

## GUIDELINES FOR DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PRACTICUM

*Credit: 6 semester hours*

- I. **FORMS.** All forms for the D.Min. Practicum can be accessed through Columbia's website by choosing "Current Students," "Doctor of Ministry" and "Supervised Ministry."
  
- II. **PREREQUISITES FOR THE PRACTICUM**
  - A. The student must satisfactorily complete the Introductory Seminar.
  - B. The student must make preliminary arrangements for the practicum with the Director of Contextual Education, Dr. Kim Clayton.
  
- III. **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 and receive the approval of the governing body of the congregation or other ecclesial agency to which you are accountable.
  
  - Fourth.** Finalize "Proposal for Doctor of Ministry Practicum," 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.
  
- IV. **GENERAL**
  - A. **Options for the Practicum.** Students may select one of the following options for the practicum.
    - Clinical Pastoral Education (SM610)

- Practicum: Church and Ministry (SM680)
- Practicum: Preaching (SM681)
- Practicum: Christian Spirituality (SM682)
- Practicum: Gospel and Culture (SM683)
- Practicum: New Church Development (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. 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 Doctor of Ministry 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.

## V. REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF THE PRACTICUM

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

### 1. The Supervisor.

- a. **Qualifications.** The person nominated by the D.Min. 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. (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 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.

- 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 “Proposal of D. Min. Practicum” and submitted by the student to the Director of Contextual Education.
  - 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.
- 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 in which the student is engaged in the practicum. Peers are not required to be enrolled in the D.Min. program or to be ordained ministers. However, they must be available and competent to engage in a disciplined process of theological reflection about the ministry of this practicum.
- Time Requirements for Supervision.**
  - 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).
  - Supervision shall ordinarily involve a minimum of 3 hours of supervisory time for every 40 hours of ministry experience, or a total of 30 hours over the course of the practicum (including both individual supervision and group supervision).
  - 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 Professor Supervised Ministry.

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 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 distribute 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. While no specific format is required, the assessment should address the following:
  - a. A brief description of the work done by 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 as evidenced in this practicum;
  - g. Recommendations for continuing growth.

Prior to submitting the reports, the student and supervisor shall review the content of these reports with each other.

2. **By the Student.** At the conclusion of the practicum, the student shall submit an 8-10 page written paper that includes *all* of the following:
  - a. Overview of Practicum:
    1. Name, address, and telephone of student.
    2. Name, address, telephone of supervisor.
    3. Supervisor's Social Security number (treated confidentially, but required for payment of stipend).
    4. Beginning and ending dates of the practicum.
    5. Briefly describe the practicum, noting any significant changes from what was envisioned in the practicum proposal.

6. 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:
7. Describe the supervisory process followed in the practicum, plus your evaluation of how supervision did or did not contribute to your learnings.
  8. Summarize your progress toward the goals stated in your learning covenant.
  9. Identify other key learnings not previously noted in your learning covenant.
  10. Describe your strengths and limitations emerging in this practicum.
- c. Understanding of Ministry:
11. Describe the basic model or understanding of ministry that has informed your ministry in this practicum.
  12. State how other D.Min courses taken to date support or challenge this understanding of ministry.
  13. State how this practicum supports or challenges this understanding of ministry.
  14. State the implications of your practicum for the remaining D.Min courses (including your final project) and your future professional growth.

## VI. **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.

## VII. **FINANCIAL MATTERS.**

- A. Tuition for the course, to be paid by the student, is stated in the current seminary catalogue.
- B. The Seminary will pay the supervisor a stipend of \$500 for supervisory services.

## VII. **TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY.**

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.