Office of the Registrar" at the Columbia address in the front of this Manual. Alternatively, completed registration forms may be faxed to the Registrar at 404-687-4575. The student is responsible to register, order textbooks and prepare for the first class meeting. A \$50 late fee is charged for registration after the deadline date. If, after registering, the student wishes to drop or add a course, he or she must do so using a Drop/Add Form also mailed or faxed to "The Office of the Registrar."

All academic forms are available at www.CTSnet.edu by selecting the "Current Students" tab, then choosing "D.Min." under "Degree Programs."

3. **Payment of fees**

Payment may be made with the registration form sent to the Registrar. Payment or arrangements for payment must be made with the Business Office (404-687-4580) by the first day of class. The student may write a letter to the Business Manager to arrange a payment schedule on a monthly basis. All payment questions should be directed to the Business Office. Grades and academic transcripts may not be released for a student whose account is not current. Academic transcripts will not be released for students who have withdrawn or dropped out and have unpaid accounts with the seminary. All accounts with the Business Office and Library must be cleared before a student is eligible for graduation.

4. **Housing**

Short-term housing is available on campus in the Harrington Center, double occupancy, with linens provided. Housing request forms are available on Columbia's website (www.CTSnet.edu to the "Current Students" tab, then "D.Min." under "Degree Programs.") and should be returned to the Business Office.

5. **Grades**

A grade of B or better must be earned in the Introductory Seminar, and the student's final GPA must be at least a 3.00 in order to graduate. Any course that a student fails is automatic grounds for dismissal from the program.

6. **Financial Assistance and Loans**

Columbia keeps the cost of the D.Min. program as low as possible and assumes that ministers can pay for the program costs. The Advanced Professional Studies Office does not have scholarship funds.

INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR

The Introductory Seminar, the first course of the degree, asks you to undertake academic study of significant texts, engage in critical theological reflection, work with peers in ministry, and write a major term paper examining your understanding of your calling to serve the church as a minister and your vision of new directions in ministry and mission.

The seminar will present the aims of the particular approach in which you have enrolled:

- **Church and Ministry:** developing your vision of ministry for the mission of the local congregation. This seminar meets 3 days per month in September, October, November, and December.
- **Gospel and Culture:** a two-week residential seminar, focusing on a critique of North American culture and a new design for mission to the contemporary world.
- **Christian Spirituality:** a two-week residential seminar in which participants seek depth in their own spirituality and how to foster spiritual growth within the congregation.
- **Church Planting and Transformation:** a two-week residential seminar in which students explore models of church planting from around the world and gain an understanding of how congregations can be strengthened and sustained.

You are required to earn a grade of at least B in the Introductory Seminar in order to continue in the program. When the Introductory Seminar is completed, two copies of the paper are given to the professor. The Introductory Seminar counts for 6 credit hours.

ELECTIVE COURSES

WHAT COURSES TO TAKE:

1. Eighteen credit hours of elective course work are required for the degree. Course schedules can be found on the CTS website (www.CTSnet.edu) by following the "Current Students" tab to "Course Schedules" under "Academic Affairs."
2. You must choose an elective from each of the three areas of the Columbia curriculum: **Biblical**, **Practical**, and **Historical/Doctrinal**. You must take an additional course in either the **Biblical** or the **Historical/Doctrinal** area.

3. In the Introductory Seminar you will discover areas and courses you will want to pursue.
4. The Office of Academic Affairs assigns faculty advisers. Up until the project, faculty advisers help guide students in course selection. During the student's project work, the adviser may serve as either the first or the second reader.

HOW ELECTIVES ARE OFFERED:

1. Upon approval of Academic Affairs, students may take electives by **cross-registration** at any of the other **Atlanta Theological Association (ATA)** schools (Interdenominational Theological Center, Candler School of Theology, Erskine Theological Seminary, and Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary). Registration is through Columbia by contacting the Registrar. Both a regular registration form and a cross-registration form must be completed. Payment of fees is to Columbia.
2. Students may take three hours (one course) through **Independent Study**, a reading course on a topic selected by the student, consulting with her or his faculty adviser. It is usually on a subject related to the research dimension of the Doctor of Ministry Project. With the approval of one's faculty adviser, the student initiates negotiation with the professor of choice. You register for independent studies (and pay the standard tuition) by completing and submitting to the Registrar's Office a "Contract for Independent Study" form and a regular Registration Form, both available at Columbia's website (www.CTSnet.edu to the "Current Students" tab, then "D.Min." under "Degree Programs.>").
3. Columbia seeks to bring international dimensions and perspectives to all aspects of its educational program, including **D.Min. Travel Seminars**. We provide regular opportunities for D.Min. students to study in overseas settings. Travel Seminars have gone to South Africa, China, Israel, and the Caribbean. You will see announcements for these and other programs.

**GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICUM IN DOCTOR OF MINISTRY and
DOCTOR OF EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY DEGREES**

Credit: 6 hours

1. **FORMS** The Practicum Proposal Form can be accessed through Columbia's website by choosing "Current Students," "Doctor of Ministry" or "Doctor of Educational Ministry" and "Supervised Ministry." Once registered for the Practicum, all manuals and necessary forms will be available through the student portal on CAMS.

2. **PREREQUISITES FOR THE PRACTICUM**
 - A. D.Ed.Min. students must satisfactorily complete the Introductory Seminar and at least two additional required courses before beginning the Practicum. (The Practicum should normally be done before the completion of all required courses.)
 - B. D.Min. students must satisfactorily complete the Introductory Seminar and at least two additional courses. (The Practicum should normally be done before the completion of all courses—see Timeline provided in the Manual.)
 - C. The student must make preliminary arrangements for the practicum with the Director of Contextual Education, Dr. Kim Clayton.

3. **ARRANGING FOR THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PRACTICUM.** Once all prerequisites are satisfied, the student should formulate a detailed plan for the practicum. The following is a summary of the process:
 - First.** Develop a preliminary proposal for the practicum, following the outline found on proposal form. The Director of Contextual Education is available to consult with you about your proposal.

 - Second.** Enlist your supervisor and peer group, following the guidelines below.

 - Third.** Review the proposal with your Advisor, and receive the approval of the governing body of the congregation or other ecclesial agency to which you are accountable.

 - Fourth.** Finalize "Practicum Proposal Form" and submit it to the Director of Contextual Education for approval.

 - Fifth.** The Director of Contextual Education then acts on your proposal, either approving it or indicating needed revisions, and notifies the student of this action in writing.

Sixth. Once approved, the Office of Contextual Education registers the student for the course with the Seminary's Registrar. The Business Office bills the student for tuition. This fee must be paid to complete the course registration.

4. **GENERAL**

A. **Options for the Practicum.** Students select one of the following options for the practicum.

- Doctor of Educational Ministry Practicum (SM687)

Doctor of Ministry students select one of the following:

- Clinical Pastoral Education (SM610)
- Practicum: Church and Ministry (SM680)
- Practicum: Preaching (SM681) (Note: This is an occasional course offered by CTS)
- Practicum: Christian Spirituality (SM682)
- Practicum: Gospel and Culture (SM683)
- Practicum: Church Planting and Transformation (SM686)

B. **Choosing the Practicum Site.** The practicum may be done within or outside the student's ordinary work situation, but must be ministry accountable to a community of faith - not done privately outside the authority of the church. The setting of the practicum should challenge the student to grow professionally in relationship to his or her call to ministry.

C. **Time Requirements:**

- *Minimum Length.* The minimum time required to complete the practicum is 400 hours, including preparation time and supervision. *No more than 100 hours may be devoted to reading, research and writing.* Normally the 400 hours is spread over a period of 8-9 months, although one may complete it in as little as ten weeks of full-time supervised ministry.
- *Maximum Length.* The *maximum* time allowed for completing the practicum is 12 months.
- *Extensions.* If not completed within one year of the beginning date, the student must formally request an extension through the Seminary Registrar, Mr. Mike Medford, in the Office of Academic Affairs.

D. **Church Support.** Because of the significant amount of time required to complete the doctor of ministry practicum, the student must certify that she or he has discussed this step of the Doctoral studies with the governing body of

the congregation or other ecclesial agency by whom he or she is employed or to whom he or she is accountable, and has received their approval to proceed.

5. **REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF THE PRACTICUM**

A. **Supervision.** Supervision in the practicum is provided by both a supervisor and a group of peers.

a. **The Supervisor.**

1. **Qualifications.** The person nominated by the student to serve as a practicum supervisor must possess the educational, theological, and experiential credentials that equip him or her with competencies to supervise this particular practicum. Normally, this means that the supervisor-candidate must:

- Hold at least a Master’s degree, preferably the Master of Divinity degree (or its equivalent); or the Master of Christian Education degree (or its equivalent). In cases where the degree is in a non-theological field, the person should demonstrate a capacity to relate theological understandings to the practice of ministry.
- Have been actively engaged in ministry/educational ministry for a minimum of five years, including at least three years in work related to the nature of the proposed practicum.
- Be committed to learning through an action-reflection educational process.
- Be in good standing with his or her own faith community.
- Have a basic knowledge of the practicum context.
- Be accessible to the student for supervisory responsibilities.

Ordinarily the supervisor will *not* be a member of the Columbia Seminary faculty or a colleague working in the same ministry setting as the student.

2. **Approval of Supervisor.** The supervisor must be approved by the Director of Contextual Education prior to the beginning of the practicum. Information about the proposed supervisor must be included on the “Practicum Proposal Form” and submitted by the student to the Director of Contextual Education.

3. **Preparation for the Supervisor.** Supervisors must review and agree to the purposes and expectations for supervised ministry as outlined in these “Guidelines.” The Director of Contextual Education is available to review these materials with the supervisor.
- b. **The Peer Group.** The Practicum shall ordinarily involve a peer group of two or more other persons who share concerns for the kind of ministry/educational ministry in which the student is engaged in the practicum. Peers must be available and competent to engage in a disciplined process of theological reflection about the focus of this practicum.
 - c. **Time Requirements for Supervision.**
 1. Supervision is done through a combination of both individual supervision (the student meeting privately with the supervisor), and group supervision (the student meeting with the supervisor and peer group).
 2. Supervision shall ordinarily involve a minimum of 3 hours of supervisory time for every 40 hours of ministry experience, or a total of 30-45 hours over the course of the practicum (including both individual supervision and group supervision).
 3. The division of time between individual and group supervision is determined by the student in consultation with the supervisor, based upon the goals for supervision and the circumstances of the practicum. However, group supervision must take place *a minimum of three times during the practicum unless the requirement is waived by the Director of Contextual Education.*
- B. **The Learning Covenant.** In an effort to help focus the practicum, the student and supervisor shall work together during the initial weeks of the practicum to create a learning covenant (available on, and uploaded through, CAMS) that articulates the following:
- Learning goals of student for this practicum;
 - Planned ministry experiences designed to achieve stated goals; and
 - A plan for supervision, including schedule for meetings and how work will be supervised.

The student should submit copies of the covenant to the supervisor, peer group, and Director of Contextual Education.

C. **Concluding Written Materials.**

1. **By the Supervisor.** At the conclusion of the practicum, the supervisor shall submit a written assessment of the student's work in this practicum. The assessment should address thoroughly the following:
 - a. A description of the work done by the student;
 - b. The supervisory process followed in the practicum;
 - c. Progress of student toward goals stated in the learning covenant;
 - d. Other key learnings not previously noted in the learning covenant;
 - e. Strengths and limitations of the student in this practicum;
 - f. A description of the student's operative understanding of ministry/educational ministry as evidenced in this practicum;
 - g. Recommendations for continuing growth.

2. **By the Student.** At the conclusion of the practicum, the student shall submit a 10-12 page written paper that includes *all* of the following:
 - a. Overview of Practicum:
 1. Student contact information.
 2. Supervisor contact information.
 3. Beginning and ending dates of the practicum.
 4. Describe the practicum, noting any significant changes from what was envisioned in the practicum proposal.
 5. Summarize how your time was spent in the practicum—i.e., provide an itemized list of major activities and how much time was spent in each (including individual and group supervision), adding up to a minimum of 400 hours.
 - b. Self-Assessment:
 6. Describe the supervisory process followed in the practicum, plus your evaluation of how supervision did or did not contribute to your learnings.
 7. Summarize your progress toward the goals stated in your learning covenant.
 8. Identify other key learnings not previously noted in your learning covenant.
 9. Describe your strengths and limitations emerging in this practicum.

c. Understanding of Ministry/Educational Ministry:

10. Describe the basic model or understanding of ministry/educational ministry that has informed your work in this practicum.
11. State how other doctoral courses taken to date support or challenge this understanding of ministry.
12. State how this practicum supports or challenges this understanding of ministry.
13. State the implications of your practicum for the remaining courses (including your final project) and your future professional growth.

Prior to submitting these final reports, the student and supervisor shall review the content of these reports together.

6. **GRADE FOR THE COURSE**

The final grade awarded for the practicum is either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” In order for the student to earn a “satisfactory” evaluation, all of the “concluding written materials” outlined above must receive a “satisfactory” evaluation. The Director of Contextual Education will evaluate the materials submitted and assign a grade for the course.

7. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- A. Tuition for the course, to be paid by the student, is stated in the current seminary catalogue.
- B. Once all final reports have been submitted and a grade given, the Seminary will pay the supervisor a stipend of \$500 for supervisory services after the submission of a W-9 form by the Supervisor, mailed directly to the Business Office.

8. **FOR D.MIN. STUDENTS ONLY**

A. PRACTICUM TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY

D.Min. Students who have completed a basic or advanced unit of Clinical Pastoral Education in an accredited CPE center within five years of being admitted to the D.Min. program may request “transfer credit” for the Supervised Ministry requirement, provided this credit was not used for another degree program. Note, however, that no student may receive transfer credit for more than a grand total of six credit hours in her or his entire Doctor of Ministry program.

To apply for transfer credit the student should address a written request to the Director of Contextual Education. The request should indicate the location, dates, and supervisor for the CPE unit. A written copy of the CPE evaluation must be attached to the request. The Director of Contextual Education will review such requests and advise the student of action taken on the request. If approved, the Registrar will be instructed to grant credit for the course.

B. D. MIN. PRACTICUM AND FINAL PROJECT

The D.Min. Practicum and the D.Min. Final Project are two separate requirements for completing the D.Min. degree. While the Practicum may relate to the final project, it is expected that the Practicum will be completed before the final project is undertaken. For the sequence of Practicum and Final Project, see the Four-Year Timeline in the D.Min. manual. Note that the Practicum is to be completed in Year Three with the Project Proposal Workshop. Any request to deviate from this schedule must be approved by the Director of Advanced Professional Studies and the Director of Contextual Education.

ADVISER AND FIRST AND SECOND READER

The D.Min. adviser is a Columbia faculty member assigned by the Academic Affairs Office. The adviser becomes familiar with the student's focus for the D.Min. program from the Introductory Seminar paper and seeks to counsel the student in choosing elective credit courses, keeping in mind the student's own needs and goals as a minister, and the requirements of the program. Additionally the adviser may review the student's D.Min. Practicum, which is evaluated ("S" or "U") by the Director of Contextual Education.

When students are preparing for the Project Proposal Workshop they confer with their adviser about who might best serve as first and second readers for their D.Min. Project. The adviser may serve as either the first reader, when the project is within his or her field, or as second reader, when the project is within the field of another faculty member. The D.Min. student asks appropriate faculty members to be first and second readers, who supervise the research and reporting.

In preparation for the Qualifying Examination, the student consults with his or her first and second readers. The readers prepare the Qualifying Examination, of a type that they deem appropriate, and see that it is administered and evaluated ("S" or "U"). The examination may take the form of a literature review, the annotation of a selected bibliography, one or more research papers, an oral exam with the second reader participating, or other means of helping the student become fully qualified to undertake his or her research. The completion of the Qualifying Exam is communicated to the Registrar by means of the Qualifying Examination Form.

The readers are available to the student for counsel and advice during the time in which the Doctor of Ministry Project is carried out. The readers coordinate the evaluation of the Doctor of Ministry Project Report. When the readers have determined that the content of the D.Min. Project Report is acceptable, they will communicate this to the Registrar.

Ordinarily the student will complete the final research project under the supervision of the previously designated first and second reader, including passing the Qualifying Examination, conducting the approved research, and completing the final research report. If extraordinary circumstances require a change of a faculty reader:

1. The student must request permission to change from the original first reader from the Director of Advanced Professional Studies, stating in writing the request and the reasons.
2. The Director of Advanced Professional Studies will submit the request to the Dean of the Faculty, who may grant the request.
3. When the request is granted, the student shall ask for a new first reader for the research project and with consultation, select a second reader.

4. The original first reader shall supply the new readers with a report on the student's previous work and make any recommendations appropriate. With this report, the change of faculty reader is complete. The Director of Advanced Professional Studies will consult with the advisers.
5. If needed, the Director of Advanced Professional Studies will facilitate and mediate any discussion during this process.

COMPLETION OF COURSE WORK

Columbia expects D.Min. students to complete their work in four years. Therefore, when a student falls behind this timeline, the Director of Advanced Professional Studies sends a letter informing where the student is out of sequence.

THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT PROCESS THE CULMINATION OF THE DEGREE PROGRAM

The Doctor of Ministry Project asks you to choose a topic, in an area of ministry on which will be the focus of your 25-35 page project report. The Doctor of Ministry Project is designed to enable degree candidates to develop their abilities to engage in theological research from their own ministries for the sake of the Church. With the guidance and counsel of faculty members of Columbia, students engage in disciplined practices of research on issues and challenges in ministry, so that these practices can become part of their critical resources for doing ministry. Having researched one important question in the life of the church, it is expected that graduates will be able to use that process as they engage other problems and issues in ministerial leadership. In this way, students become researchers as well as practitioners (e.g., as a physician working in a clinical setting learning how to improve his or her practice). Subsequently, practice improves only when researchers also share their conclusions and, thereby, helping others to learn from their research, raise their own questions, and find appropriate applications for their own settings. The Doctor of Ministry Project is Columbia's way of inculcating a learned minister for more faithful leadership for the church.

RESEARCH METHOD

The Doctor of Ministry Project is a multifaceted program of original research culminating in a presentation, ordinarily in written form, that describes what the student has learned for the good of the Church. This research project is of such character and quality that it can be shared with others in the practice of ministry. Therefore, the project is far more than the production of an acceptable paper and, as such, is a disciplined program of research, reflection, and practice, with many interrelated stages.

Throughout the project it is important for students to consider how they understand and approach their roles as theological researchers. Among contemporary research models in the social sciences, at least two broad approaches may be identified. In the first, a positivistic social science research method, researchers understand themselves as experts who carry new knowledge to a people. In this model, the student researcher attempts to form a hypothesis based on theory and intuition concerning the best way to fix the problem. In the second, an interpretivistic social science research model, researchers take on the role of a collaborative guide who works as a member of the larger community. Here the researcher seeks to make sense of the topic within a particular context through prolonged engagement with the members of the community. These two approaches may be used, with appropriate modification, in research for ministry. The following outline of the typical D.Min. Project at Columbia allows students to adopt either model.

APPROVAL OF D.MIN. PROJECT PROPOSAL (3 parts)

1. **Preliminary Approval of D.Min. Project Proposal by First Reader**

The early germinal idea and how it will be carried out should be discussed with your adviser and then your first reader. It should be written up in a format, and with appropriate content, as directed by your first reader (see “5. The Project Proposal” below for likely items to include). It, or a revision, must be approved by your first reader prior to registration for the Workshop. Please use the **Approval of Project Proposal Form** below to indicate your first reader’s approval of the rough draft of your proposal.

2. **Workshop Instructor Approval of D.Min. Project Proposal**

All students are required to take the **Project Proposal Workshop**. A student is eligible to take the workshop when he or she has completed the Introductory Seminar and has a first reader-approved rough draft of the project proposal. This four or five-day workshop is usually offered during the first week of classes in January and during one week of each two-week Summer Session, with an additional Spring workshop added as needed. Because it meets in the afternoon, it can be taken at the same time that one is taking an elective course, since elective courses meet in the morning. While there is no credit granted for the workshop, students are required to successfully complete it before beginning their projects.

A faculty member leads the workshop, and it includes proposal development, help in structuring research, and instruction on form. The student brings the written, approved, rough draft of the Project Proposal to the Workshop, and works from it to develop a more polished and complete Project Proposal.

By the end of the workshop, the student will present a completed proposal in the form required by the Workshop instructor. When the Workshop instructor has approved the proposal in the form required, he or she will indicate this by signing **Part II Approval of Project Proposal Form**. The Workshop instructor will then return the signed form (along with a copy of the Proposal with related comments) to the student. The Workshop instructor will also communicate a grade of S (Satisfactory) to the Registrar after having approved the proposal.

3. **Final Approval of D.Min. Project Proposal by First and Second Readers**

Having received the Workshop instructor’s approval of the D.Min. Project Proposal, the student will present the completed proposal to his or her faculty readers for discussion and possible revision. When the student’s faculty readers judge that the Project Proposal is ready for final approval, they will indicate their approval by signing **Part III of Approval of Project Proposal Form**, after which the student can proceed to the Qualifying Exam and the execution of the project.

When the Registrar receives the completed form (all three parts), the student qualifies to be registered for the **Doctor of Ministry Project** (ATA496, 6 hours credit). The Business Office will then bill the student for the Doctor of Ministry Project.

APPROVAL OF PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM

D. Min.

D. Ed. Min.

Please return this form to the Registrar (Box 11F) when Part I is completed.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I. Preliminary Approval of Project Proposal by First Reader:

Working Title of Project: _____

First Reader's Signature

Date

II. Workshop Instructor's Approval of Project Proposal:

Project Workshop Instructor's Signature

Date

Workshop instructor may attach comments for the first reader on a separate sheet.

III. Final Approval of Project Proposal by First and Second Reader

Working Title of Project: _____

First Reader's Signature

Date

Second Reader's Signature

Date

Please return this form to the Registrar (Box 11F) when Part III is completed

THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

1. The Examination is administered after the full approval of the Project Proposal.
2. The Examination is administered by the student's first and second readers.
3. The purpose of the examination is to discover if the student is qualified to begin the research for the approved project. If the faculty readers conclude from the examination that the student is not able to complete the Doctor of Ministry Project, and consequently assigns the student a grade of U (Unsatisfactory), the student is dismissed from the program.

When the Qualifying Examination is completed successfully, the student turns in the completed **Qualifying Exam Form** below to the Registrar.

4. Format
The faculty readers devise an examination appropriate for the student's proposed project which will broaden her or his competence and make the student better able to conduct research and write a publishable report. The examination may take the form of a literature review, the annotation of a selected bibliography, one or more research papers, an oral exam conducted by both readers, or other means of helping the student become fully qualified to undertake his or her research. The examination must be evaluated by the faculty readers, and perhaps other scholars of their choosing.
5. Arrangements for Exam
The D.Min. student has first responsibility to meet with the first reader and plan for the Qualifying Examination.
6. Paper work procedure
The student is responsible for completing the **Qualifying Exam Form** (found below) and for returning it to the Registrar.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Fill in after satisfactory completion of Qualifying Examination.

The above named student has satisfactorily completed the Qualifying Examination.

The Qualifying Examination was completed on _____ (*date*).

First Reader's Signature

Date

Second Reader's Signature

Date

Please return this form to Registrar (Box 11F).

ELEVEN COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

Each of the following components of the project requires thorough consultation with the faculty readers.

1. The identification of a topic

Elective courses should allow the student to establish a broad base of subjects for research and to explore diverse theoretical orientations and methods. The courses lead one toward a focus for the D.Min. Project. This topic should be stated in the form of a brief narrative (to be shared with potential readers) that could consider a practice of ministry, an issue of theological relevance to the Church, or a problem or a need facing the Church. This topic arises out of the student's own experience and ministerial context, either in the life of the Church or possibly in the public sphere. Especially as students near the end of their course work, they may wish to seek opportunities within their remaining courses to explore portions of the project.

In presenting the topic of research, it is necessary to clarify the boundaries and character of the project, to state what is (and is not) being studied. To help clarify, the research might ask: What is the chief, essential question being pursued? What are the theological issues at stake, and why are they important for the writer? What kind of event is the focal point of investigation? Who might be concerned with this topic and why?

2. Discerning and naming contexts:

The goal of this aspect of the project is to provide the necessary framing material that helps both research and readers locate and make sense of a project. Thus, the primary concern is to identify as thoroughly as possible, through thick description, the setting in life of the proposed topic. This should include:

- Description of relevant theological assumptions and convictions, faith perspectives, and pertinent ecclesiastical considerations.
- Relevant characterizations of demographics—including age, gender, race, socio-economic factors, and the like—may help highlight all of the pertinent information that makes this matter distinctive, as well as typical.
- Structural/systemic considerations should consider what key intellectual movements, cultural currents, or world-views are factors in the problem, need, issue, or practice. How does the issue or practice being considered relate to larger systemic factors and forces? Who or what are the dominant powers or forces at work, and how do the main characters in the drama relate to these expressions or embodiments of power?
- Who are the identified “protagonists” or “antagonists,” if any?

- How is this topic to be located historically? Where can it be located in reference to other events or to the intersecting timelines of events and characters that make life so complex? What causal factors have led up the present situation or event?
- What are the symbolic expressions that illustrate or illumine the context, what are the telling expressions of this topic—whether social, artistic, architectural, etc.?

In this stage, it may be possible to begin to see the topic in new ways, to probe underneath presenting issues to the level of assumptions. For example, it might be useful to ask the following sequence of questions:

- What is the presenting issue?
- What are the immediate causal factors?
- What are the motivations of the persons involved?
- What are the underlying assumptions or ways of thinking that have led to the present situation?

3. **Outlining theoretical framework:**

The theoretical framework, sometimes referred to as the literature review, is the conversation that the research is joining. In other words, who are the primary intellectual influences or conversation partners in the development of the student researcher's approach to the topic? This stage of the process may at first consist of little more than a statement of the hunches a researcher has about "what's going on" in the topic under investigation. Yet, early on it is important to identify the nature and source of the researcher's operating theoretical perspective. Does the proposed theoretical framework have its roots in the researcher's experience, in knowledge of scripture or tradition, in a particular ecclesial or ideological setting, in distinctive theological convictions, and/or in certain philosophical or social scientific assumptions? The two primary goals of the theoretical framework of the project are to:

1. help the student researcher become more critically reflective about his or her assumptions, intellectual habits, or tendencies, and also to help the researcher move toward critical awareness of the "social locations" in which these assumptions, habits, or tendencies have been formed and
2. provide the theoretical lens with which to examine the topic in a particular context.

Identification of the primary location of the student researcher's theoretical orientation—experience, scripture, theological convictions, the history and traditions of the Church, or current philosophical movements—may point the way to areas where further research is necessary in order to balance or enhance the researcher's perspective. If, for example, the researcher's initial hunches are strongly rooted in experience to the exclusion or diminishment of the other theoretical aspects, then attention could be directed toward redressing this imbalance. This aspect of the project may also help to raise crucial interpretive issues and assumptions. In considering a theoretical framework, researchers should above all else reflect critically on their primary theological convictions.

4. **Discerning and clarifying appropriate research methods**

The Project Proposal Workshop focuses attention on helping student researchers to lay out and describe their research methods. Before a particular research methodology can be developed, however, a clear articulation of the topic, context, and theoretical framework must be presented. It is common for researchers to come to this seminar with one proposal that is in fact multiple studies. Therefore, the seminar strives to help the student researchers narrow their research project while addressing research methodology questions.

Given the theoretical diversity of a theological faculty, a wide variety of research models are possible. In addition to the disciplines normally associated with theological investigation, the student researcher should consider relevant methodologies in the arts and sciences. Broadly understood, research methodologies are fall into one of two categories—quantitative and qualitative.

1. ***Quantitative*** methods focus on the collection and analysis of data in the form of numbers that are then mathematically analyzed (e.g., regression analysis). This method is typically used to test a preconceived hypothesis.
2. ***Qualitative*** methods focus on the collection and analysis of data in the form of words that are then qualitatively analyzed (e.g., case study). This method is typically used to help make sense of a certain situation or to bring about desired changes in a situation

For obvious reasons, the vast majority of D.Min. projects use qualitative research methods. Some examples of qualitative research methods are:

1. ***Ethnography***: Usually one-two year study in field. It is the oldest qualitative methodology coming out of anthropology.
2. ***Grounded Theories***: Start in setting then move to theory. It is a fishing expedition for theory development. It is a first generation of qualitative that still has vestiges of the scientific method.
3. ***Life Study***: A person(s) life is the focal point.

4. ***Narrative Study***: A story about a person or organization. Differs from a Life Study in that it focuses on one story of the person, not his or her whole life.
5. ***Case Study***: Use general qualitative methodology to study an entity (such as a congregation). The case is descriptive in nature.
6. ***Historiography***: This study uses history to understand the people, places, and movements. Revealing what has taken place over the years in a family, an organization, or a community exposes the circumstances, the causes of change, and the motives for present circumstances.
7. ***Participatory Action Research***: This method focuses on local issues and problems and involves subjects as co-researchers in a collaborative inquiry process. The goal is to bring about purposeful change.

Finally, researchers face an important ethical consideration regardless of which research methodology they employ. That is, are they going to study this particular community for knowledge sake, or do they believe that the research itself is part of the ongoing work of the life of the community? A pro-active research approach, also known as critical theory, intends for the research to better, or transform, the individuals and groups involved. Rather than merely describing or understanding a phenomenon, the researcher seeks to stand with the members of the community in an advocacy role. D.Min. projects are typically pro-active in nature.

5. **The Project Proposal**:

The Project Proposal succinctly states the results of the preceding stages of the process, so that peers and faculty readers can critically engage with the student researcher's area of interest, posing questions, and offering suggestions leading to further refinement. Student researchers must enter the Project Proposal Workshop with a tentative proposal or narrative in hand, the result of preliminary conversations with the faculty readers. This proposal for the project must be approved on "Approval of D.Min. Project Proposal" Form, Step 1, prior to registration for and participation in the workshop.

Outline of Project Proposal:

1. ***Topic***
The topic section details the problem, issue, or need that the student researcher desires to study.
2. ***Context or Contexts***
Given the topic outlined in the first section, this section provides a thick description of the context for the research project and will usually be a particular community that exhibits the topic.

3. ***Theoretical Perspectives***
In the theoretical perspectives section the student chooses the most appropriate questions from the literature review and applies them to the research.
4. ***Research Question(s)***
In one sentence, the student researcher presents his or her primary question for the research. In this question, the reader finds what the researcher intends to explore given the topic, context, and theoretical perspective. Typically this is accomplished in one question but is not limited to one.
5. ***Methodology***
A description of the specific research steps that will be taken to answer the research question.
6. ***Working Bibliography***
List the books, in proper bibliographical form, which have already contributed to the project design and some, which might be used in the future.
7. ***Courses***
A list of courses which have informed the project proposal.
8. ***Public Presentation***
Component 10 (page 30) advises that after a draft of the project has been prepared, and deemed appropriate by readers and student, a public presentation be made to a group (peers or other selected persons) before the final revision. It would be helpful to include a plan for the public presentation at this point in the project proposal.

Four key questions for student researchers to clarify in the above project proposal outline:

1. Who is the intended audience and who would be affected?
2. If successful, what are the intended outcome(s) of the study?
3. How is the project (and its theoretical framework and research methods) related to a named discipline or body of research?
4. Is the theoretical framework integrated and consistent with the author's theological stance in ministry?

6. **Research**

In this phase of the project the student researcher engages in the diverse kinds of research necessary to develop, refine, and execute the project. Unless the Qualifying Examination is already complete, the student and his or her faculty readers will now determine how the Examination is to evaluate the project. The student and his or her faculty readers will determine when it is appropriate to evaluate the project. Questions are drawn up by the faculty readers and given to the student in order to focus their preparation. The examination itself may take a variety of forms. It may, for example, take the form of a series of short, preliminary explorations to be submitted to the student's faculty readers for evaluation and refinement, or a formal examination to be written under agreed-upon circumstances and time constraints.

The goal of the research and evaluation phase is to encourage the students to approach their topics from a number of angles, including especially those that are crucial to the effective practice of ministry. The purpose is to enable the student to establish the broad, critical awareness necessary both to complete the project and to engage more effectively in the practice of ministry. Not all of the material generated in the research and examination portions of the project will show up explicitly in the final presentation of the project, but it should nonetheless contribute either to the student's informational, practical, and theoretical bases, or to his or her critical awareness and disciplinary acumen. Most projects will touch on a variety of perspectives, such as experience, scripture, theological convictions, the history and traditions of the Church, social and cultural analysis, current philosophical and intellectual movements, and missional perspectives.

Experience calls on students to reflect on their own practices and what they have already learned in ministry, and to bring this into conversation with the other elements of the research program. In what ways, for example, is experience challenged by scripture or by the theological tradition, or in what ways might contemporary experience add to the tradition or lead to fresh and faithful improvisation? Engagement with the theological *tradition* requires students to assess their work or the topic in light of the Church's history and theological convictions, mining these for analogies, precedent, and correction. Likewise, engagement with *scripture* necessarily plays a significant role—what might it teach us? How does it challenge our assumptions? What new practices or vocational awareness does it engender?

Furthermore, *theoretical and practical knowledge* from the work of other practitioners and researchers may significantly inform the student's research, including, for example, other *theological disciplines, cultural or social analysis, Church practices, and the philosophical and intellectual movements* at work in the public sphere.

Finally, all projects must address the relation between the matter under investigation and the *mission* of God's people in the world. This aspect of the project has its roots in the mission statement and mission emphases of Columbia and is regarded as one of the distinctive aspects of this program. Exploring the missional dimensions of a given project requires that students reflect on their chosen topic in light of their understanding of the Church's mission, as well as their own sense of pastoral vocation.

For example, in what way does the project contribute to the realization of the Church's calling to participate in God's work of reconciling a broken creation? How does the project facilitate the efforts of Christians to participate faithfully in God's work to bring about justice in the world, to include the excluded, to break down the walls of racism, sexism, and class-consciousness? In what ways does the project open up new perceptions of what God is doing in the world and how we might participate faithfully? How does it challenge our imagining of the way the world works and expand our awareness of what God is doing and intends to do?

7. **Human Subjects Socio-Religious Research Policy**

Students, in consultation with their first and second readers, are to follow the protocol for conducting their research in a manner that respects the dignity, privacy, and due regard for the subjects of their research. The guide for this concern for the ethical conduct of research is "Human Subjects Socio-Religious Research Policy" approved by the faculty of Columbia Seminary. The Policy is distributed and discussed in the Project Proposal Workshop. It is available on the web site. Students are asked to assess the level of risk in their research, in consultation with the first reader. If warranted students must use consent forms and request an Institutional Review Board (IRB) as the Research Policy requires.

8. **Completion of Research**

The next step focuses on gathering and organizing data. The stage of generating data necessarily begins during the pre-examination phase of the project. Still, student researchers finally must collect and organize the data and their findings—whether in the form of exegetical studies, theological probing, field notes, "found" documentation, verbatim, surveys, interviews, questionnaires, or investigator's journals—in a responsible manner. One of the key indicators of whether this phase is completed is whether a reader with full access to the data would find the claims advanced in the final presentation an honest and compelling representation of what was gathered in the course of the project. Finally, the research summarizes the project by drawing conclusions from the findings. This summary can be a metaphor, diagram, suggested plan, narrative, or other means of expression that helps capture for the reader the heart of what the research has found.

9. **Presenting the Project**

The goal of this phase of the project is to present the project in a compelling narrative form with special attention to theological reasoning and understanding of the church's life. Ordinarily this takes written form, whether as a critical essay, a practitioner's thesis, a practical, theological case, or another evocative expression of the project. Student researchers compose this presentation with a mind to what readers want to know.

Such questions include: *What did you learn? Why should we care? Why is the subject of this project important? What contributes to the ways things are and how did you find that out? How should we think about it? What are the key resources for coming to terms with the subject and how*

can they be accessed and used? How might this understanding improve the practice of the church? In what ways has this understanding already informed your practice of ministry?

As student researchers move through the various stages of the Doctor of Ministry Project, they should be sifting the layers of material at their disposal with an eye to what really fits within the boundaries of the project and helps them refine their initial questions and hunches. As the project evolves, certain themes, theses, metaphors, or images will begin to surface. These may become the key elements that shape the final project presentation.

The presentation of the project should ideally be publishable in the fields of ministry, theology, or the social sciences. Project write-ups should be about 25-35 pages in length (typed and double-spaced). The presentation should set forth not only the results of the student's research, but also raise questions and highlight resources for further study.

10. **Public Presentation**

When the student has completed a draft of the project presentation that both the student and faculty readers deem appropriate for public presentation, the student should arrange some form of public presentation leading to critical evaluation of the project. The goal of this phase of the project is to provide students a chance to field test the project, to get some critical feedback, and to learn from peers or other interested parties, just prior to doing final revisions. The format and audience for the evaluation could take a variety of forms, depending on the character of the project and the student's situation. It might, for example, take the form of a focus group consisting of selected members of a student's Church community, or a peer group of local pastors or other experts, including particularly those having interest or expertise in the area of research. In most cases, participants would be asked to respond to the written presentation of the project, and would both engage with the student in critical dialogue around the content of the project and offer suggestions for refinement or improvement of the project presentation.

The form of evaluation should be worked out in advance with the student's faculty readers, but should ordinarily focus on matters of both content and presentation. Students should develop a clearly defined set of objectives and evaluative tools appropriate to the determination of the relative success or failure of the project presentation in achieving these objectives.

11. **The Final Copy**

Drawing on the results of the public presentation, and in consultation with the faculty readers, the student now edits the presentation for final submission to the Seminary for dissemination to the wider public. Each D.Min. project report deemed satisfactory for graduation is bound for use by the student and by others in the practice of ministry. The faculty may select excellent D.Min. project reports for publication or posting on the Seminary's website. Two bound copies remain in the Seminary library. For the series of graduation deadlines for the D.Min. project report, see "Schedule for D.Min. Project Completion" below.

SCHEDULE FOR D.MIN. PROJECT COMPLETION

Having completed the Qualifying Examination, the student should begin work on the Doctor of Ministry Project itself, as soon as possible. As you can see from the description of the Doctor of Ministry Project process on the preceding pages, the Doctor of Ministry Project is an extended process. It is wise, therefore, to work out a precise schedule, with some built-in flexibility. The following is illustrative and minimal. Each individual schedule will need to be adjusted in accordance with the time when the student wishes to complete the work and graduate. However, the January – April deadlines are firm for graduation in any given graduation cycle.

Assuming that the student has:

1. Completed the Introductory Seminar and consulted with faculty adviser.
2. Worked with the adviser and first reader through the first steps of the D.Min. Project conception, and developed a rough proposal which the first reader has approved by signing Part I of the “Approval of D.Min. Project Proposal Form.”

Summer or January or Spring Term – student successfully completes the Doctor of Ministry Project Proposal Workshop.

February – student and his/her faculty readers agree on the final form of the Project Proposal.

March – student completes the Qualifying Exam and is authorized to begin work on the Doctor of Ministry Project.

April to November 1 – student does research, carries out evaluation, and writes a draft of the project report.

November 1 to January 15 – student prepares the presentation of the project, offers the public presentation, and prepares the final draft.

January 15 – submission of final rough draft to faculty readers.

The content must be in such shape that it does not require major revision. If it does require major revision at this submission, the student will not be able to complete the work in time for graduation. In that case, the student should continue to work toward completion for graduation the following year.

February 15 – If the submission does not require major revision, the first reader will return it to the student for final revision and typing.

March 1 – student returns the Doctor of Ministry Project to the Advanced Professional Studies Office for form and style reading. The marked copy is then returned to the student for corrections.

April 15 – student submits the final two copies of the project for binding to the Staff Associate/Binding at the CTS JBC Library

May – Commencement.

GUIDE TO STYLE FOR THE D.MIN. PROJECT REPORT

The “Guide to Style for the Doctor of Ministry Project Report” has been written with great care and must be followed precisely. You will find this Guide below as an appendix to this D.Min. Student Manual. These guidelines, based on Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th edition, should answer most questions of style and format. Most other questions can be answered by referring to the Turabian text itself. The Guide also answers questions about the process of submitting the Doctor of Ministry Project Report for form reading and binding. In case of serious problems the first reader is consulted.

COMMENCEMENT

The timeline for graduation, which is detailed above (January – April deadlines), is firm. **Therefore, if a student does not meet all of the steps in a timely manner, he or she will not be able to graduate in that cycle.** It is best for the student to stay in close contact with his or her first and second readers and to hand in materials prior to the deadlines. Graduation is only once a year, in mid-May. **By January 1, all students who intend to graduate in May must** notify (email or mail) the Registrar of their intention to graduate. This is necessary in order to receive graduation-related forms and information from the Academic Affairs Office. Information concerning Commencement/Graduation is **emailed to CTS student emails** from the Academic Affairs Office. This information includes forms for ordering cap, robe, hood, and announcements; information about diplomas, fees, and clearing-up of student's account in the Business Office and the library, a schedule of events which the student should attend, and other instructions.

If the student cannot attend the Graduation ceremony and wishes to receive the degree in absentia, a letter must be sent to the Dean of Academic Affairs **by April 1**, requesting permission to be absent and the reasons for the request. If permission is granted, the diploma is mailed following graduation.