

**WESTERN**

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

---

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**  
**Program Reference**  
**Guide 2023**

---

## Mission Statement

By God's grace, Western Theological Seminary forms women and men for faithful Christian ministry and participation in the Triune God's ongoing redemptive work in the world.

## Identity Statement

Western Theological Seminary is an evangelical and ecumenical community of faith and learning in the Reformed tradition that serves the church of Jesus Christ. In covenant with the Reformed Church in America, Western equips men and women for Christ-centered, biblically based, theologically integrated, culturally competent, and mission-oriented Christian leadership.

## Curricular Values

- **Reformed** – We are committed to a generously Reformed theological identity and seek to shape our students in this tradition.
- **Biblical** – We are committed to a curriculum that is soaked in Scripture. We believe that Scripture is not an “object” to be analyzed, but a living document that transforms us.
- **Theological** – Connected with the two values above, we believe that our curriculum is thoroughly theological. We do not perpetuate the division and silos of traditional fields. Rather, we seek deep integration of biblical courses, ministry courses, and theology courses.
- **Sacramental** – We celebrate the Lord's Supper each Friday and remember our baptisms each day in the worship life of our school, which fundamentally shapes our identity and ethos.
- **Missional** – The church is called to participate in God's mission in the world. We are committed to building a curriculum that explores the central theme of the Christian faith.
- **Formational** – We do not simply “deliver” a degree program. We are called to form students into deeper, wiser, more pastorally aware, more skilled practitioners of ministry practices, and more committed disciples of Jesus.
- **Contextual** – Theology and ministry always happen in a particular time and a particular place with a particular people. We help our students see the thoroughly contextual nature of theology, Scripture, church, and their own selves.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>The Goal and Character of the D.Min. Program</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Program Requirements</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Learning Process</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Program Leadership</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Program Components</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Year Three Timeline</b>	<b>Page 12</b>
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>Seminar Information</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>Cook Theological Library</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<b>Technology</b>	<b>Page 16</b>
<b>Appendix A: Statement of Call Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Appendix B: Statement of Focus Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 19</b>
<b>Appendix C: Autobiography of Loss Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 20</b>
<b>Appendix D: Ecclesial Autobiography Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 21</b>
<b>Appendix E: Vocational Autobiography Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 23</b>
<b>Appendix F: Case Study Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 25</b>
<b>Appendix G: Creating a D.Min. Program Goal</b>	<b>Page 27</b>
<b>Appendix H: Project Proposal Guidelines</b>	<b>Page 28</b>
<b>Appendix I: Cohort Leader Expectations</b>	<b>Page 31</b>
<b>Appendix J: Billing Policy and Deferred Payment Plan</b>	<b>Page 32</b>
<b>Appendix K: Cook Library Information</b>	<b>Page 33</b>
<b>Appendix L: Thesis/Project Consent and Release Form</b>	<b>Page 35</b>
<b>Appendix M: Form for Approval of Candidacy Status</b>	<b>Page 37</b>
<b>Appendix N: Assessment Rubric</b>	<b>Page 38</b>

## WELCOME TO THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

Welcome to the Western Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry program. The faculty, administration, and staff are eager to walk with you on your learning journey over the next few years.

The Doctor of Ministry program at WTS is designed around unique cohort themes that meet the needs of specific areas of ministry (soul care, preaching, pastoral leadership, discipleship, sacred writing, church renewal, etc.). Once committed to a specific track, the cohort of students journeys with their mentor(s) along the curriculum designed for that specific area of ministry. Working collaboratively with other students and faculty, the student has the flexibility to shape their learning and writing around their particular context.

The D.Min. program at WTS encourages formation at five levels simultaneously:

- *who you are as a person* (emotional and psychological formation),
- *who you are as a beloved child of God* (spiritual and ecclesial formation),
- *what you do* (skills and experiences),
- *what you know* (intellectual and academic formation); and,
- *where you serve and empower others* (leadership formation).

The D.Min. program culminates in a project that is pastorally wise, intellectually disciplined, and advances the mission of the church.

Western Theological Seminary's Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and the State of Michigan.

## THE GOAL AND CHARACTER OF THE D.MIN. PROGRAM

### The Doctor of Ministry Program as Continuing Education for Ministers

Western's Doctor of Ministry program began in the fall of 1977 as a response to the growing need for pastors and church leaders for a sustained experience of depth and breadth in continuing education. It recognized the desire of ministers from various backgrounds and denominations to pursue an "in-ministry" degree rooted primarily in one's ministry setting, rather than in a school. Built on the foundation of the Master of Divinity degree or equivalent training, the D.Min. student would be able to pursue advanced studies in the theory and practice of ministry from the perspective of a mature involvement in ministry. The personal and professional growth secured would, at the same time, yield significant benefits to the candidate's ministry setting.

Four decades of experience with the program have demonstrated that the goals initially set forth have been achieved with a high level of approval and satisfaction by the seminary and the many students who have completed the program. However, recent trends in the pedagogy of theological education reveal that students thrive in collective learning environments (cohorts). Western responded to these trends by redesigning and restructuring its Doctor of Ministry program and in 2017 launched cohort-based, specialized tracks that focus on one particular area of the Christian life or ministry. Working collaboratively, the students follow their spiritual and vocational passions while increasing academic and

pastoral skills, if applicable, in a specified field. Cohorts are led by faculty mentors who are not only experts in their field of study but are also deeply committed to mentoring students as they hone their skills and grow in wisdom.

## **Educational Assumptions**

The D.Min. is designed around the assumptions of adult collaborative learning. Employing discussions, clarification of ideas, and evaluation of the ideas of others, collaborative learning guides students as they share experiences, skills, and knowledge that shape their questions. Adult learners recognize what they know and seek out other learners (peers or faculty) to assist them in discovering what they do not yet know. Ultimately, adult learners take personal responsibility for learning, enjoy collaborative (democratic) processes for learning, and learn for the sake of deeper engagement in the world. The assumption that D.Min. students are adult learners unfolds several additional assumptions about how learning happens in our D.Min. program:

- D.Min. education is done best by self-motivated learners, where planned learning takes place within the local context and in open conversation with vocational colleagues. Self-motivated students gain skills in locating their own resources, a process that enables them to discover the most efficient methods of learning.
- Learning is a process of practice, reflection, and ongoing action. The student's context is thus a "living textbook" that provides experiences for reflection.
- Learning is a communal process where peers, congregation and constituents, faculty, and other professionals contribute to the student's learning.

## **Program Goals**

The D.Min. is not a research nor an academic degree intended for those seeking a career in academic teaching; rather it is designed to help participants develop a more robust Christian imagination, wisdom, and skills for their ministry or at the unique intersection of their vocation and cohort focus. The program integrates contextual engagement, academic work, and disciplined reflection under the guidance of a mentor and in the company of colleagues.

Specifically, students will:

- grow in basic skills required for Christian engagement in the world: this may include biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, historical inquiry and contemporary application, theological reflection and ethical understanding, and pastoral ministry analysis and application.
- demonstrate familiarity with a representative body of knowledge and praxis related to a specialized field.
- be able to articulate in writing and practice a coherent biblical theology of their vocation.
- demonstrate maturing personal qualities in advanced levels of vocational excellence.
- demonstrate self-awareness in the capacity to plan appropriate continuing education.
- demonstrate collegiality with faculty mentors, colleagues, and other professionals with differing orientations.

Faculty will evaluate student competency in these areas through residency coursework, one-on-one mentor meetings, projects, thesis writing, and defense.

The realization of these programmatic goals and the student's growth in ministry will be greatly aided by the relationships the student establishes with faculty mentors and other participants in the program. Students will study, converse, work, and share life together for an advanced learning experience.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The D.Min. degree consists of 36 required credits in the D.Min. curriculum AND a completed approved thesis. The seminars for the D.Min. program outlined below are required must be taken in sequence, and students must receive a passing grade for each component. The specific course descriptions will be available in the syllabus and differ from cohort to cohort, but a general outline is below:

### **DM850 Orientation Seminar 1**

Designed by the cohort mentor. This generally includes an introduction to the major administrative, curricular, and academic components of the program, as well as to the specialized track (theme) that identifies the particular focus of the cohort. Cohort members are introduced to one another, rhythms of the week are established, the trajectory of the entire three-year program is envisioned, and possible project and thesis directions are explored in one-on-one meetings with the mentor. Includes a one-week in-person intensive. **6 credits.**

### **DM851 Orientation Seminar 2**

A continuation of DM850. Designed by the cohort mentor. This generally includes students deepening their engagement of the overall theme of the cohort, while clarifying the direction of their project and eventual writing. An oral description of a submitted written proposal of the direction of their project is given during one-on-one times with the mentor(s) (see "Proposal" below). A first draft of a literature review is submitted. Research pathways/methods are finalized with the mentor(s). Includes a one-week in-person intensive. **6 credits.**

### **DM860 Research Seminar 1**

Designed by the cohort mentor. This generally includes students beginning to implement projects, coming together for an intensive that focuses on a critical reflection of their contextual learning as they also discern the interpretation of their learnings within an academic theological framework. Includes a one-week in-person intensive. **6 credits.**

### **DM861 Research Seminar 2**

A continuation of DM860. Designed by the cohort mentor. This generally includes students sharing the learnings of their research projects and engaging in active research and writing for their thesis during individual hours. **6 credits.**

### **DM870 Thesis Seminar 1**

Designed by the cohort mentor. This generally includes focused time for research and writing, guided by the faculty mentor(s). A final timeline for completion is agreed-upon, allowing enough time for first and second reader interactions. Includes a one-week in-person intensive. **6 credits.**

### **DM871 Thesis Seminar 2**

A continuation of DM860. Designed by the cohort mentor. This generally includes focused time for research and writing, guided by the faculty mentor(s). Guidance and direction is given for the thesis defense. Includes a one-week in-person intensive. Includes a one-week in-person intensive. **6 credits.**

### **DM940 Thesis-Project**

Under the director of the faculty mentor and assigned reader(s), the student designs, develops, and writes a thesis project linking his/her ministry context to the specialized field of the D.Min. track. **0 credits but required.**

## **THE LEARNING PROCESS OF THE D.MIN. PROGRAM**

The D.Min. at Western is designed to be taken in an uninterrupted sequence of learning experiences over three years, with an expectation of completion and defense of the thesis at the end of the third year.

Cohort seminars are usually structured as two separate weeks of seminar residency each year over three years, meeting at different times and possibly locations.

### **Course Preparation**

Before each seminar, a syllabus will be available to students. The faculty mentor may assign readings, online lectures, or other content in preparation for the upcoming learning experience. It is expected that students will arrive at the residency having met all the required reading and written assignments. Students should plan to set aside approximately 12 hours per week in preparation for each residency.

### **Residency Courses**

Seminars consist of one-week courses that are designed sequentially by the faculty mentor to enable students to acquire increasing competency in his/her selected area of concentration. A principal focus of each residency is the student's personal preparation and the faculty mentor's approval of a proposal for a major project.

### **Projects**

Given the D.Min. focus on context and praxis, the mentor and student will identify a project to be implemented within a student's context, which will allow the student to pursue his/her research focus and questions. Projects are utilized to address key questions and research hypotheses. While many projects will employ qualitative research pathways, D.Min. research allows for a wide array of possible project possibilities depending on the cohort focus.

### **Thesis and Defense**

The culmination of the D.Min. is the thesis, which demonstrates the student's ability to engage in their particular vocation as a scholar-practitioner in the given area of specialization. In addition to the faculty mentor, the student is assigned two other readers to evaluate the quality of the thesis. Together these three comprise the thesis committee, and they guide the student through to the final draft. The final requirement for degree completion is the student's successful defense of the completed thesis in an oral examination with the mentor and two readers. A final public presentation of the thesis project is optional.

### **Qualifying Oral Exam (optional)**

During the second year, cohort leaders *may* require a qualifying oral exam. This exam is conversational in nature and takes place with their faculty mentor as it focuses on the student's progress in the program. The faculty mentor may review the student's completion of all requirements to date and recommend whether he/she should continue in the program. Candidacy status is granted upon the faculty mentor's affirmation that the student has demonstrated a purpose and plan for completing the degree and that the student is formally eligible to receive the D.Min. degree upon completion of the remaining work.

See *"Appendix M: Form for Approval of Candidacy Status."*

### **Personal Transformation Paper**

The student will write a 500-1000 word paper articulating their experience of formation and transformation through the program. The student will summarize specific areas of the program that were particularly transformational, including content, relationships, processes, trips, WTS institutional life, or other areas of formation and transformation. The paper is due at the time of the thesis submission.

## **PROGRAM LEADERSHIP**

The D.Min. Committee exercises policy supervision of the D.Min. program, and the faculty delegates responsibility for implementing the program to the D.Min. Committee. The director of the D.Min. program functions as chairperson of the D.Min. Committee.

### **D.Min. Committee**

The D.Min. Committee's responsibilities include the following:

- Admissions
- Implementation of policies regarding student status
- Review of all policies and procedures
- Monitoring the quality and standards of the program
- Maintaining relationships with advisors, mentors, and readers

### **D.Min. Program Director**

The D.Min. Program Director oversees the vision and faculty of the program and is responsible for the overall ethos of the program, its quality, and reputation, calling meetings, and assigning and reviewing the work of mentors and faculty mentors. Along with the committee, the D.Min. Program Director upholds the



integrity of the program at a level above the minimum standard set by the Association of Theological Schools.

### **D.Min. Program Administrator**

The Program Administrator provides continuity of program administrative procedures and support to faculty mentors throughout the development and running of their cohorts. The Program Administrator provides support to students in various areas and facilitates the work of the D.Min. Committee under the auspices of the Director. The D.Min. Program Administrator is also responsible for implementing the final stages of the project review and public presentation for candidates intending to graduate.

### **Faculty**

Faculty support the D.Min. program by leading specialized tracks, advising students, serving on the D.Min. Committee, mentoring students through their program of study, evaluating residency projects, and guiding and consulting students as they develop their thesis projects.

The Academic Dean, in consultation with the director of the D.Min. program, selects and assigns faculty mentors for each of the specialized D.Min. tracks. The director of the D.Min. program, in consultation with the D.Min. Committee and Academic Dean, may appoint adjunct faculty for leadership in the program as time and circumstances require.

The director of the D.Min. program assigns faculty as second readers to advise students in completing the thesis project. Assignments are made through consultation with faculty and students.

### **Record Keeping**

Student files are maintained in the office of the Registrar. This file contains materials submitted with the application to the program and records of student progress in the program. Students assume responsibility for keeping a record of their progress and uploading documents in the learning management system, Canvas.

## **PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

### **APPLICATION PHASE**

#### **Statement of Call**

Applicants to the D.Min. program submit a 2–3 page statement of call. This statement includes the persons and events that shape the call to ministry and the theological understanding of who God has called the applicant to be as a leader in ministry. The statement of call also includes recent discoveries around one's strengths and weaknesses in ministry. *See "Appendix A: Statement of Call Guidelines."*

#### **Statement of Focus**

Applicants to the D.Min. program submit a concise statement of focus for their learning in the program. This statement names the problem that will guide the work throughout the program. The focus for the D.Min. program emerges as students reflect on their own call to ministry and the call that has guided them to their particular ministry setting. Students are encouraged to probe the deeper issues in their own

Christian formation and the deeper issues in the life of their ministry setting. See *“Appendix B: Statement of Focus Guidelines.”*

### **YEAR ONE – ORIENTATION PHASE**

DM850 Orientation Seminar 1

DM851 Orientation Seminar 2

### **YEAR TWO – PROJECT PHASE**

DM860 Research Seminar 1

DM861 Research Seminar 2

### **YEAR THREE – THESIS WRITING PHASE**

DM870 Project Seminar 1

DM871 Project Seminar 2

Thesis writing is the final stage of the D.Min. program. A project may resemble the form of a doctoral thesis with multiple chapters, or it may take other literary forms such as poetry, narrative, a novel, drama, artwork, a handbook, a curriculum, or sermons. Whatever form the project takes, it should be done in consultation with the cohort mentor(s), and successful design and completion should demonstrate that a student has met the defined goals of the program. D.Min. projects should, with appendices, range between 100–200 pages. Permission should be requested to significantly go beyond this limit. Students will also submit their Personal Transformation Paper of 500-1000 words. See *“Appendix H: D.Min. Project Proposal Guidelines.”*

#### **Proposal**

While the first year is designed to orient the student to the core curriculum of the track, students should already be considering the direction of their research and writing. By the second intensive (Orientation Seminar 2), the student should be prepared to propose the direction of his/her research and the nature of the project. Quality proposals include a clear problem statement; plan of inquiry or methodology including underlying assumptions; literature review; research design including a collection of survey and/or interview data; project outline; timeline; and budget (if applicable). The faculty mentor approves proposals.

#### **Thesis:**

To be eligible to participate in the April commencement, students must have their theses completed and finalized (including the internal/external review, the project review/defense, and final edits) by one week before commencement. A more complete timeline for graduation is provided in the next section. Students should endeavor to submit their work well ahead of program deadlines.

Completed drafts are initially submitted to the faculty mentor for review. The mentor approves the final draft and submits it to the Program Administrator, who distributes the project to internal and external readers. The Program Director appoints internal and external readers in consultation with the student and faculty mentor. Internal and external readers have three weeks to read and offer a response to the mentor and student. The student considers the readers' responses and integrates the suggestions into the final project.

#### **Thesis Defense:**

Upon final approval by the Program Director, a date for the defense will be established. The thesis defense is a closed-door meeting with the first and second readers, the faculty mentor, and the Program Director. The Program Director moderates the review. The format includes a 20-minute presentation by the candidate, 45 minutes of inquiry by the mentor and readers, and 15–30 minutes for deliberation and decision. The presentation by the student candidate is focused on sharing one’s learning, reflecting on vocational and ecclesial significance, and extending the implications of the project for future research and ministry practice.

Based on the discussion during the project review, the mentor, faculty reader, and outside reader make one of three recommendations to the D.Min. Committee:

- (1) To approve the thesis and recommend the granting of the D.Min. degree;
- (2) to approve the thesis on condition that specified revisions be made; or
- (3) not to approve the thesis and require further work before resubmission.

For an approved thesis, the designation “with distinction” may be added if the project is deemed to be of superior quality. When the review is completed, the Program Director of the D.Min. Program reports the degree status to the faculty.

#### **Public Presentation (optional):**

The purpose of the public presentation is to share one’s learning with others. The public presentation is a gathering for faculty, area pastors, lay people, and a candidate’s friends, family, and congregation/ministry colleagues. The format includes a welcome and introduction by the Program Director, an opening word by the faculty mentor, a 20-minute presentation by the candidate, and 30 minutes for an open discussion moderated by the Program Director. At the student’s request, (who shall assume all expenses incurred by this option) the public presentation may take place in the student’s ministry context, i.e., wherever they are serving.

#### **Submission of Final Thesis**

Students must submit a PDF of their D.Min. thesis along with the “Thesis-Project Consent and Release Form” (see Appendix L) to the library before receiving their diploma. Please contact Katlyn DeVries ([Katlyn.devries@westernsem.edu](mailto:Katlyn.devries@westernsem.edu)) for more information.

Students are not required to submit paper copies of their D.Min. theses to the library for binding. The library will produce a paper copy for its own collection. All other access will be from the institutional digital repository.

Students who want a bound copy of their thesis may contact Wallaceburge Bookbinding at <http://wbmbindery.com/thesis-binding/personal-thesis-binding>

#### **Commencement and Diploma**

Students who complete all requirements may participate in the April commencement ceremony. Students may request to receive their diploma in their place of ministry. Students who request a special commencement service incur the travel and lodging expenses for the faculty mentor and Program Director.

Diplomas will be granted when all program tuition and fees are paid, and the library has received a PDF of the thesis and the signed “Thesis/Project Consent and Release Form” (see Appendix L.)

## YEAR THREE TIMELINE

**NOTE:** The following dates are the upper limit deadlines. The student should endeavor, as much as possible, to submit the project ahead of these dates.

### **May–November**

Write draft chapters and submit completed chapters to the faculty mentor for ongoing feedback.

### **September or October**

Submit a statement of intent to graduate submitted to the faculty mentor, D.Min. Director, and Registrar.

### **December**

Bi-weekly updates to faculty mentor on progress.

### **January 1**

Submit a completed draft to the faculty mentor and D.Min. Program Director for mentor (first reader) feedback. The mentor will provide an assessment in approximately two weeks.

### **January 15 – February 1**

Revisions based on mentor/first reader feedback (students will complete edits in one week; faculty mentor/first reader will provide final review feedback in approximately one week.)

### **February 1 (Deadline for participation in April commencement)**

- Submit completed Thesis to D.Min. Program Administrator (or designee) for assignment to first and second readers. Readers will provide an assessment to students in approximately three weeks
- Edits should be completed within two weeks
- A review (defense) date is scheduled
- Submit Personal Transformation Paper

### **February - April**

- Project review and defense with student, faculty mentor, D.Min. Program Director, and first and second readers
- Committee recommends to (1) Approve the project; (2) Approve the project pending specified corrections made and approved by faculty mentor and director; or (3) Postpone approval of the project and require further work for resubmission
- Public presentation (optional)
- Completed thesis submitted to Cook Library (in PDF form) along with “Thesis/Project Consent and Release” Form (see Appendix L)

## **April**

Participation in the WTS commencement ceremony or student may petition to have special commencement service. Diploma granted upon submission of project, submission of library form, and payment of all tuition and fees.

## **PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The D.Min. academic year runs from September to August. The program is full-time, and students are expected to complete the degree in three years but not more than six years.

Candidates are expected to complete two one-week residencies per academic year (6 credits each) during each of the first three years. The D.Min. degree is granted when a student has completed the core curriculum of 36 credits plus the final thesis and its successful defense. Students not progressing at the above-listed rate will not be considered making progress towards a timely completion.

### **Admission**

The D.Min. Committee of Western Theological Seminary grants admission to the program. Minimal requirements are:

- A Master's degree or its equivalent\* in an area related to one's ministry setting or vocational calling.
- At least three years of vocational experience in one's area of study and a clear alignment with the focus of the D.Min. cohort.
- A capacity for theological and cultural reflection, strong self-awareness, and a commitment to one's own continued spiritual formation.

*\*In consultation with ATS, WTS defines equivalency in terms of 1) equivalent degrees for international students and 2) students who have completed more than 1/2 of their credits toward a Master of Divinity degree. Any exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis and could include factors like:*

- *being admitted on a probationary status for the first year of the program until the requisite graduate coursework is completed (if the coursework isn't completed within the first year, the student cannot continue in the program)*
- *graduate coursework in another area of study that can be shown to be relevant to the cohort focus*
- *other experiences which may be deemed significant to offset the three-year requirement*

### **Application**

Students submit the following material with their application for admission to the D.Min. Program:

- A completed application form, including a list of the applicant's vocational experiences, noting places and dates of service together with information about the primary function or responsibilities in the position.

- Letters of recommendation: One from a lay leader in a local congregation or ministry agency, one from a supervisor (current or former), and one from a peer.
- Official transcripts from all institutions granting undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- A statement of call. See Appendix A for guidelines.
- A statement of focus for the program. See Appendix B for guidelines.
- Review of three significant books (no more than 1½ double-spaced pages per book)

### **Credits**

The D.Min. program totals 36 credit hours: six courses (seminars) at 6 credits each, plus the thesis project. WTS does not normally substitute credit for work completed before entry into the D.Min. program.

### **Tuition**

The full cost of tuition covers the full three years of the program, including the six seminars and the year of project writing. The amount is payable in six bi-annual installments, invoiced in equal parts in the Fall and Spring semesters. Payment plans can be negotiated to spread the cost across the semester – see Appendix J.

Students must (1) pay their annual tuition in full before they can enroll for the subsequent year of the program, or (2) have a satisfactory arrangement in place (e.g., a monthly payment plan) with the Business Office before September each year.

### **Fees**

The current schedule of fees is available on the Western Theological Seminary website and is subject to change. As of publication, those fees are:

\$50 Application fee (non-refundable)

\$250 Acceptance Confirmation (non-refundable, applied toward tuition)

\$100 Graduation Fee

\$750 Continuation Fee is charged for each additional year beyond the first four years in the program.

### **Termination Guidelines and Suspension**

If students are not completing work in a timely manner, they must petition the D.Min. Committee for an extension of their program. The D.Min. Committee may request that the student withdraw from the program or recommend alternative action, including a leave of absence.

Students may complete their programs in not less than three years and not more than six years after the first Orientation Seminar. A student who does not complete the D.Min. program within the required six years from entrance may be terminated from the program. If there are extenuating circumstances, the student may petition the D.Min. Committee for an extension. This petition must be submitted sixty days before the six-year deadline (please contact the Program Director for more information).

When the quality of the project does not conform to program guidelines or the written portion of the project is unacceptable in any way, the faculty mentor or Program Director may require a rewrite. If this does not produce adequate quality, the project may be referred to the D.Min. Committee with the recommendation that the candidate is terminated.

Students are suspended for failure to pay annual tuition or the annual continuation fee in the fifth year of the program and beyond. A suspended student may not continue work in the program until all fees are paid.

For additional institutional policies, please see the most recent Western Theological Seminary Handbook.

### **Standards for Student Workload (WTS Handbook)**

Each credit hour stands for 42 hours work for an average Western student. The workload for each learning unit should be calculated by the following standard.

Reading	25 pages per hour
Alternative Texts (film, audio/podcasts, etc.)	Time according to engagement
Written research papers	½ page per hour
Non-research writing (i.e., journals, reflection papers, etc.)	1 page per hour
Other assignments	Based on reasonable expectations of an average D.Min. student.
Conferences and Events	Hours calculated by time-in-attendance.

### **Writing Guidelines and Writing Studio**

To ensure consistency in student submissions, the D.Min. and Th.M. programs provide students with a Manual of Style Supplement as the guiding protocol for theses, research papers, and projects. This supplement is based upon the eighth edition of Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. For projects that make extensive use of biblical, classical, and medieval sources, the *SBL Handbook of Style* is also recommended.

The Writing Studio at Western Theological Seminary is available to help students strengthen their English-language writing skills. The studio instructor will assist in identifying issues such as proper punctuation, sentence structure, and accurate citation methods. Online conferencing with the Writing Studio is available for students at a distance. To schedule an appointment, students should visit the Writing Studio module in the Student Portal or email [katlyn.devries@westernsem.edu](mailto:katlyn.devries@westernsem.edu). This is a free service.

## **SEMINAR INFORMATION**

### **Dates and Locations**

Seminar dates and locations will vary for each specialized track. Detailed information regarding schedules and other logistics will be sent to accepted students ahead of time. Please note that students are required

to pay the cost of their own transportation to and housing at the seminar sites unless notified otherwise in writing. Some meals may be provided by prior arrangements.

## COOK LIBRARY

### **Cook Library**

Cook Library provides access to over 250,000 print and electronic books for theological study, some in English and some in Spanish. Included in the collection are reference materials, over 1,300 periodical titles, audiovisual materials, and a unique collection of rare and foreign books. Whether on campus or off, Cook Library services are available to you as a Western Theological Seminary student each semester you are registered in WTS courses.

For non-English language cohorts, WTS may also arrange for student borrowing privileges at another library to provide resources in the language of that cohort.

At the beginning of the D.Min. program you may receive a student ID card that doubles as your library card. This card enables you to borrow materials from both Cook Library at WTS and VanWylen Library at neighboring Hope College. Students should bring their library card to campus when attending seminars at WTS. If lost, the card can be replaced by for \$5.00.

Please see “Appendix K: Cook Library Information” for additional information.

## TECHNOLOGY

### **Canvas Software**

The seminary’s course software, Canvas, is a web-based learning management system that enables teaching and learning on the internet in a secure environment. D.Min. students utilize Canvas to access readings, upload assignments, project proposals, completed residency project reports, thesis-project proposals, and completed projects. Seminar information is also posted in Canvas. Students will receive orientation and instruction in Canvas as needed.

*What is the Canvas website?*

You can access Canvas at <https://westernsem.instructure.com/login/canvas>.

*What do I need to know to use Canvas?*

You need to know basic internet browsing skills, how to download and upload files, and how to add attachments.

*What are the browser and computer requirements for Canvas?*

You can view the technical requirements at <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Canvas-Basics-Guide/What-are-the-browser-and-computer-requirements-for-Canvas/ta-p/66>



*Is wireless access available during times I am on campus?*

You are encouraged to bring your laptop or tablet with you during the on-campus seminars. Wireless access is available throughout the seminary.

### **Student Portal**

Students view and pay their tuition bills on a web-based software system called the Student Portal. Secure login is available at <https://westernsem.mycampus-app.com/app/#login>

### **Email Account**

All students receive a WTS email account. All seminary communication will be directed to the WTS email account, and students are responsible for regular monitoring. The WTS email account can be configured to forward to another email if the student so chooses.

## APPENDIX A

### STATEMENT OF CALL GUIDELINES

The Doctor of Ministry program assumes clarity around understanding one's vocational call. From application to graduation, the D.Min. program expects students to reflect on this past-present-future story of God working to transform a leader's life within a particular vocational setting. The statement of call is a 2–3 page essay that theologically narrates one's story in relationship to God calling them as a leader.

The statement of call is autobiographical, not merely as a chronological document but a brief theological memoir. The statement of call addresses the following questions:

- When and how have you experienced the presence of God in your life and ministry? What is your story of encountering God?
- Who is God calling you to become and how have you tested this call in the past?
- What have been the most fulfilling aspects of your work?
- What have been the disappointments, frustrations, and difficult passages of your work?
- Who are the primary mentors and friends (2–3 persons) who have walked with you as you came to understand your calling? How have they shaped you and your ministry?

Examples of well-written, albeit extensive, theological autobiographies include:

St. Augustine, *Confessions*  
Dorothy Day, *The Long Loneliness*  
Howard Thurman, *With Head and Heart*  
Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, *Unexpected Destinations*  
Rigoberta Menchu, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*  
Eugene H. Peterson, *The Pastor*  
Lewis B. Smedes, *My God and I*

## APPENDIX B

### STATEMENT OF FOCUS GUIDELINES

Applicants are required to submit a 1–2 page statement of focus which guides the work throughout the D.Min. program and is regularly revised as students progress in their learning. Students determine the focus of their research, which emerges through reflection on their own calling, in conjunction with the theme around which their cohort is gathered. Students are encouraged to probe the deeper issues in their own Christian formation and deeper issues in the vocational setting. The focus of the D.Min. program is the point of intersection between what God is doing in the student's life and in their vocation and context.

The statement of focus should begin with: “In my D.Min. program, I want to explore . . . “

In this statement, a student should:

- Reflect on the primary themes and questions that have marked your spiritual formation. We have been formed in particular contexts (family, church, and cultures).
- Reflect on the primary themes and questions that have marked the vocation to which you have been called. Like an individual, a particular vocational setting has a history and cultural particularities; a vocation has been formed in particular ways.
- Identify the point of intersection between what God is doing in your life and in your vocational context.
- Identify the fields of study that will constitute the core of your D.Min. program. The fields might include the traditional fields of theological learning, yet more often in a D.Min. program the fields of inquiry are interdisciplinary.

The focus statement should provide clarity regarding the project question that the student is interested in and how it ties into the larger theme of the cohort they are applying.

## APPENDIX C

### AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LOSS GUIDELINES

Autobiographies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. The first autobiography focuses on one's story of loss; the second focuses on one's story in, with, for, and against the church; and the third focuses on one's vocation.

If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Autobiography of Loss and present their autobiography to their peers during a seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to course syllabi for the final requirements.

#### **Autobiography of Loss Guidelines:**

- Briefly describe the most significant losses you have experienced. Think of material loss, relational loss, loss of visions or dreams, loss of roles and functions, and the experience of loss that comes when one is no longer part of a larger system.
- Reflect on what your family of origin, your church family and your culture have communicated to you regarding grieving and mourning.
- What would you say is the most significant loss you have experienced?
- Evaluate the work of mourning you did or are doing regarding this loss.
- Revisit and identify the emotions you experienced during the loss.
- How did you engage God during the loss? What did you pray about? What was the nature of your communication with God during the loss?
- Where was God during the loss? Close and personal? Remote and distant? Somewhere in-between?
- Were you angry with God? Was the loss punishment? Was it God's will? Did it have nothing to do with God?
- If you could say something to God about this most significant loss today, what would you say?
- Reflect on the relationship between this most significant loss and your call to the ministry:
- In what ways is being a minister helping you to do the work of mourning for this most significant loss?
- How has this loss revisited you in your ministry?
- How does this loss help or hinder you in being present to your parishioners or colleagues who are grieving?
- Describe your personal theodicy (a specific, plausible account of why God allows evil/suffering/pain) as it relates to the losses you have experienced.

#### **Formatting:**

- Approximately 2500-3000 words
- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12;
- Line Spacing: 1.5
- Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom

## APPENDIX D

### ECCLESIAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

Autobiographies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. The first autobiography focuses on one's story of loss; the second focuses on one's story in, with, for, and against the church; and the third focuses on one's vocation.

If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Ecclesial Autobiography and present their autobiography to their peers during a seminar and revise it in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to the course syllabi for the final requirements.

*As I looked out upon this cloud of upturned faces, each representing others already turned to the light, I was embraced by a wholeness I had never before experienced. It seemed to me that I was looking at the church as God sees it, not as a series of individual quirks and opinions, but as a single heart of love and sorrow. The only thing that made us different from any other kinship group or society was the mysterious presence of Jesus in the community. We are his body, which is not a metaphor. The ordinary world really is capable of hosting the infinite Being. As I searched the face of my congregation on my last Sunday, I felt the theological point was proved.*

~Richard Lischer, *Open Secrets*

#### **Assignment:**

- Read one of the following with a view toward writing your own ecclesial autobiography:

Samuel Freedman, *Upon This Rock*

Richard Lischer, *Open Secrets*

Gary Dorsey, *Congregation: The Journey Back to Church*

- Write an ecclesial spiritual autobiography. You may find it helpful to revisit your first-year spiritual autobiography of loss.

**Seminar Focus for Autobiography:** Deepening the practice of ministry is a primary focus of the D.Min. program; deepening one's understanding of who the church is and who he/she is in, with, for, and against the church is assumed in this. The second installment of the autobiography invites you to explore who the church is and how you are called to lead.

Please utilize the following guidelines for writing an integrated essay:

- Briefly describe the most significant experiences you have had with the church. Think chronologically (when have you been engaged), and functionally (the roles you have played or witnessed others playing).
- Reflect on what the multiple voices (family, education, church, culture), other than God, have communicated to you regarding the church.
- Where have you seen the church suffer? Reflect on how suffering manifests within a church context.
  - How did the church relate to the suffering? How did it grieve?

- How did you engage in this time?
- What was the relationship of the church to God during this time?
- If you could write a letter to the church NOW about the time of suffering, what would you say?
- Where have you seen the church living into God's mission?
  - How did the church celebrate?
  - How were you engaged with the church during this time?
  - How did the church engage with God during this time?
- What are the primary practices, actions, and activities that constitute "church." How and what do these practices, actions, and activities mean?
- Who are you in relation to the Church? How do you live as a leader who serves *in* (king), *with* (priest), and *for and against* (prophet) the Church?
- What is your ecclesiology—biblical and theological perspective on the Church? What is God up to in calling the Church into being and leading the Church into flourishing? Who is the Church? For whom/what does it exist? How is it manifested or structured?

**Formatting:**

- Approximately 2500-3000 words
- Font: Times New Roman; Font Size: 12;
- Line Spacing: 1.5
- Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom

## APPENDIX E

### VOCATIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

Autobiographies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. The first autobiography focuses on one's story of loss; the second focuses on one's story in, with, for, and against the church; and the third focuses on one's vocation.

If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Vocational Autobiographies and present their autobiographies to their peers during a seminar and revise them in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to the course syllabi for the final requirements.

*“Neither the hair-shirt nor the soft berth will do; the place God calls you to is where your deep gladness  
and the world's deep hunger meet.”*

*Frederich Buechner*

The first autobiography focuses on one's story of loss; the second focuses on one's story in, with, for, and against the church; and the third focuses on one's vocation.

#### **Assignments:**

In preparation for writing your vocational autobiography, read James Neafsey's *A Sacred Voice is Calling* and one of the other memoirs/autobiographies listed above. Be prepared to share during class how these texts have influenced the writing of your vocational autobiography. Upload to the course site in Canvas by the due date specified by your cohort leader. Before coming to the intensive, read through all of your colleagues' vocational autobiographies

Seminar Focus for Autobiography: Deepening the practice of ministry is a primary focus of the D.Min. program; deepening vocation is assumed in this, and your last autobiography invites you to describe what your calling (vocation) has been and is, while also turning your attention to how God is inviting you to more deeply engage your calling for the future. So we join Thomas Merton, who wrote, “Education in this sense means more than learning, and for such education, one is awarded no degree. One graduates by rising from the dead.”

**Please utilize the following guidelines for writing an integrated essay:**

- Briefly describe your call to ministry (again) and how this call has been fulfilled in the past, is being fulfilled now, and how you see the call to be fulfilled in the future.
- Reflect on what multiple voices (family, education, church, culture), other than God, have communicated to you regarding vocation and work.
- What are your practices to cultivate listening (discernment) to where and how God is calling you? As Neafsey writes, “Sometimes careful listening reveals that our true calling is not to more work, or better work, or different work, but to a reordering of our priorities and a more balanced life.”
- Reflect on the suffering related to your calling. In what ways have times of suffering deepened your sense of calling and in what ways have these times weakened your sense of calling (making you want to run away from your vocation)?
- Reflect on the rejoicing that your calling has bestowed on you.
- Reflect on your social consciousness and the common good of your calling. How does your vocation bless the world or give life to others as it gives life to you?
- Describe your theology of vocation as it relates to your experience of work.

**Formatting:**

- Approximately 2500-3000 words
- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12; Line Spacing: 1.5
- Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom



## APPENDIX F

### CASE STUDY GUIDELINES

Case Studies are an optional component of the D.Min. program at WTS. If required by the Faculty Mentor, students write their Case Study and present it to their peers during a seminar, revising it in light of the insights they gain from their peers. Please refer to the course syllabi for the final requirements.

A case study is a story of a problem or situation from your ministry leadership life that invites you and your colleagues to reflect on what occurred and what could occur next time, considering the promise of theological reflection. The writing of a case is primarily focused on what occurred as best as you remember it. Please change names and locations to protect the confidentiality of those involved.

Case studies give us slices of real-life ministerial leadership to discuss, and they force us to look at our engagement with a ministry opportunity from an evaluative perspective. The case study invites the writer to discover more about themselves through peer interaction and personal reflection. The case study also invites peers to discover more about themselves by reflecting on how they would engage in a situation that may be foreign to their own experience.

#### **What is a case study?**

A “case” is a leadership event in which you were a principal player, written in a particular format and intended to foster learning and faithful action through peer reflection.

#### **What should a case study contain?**

A case study has five parts—each a paragraph heading to guide your written reflection:

Background: Share enough information to set the event in context. What do we need to know to understand the event?

Description: Report what happened with the community (first). Report on how you engaged if you did. Briefly describe the event as if it was a newspaper article.

Social Analysis: What is unstated but important to know to understand the multiple layers of the story? What do you perceive going on in you and with the people involved?

Theological Reflection: Where do you find intersections of this case with Scripture, history, or theological tradition? What do you hear God saying to you and the people involved? Relate biblical and theological themes to this event to illuminate what took place.

Educational Objectives: The educational objectives include a discussion of the learning points raised by the case. As you analyze this case, what action did you take? What do you learn (about yourself and the organization) having distance from the case? What would you do differently next time?

#### **Formatting:**

- Approximately two single-spaced pages

- Font: Times New Roman
- Font Size: 12
- Line Spacing: 1.5; Margins: 1.5" on the left and 1" on the right, top, and bottom

## APPENDIX G

### CREATING A D.MIN. PROGRAM GOAL

The D.Min. Learning Goal is the guiding statement for a student as he/she works throughout the program. It is a fluid statement that needs to be revisited before and after completing each seminar. The statement considers the problem, context, content, and process. The statement names: the *problematic* or case by which one hopes to engage throughout the program (e.g. preaching in the postmodern world; women in the pulpit; living into a missional theology; embodying Christian practices, etc.); the location or *context* of exploration, which is most often one's current ministry location and position; the *content* area(s) that are central to one's ministry-related question; and the *process* by which a student desires to explore the question or theme of ministry.

**The Problematic:** State succinctly in a single, clear, focused sentence the problem or question you intend to engage in your D.Min. program. Questions to consider:

- What primary ministry practice(s) or cultural question do you perpetually face as a called leader?
- What is the significant challenge you face that will require learning growth on your part?
- What do you believe you are called to do something about?

**The Context:** Frame in a succinct sentence the facets of your ministry location that give rise to your D.Min. focus. Questions to consider:

- Who do you serve?
- Where are you located in ministry (this includes demographics, cultural particularities, and ministry position)?
- How do you understand these people in light of the redemptive reign of God?

**The Content:** State succinctly in one or two, clear, focused sentences the learning topics that will orient and focus your D.Min. path of learning. Questions to consider:

- What areas do you need to explore in relation to your problem and context?
- What theological disciplines and sub-disciplines are at the heart of your question?
- What social scientific or other disciplines (be specific) do you need to explore to understand the human dynamics of ministry?

**The Process:** State succinctly in one or two sentences how you will orient and focus your D.Min. learning. How will you know that you have achieved the integration of your context, content, and problem in the D.Min. program? What do you hope to accomplish? Questions to consider:

- Will you be able to achieve this goal within the limits of the program?
- Is your goal about your own learning, or is it dependent upon someone else (other pastors, the congregation, etc.) changing for its fulfillment?
- How does your goal contribute to the refining and extending the practices in ministry?
- Does your goal integrate your own calling with your context?

## APPENDIX H

# PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

### Proposal for Doctor of Ministry Project

by [insert Candidate's Name]

Proposal draft #

Date Proposal submitted:

Signature of Candidate:

Signature of Cohort Leader:

Date:

The project proposal is the initial step towards the D.Min. project. The proposal is a substantial document that describes your planned research, analysis, and innovation related to an aspect of ministry. The proposal is the primary way you demonstrate to yourself, your faculty mentor, and the D.Min. committee that you have clarity for your research and an expected trajectory of what you plan to accomplish and how you plan to do so. Proposals range from 12 to 30 pages. D.Min. projects and, therefore, proposals are grounded in practical theology. Practical theology has a set of core values that cut across the diversity within the field. These include the interpretation of human experience in light of theology and the social sciences, the ongoing formation and transformation of Christian practice in particular communal contexts, and self-reflexivity. These values are enacted in four interrelated tasks of practical theology:

- *Descriptive-empirical task*, which asks the question, what is going on in this situation or context? Practical theologians answer this question by learning from or carrying out their own empirical research, usually qualitative research.
- *Interpretive task*, which asks the question, why is this happening? Practical theologians answer this question by interpreting their research using fitting theories from the arts and sciences.
- *Normative task*, which asks the question, what ought to be going in this situation? Here practical theologians turn explicitly to biblical and theological resources to help them interpret their situation or context, to help them develop new guidelines for ministry in their situation or context, or to learn from best practices.
- *Pragmatic task*, which asks the question, how ought we act in this situation or context? Practical theologians, in this task, propose strategies for action in their given situation or context.

These core values and tasks of practical theology should be evident in all D.Min. proposals and projects. More specifically, each proposal should include the following components (all of which are related to the values and tasks of practical theology):

*Clear, concise identification of the problem or question in ministry that the project will address.* Include a description of the ministry practice that you are exploring and the context in which you are exploring it.

*The purpose and/or significance of the project for you, for your community of faith, and, if applicable, the surrounding community and any other ministry settings that might benefit from your project.* Draw (directly or indirectly) from key learnings and integration from the submissions you've written throughout the D.Min.

program. Include how this project will reflect your growing self-awareness and demonstrate the personal growth and transformation you've experienced in the D.Min. program.

*Description of the context(s) related to the problem or question that your project will address.* This is related to the above categories and includes identification of the particular social, demographic, or political variables important for understanding the context.

*Clear and thorough empirical research design.* For most of you, this will be qualitative research. Necessary components of research design include the following:

- Core research question (which may or may not be slightly different from, though related to, the overall question or problem that that project addresses)
- Strategy of inquiry (for example, individual interviews, focus group interviews, participant observation and so forth)
- Sampling strategy (who are the participants in your research and what is your rationale for choosing these particular people)
- Data gathering and analysis (for example, using audio recorders, taking notes, transcription, identifying themes in transcriptions, and so forth)
- Storing data (how long you will store data, who will have access to the data, when you will destroy the data)
- Ethical issues in carrying out the research (for example, your relationship to the participants and how that might impact results; any ways in which participants would be vulnerable in the process; how you will receive informed consent from participants; freedom of participants to participate, to not participate, or to terminate participation partway through without any negative repercussions)
- Interview guidelines (if applicable)

*Literature review.* An overview of the primary social scientific (or philosophical or other scientific) sources and biblical and theological sources that will inform the project. This should include how these sources will be related to the empirical research and to one another. As you write your literature review, consider these questions (do not answer them all or answer them in a rote, linear fashion):

- What are the primary and secondary social scientific (or similar) fields of inquiry for your project? What primary models, authors, or schools of thought inform your project? How do you plan to engage, use, critique, and integrate these fields of inquiry?
- What biblical-theological questions are central to the project? How is your question understood theologically? How will you engage the theological questions in constructive ways throughout the project? On what theological ground does your project stand? How does it bring your theological tradition into fresh engagement with contemporary challenges and insights? What theological vision will your project imagine?
- How do the biblical/theological sources and the social-scientific sources relate to one another? (This is a question about interdisciplinarity.) Are they in a mutual conversation? How will you maintain conceptual distinctions while drawing connections among these fields of inquiry? Are they creatively brought together to construct new norms for ministry?

**Project outline:** This includes an outline of the chapters in the project, including, if applicable, the creation of any particular resources or products resulting from the project. The latter might include a manual, sermon series, curriculum, website, and so forth, as part of the pragmatic task of practical

theology. Chapter outlines should be detailed and clearly identify how portions of the project are interwoven. Frequently, the project outline is included in an appendix.

**Other appendices:** Timeline for completion of the project. Budget for the project, if applicable. Letter inviting people to participate in your research. Informed consent form to be signed by research subjects.

Overall, all projects and proposals should adhere to doctoral-level academic standards. This includes, among other things, following the writing guidelines listed in the D.Min. handbook and reiterated in the project seminar syllabus. Along with this, you must follow the Manual of Style Supplement when submitting the proposal. You are also encouraged to seek feedback and support from the WTS Writing Studio.

Finally, the project seminar will provide an opportunity for you to develop and revise your project proposal in conversation with your D.Min. cohort and your cohort leader.

## APPENDIX I

### COHORT LEADER EXPECTATIONS

The Cohort Leader selects the unifying theme for their D.Min. cohort and designs the learning pathway students will follow in pursuing the D.Min. degree. While adhering to fundamental expectations, degree goals and programmatic structures of the program, cohort leaders have flexibility in creating a formational and intellectual process unique to their theme, guiding students in centered study around the main theme and focused exploration generated by the participant's context and passions. The coherence of this work is a shared responsibility between the advisor and the student.

Expectations for D.Min. cohort leaders include:

- In cooperation with the Program Director, develop a three-year curriculum plan to meet all programmatic and degree goals centered on the focal theme of the specialty track.
- Design and implement the cohort learning pathway, including theme, learning objectives, seminar experiences, peer relationship development, and key academic concepts.
- Guide students through the program. Meet multiple times with students one-on-one, either in-person or via the web.
- Attention to completion of residency projects, namely,
  - Check-in quarterly on progress toward completion.
  - Read students' written projects.
  - Track student progress to completion.
  - By the conclusion of the second year, approve candidacy for each student. (Form M, page 52).
  - Notify the Registrar of the completion of courses and projects, thereby assisting in keeping an accurate record of student progress toward the degree.
  - Provide general accountability in drafting the projects toward coherence with the final project question.
- Work with the student in preparing a project proposal, offering particular attention to theological perspective and project methodology
- Walk with a student in the writing phase, namely reading drafts, submitting a final draft to an assigned committee (Director, Internal Reader, and External Reader), and follow-through on revisions until completion
- Participate in the Thesis Review and Public Presentation of Project (see **page 8** for details on the review and presentation).

## APPENDIX J

### BILLING POLICY AND DEFERRED PAYMENT PLAN

Students will receive a statement of their tuition before the start of the semester and payment is due 21 days after the first day of the semester in one of the ways:

- Cash or check
- Credit card or EFT by logging into the Student Portal

A Deferred Payment Plan is available for a \$25 administrative fee that will be charged for each semester the student is on the plan. The outstanding balance will be assessed a 1% finance charge each month until it is paid off, which must be in 4 or fewer monthly payments.

Students cannot begin a new semester with balances due on the previous semester.

Below is a sample enrollment form if you wish to pay your D.Min. tuition in monthly installments on our Deferred Payment Plan. Please contact Kerry Eshenaur in the Business Office to enroll in the plan for the current semester, or with any questions regarding payment, fees, or tuition. *Please note that deferred payment plans are only available to students paying tuition directly to WTS.*

Email: [kerry.eshenaur@westernsem.edu](mailto:kerry.eshenaur@westernsem.edu)

Phone: (616) 392-8555 ext. 106

Fax: (616) 392-7717



## APPENDIX K

### COOK THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

Cook Library provides access to over 250,000 print and electronic books for theological study. Included in the collection are reference materials, over 1,300 periodical titles, media, and a unique collection of rare and foreign books. Whether on campus or off, library services are available to you as a Western Theological Seminary student each semester you are registered in WTS courses.

At the beginning of the school year, degree-seeking students may receive a student ID card. It is also your library card and gives you access to materials from Cook Library at WTS and VanWylen Library at neighboring Hope College. If lost, the card can be replaced at reception for \$5.00.

#### Your Library Account

Your library account lets you request books and articles, renew books online, access eBooks and eJournals, save searches and favorite items, and access your reading history. To access your library account, go to the Cook Library home page at [guides.westernsem.edu](http://guides.westernsem.edu) and under **My Account** in the left-hand menu, select **My Account**. Login using OneLogin, which is the same username and password as your WTS Gmail account. If you use 2-factor authentication for your Gmail account, you need to turn it off in your Google account settings for OneLogin to work.

#### Access to Resources

You can access eBooks and online journal articles through the library catalog while logged in with OneLogin and request print books to be mailed to your home address.

**To request print books:** Find the item you want in the catalog and click **Request**. Choose **Home Address** as your pickup location, and the item will be mailed to you at no cost. Return shipping is at your expense, and the item will need to arrive back at the library by its due date to avoid overdue fines. The checkout period for DL students is 60 days, with one 60-day renewal available.

**To request a scan of a journal article or essay:** Find the item you want in the catalog and click **Digitization**. Fill out the form with the citation information and click **Send Digitization Request**. The scan will be emailed to you as a pdf attachment.

**Tutorials:** Helpful tutorials are available on the homepage of the **Cook Library Services** Canvas course.

#### Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

Interlibrary loan is available at no cost for books and articles not owned by Cook Library. To request a book or article, submit an **ILL Request**, a tab at the top of the main catalog page. Please submit as much citation information as you can, to ensure we get you the right item. It may take up to two weeks to acquire books through ILL, since the book must be mailed from the lending library to WTS and then mailed to you. Articles may arrive faster since they are scanned and emailed. A/V materials and

books published within the current year are typically not available through ILL. The circulation period and the number of renewals are determined by the lending library and will vary.

### **ATLA Reciprocal Borrowing Program**

Some libraries belonging to the American Theological Library Association have agreed to grant free borrowing privileges to each other's off-campus students. This means that as an off-campus WTS student, you can go to any participating ATLA library, show your student ID as proof of current enrollment at WTS, and check out materials according to that library's policies. For more information and a list of participating libraries, go to our library home page, and under Services, select **WTS Students**, then **WTS Distance Learning**.

### **Assistance**

For assistance with renewals, requests, and other library questions, call the circulation desk at 616-392-8555 ext.139.

For assistance with logins, online access, and other library technology, contact Steve Michaels, Emerging Technologies Librarian.

Email: [steve.michaels@westernsem.edu](mailto:steve.michaels@westernsem.edu)

**APPENDIX L**  
**THESIS/PROJECT CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM**

**Western Theological Seminary Digital Repository**  
**Thesis/Project Consent and Release Form**

Western Theological Seminary retains one print copy of Doctoral of Ministry and Master of Theology projects/theses in the Cook Library Special Collections. One digital copy is retained in the Western Theological Seminary Digital Repository. These copies must be submitted to Katlyn DeVries, Writing Assistant, at [katlyn.devries@westernsem.edu](mailto:katlyn.devries@westernsem.edu)

Student name:

Permanent email address:

Phone number:

Year of project completion:

Graduation date:

Program completed (please circle): Th.M.          D.Min.

Faculty Supervisor:

Project title:

**Notice of Original Work and Use of Copyright Protected Materials**

If your work includes copyrighted material (images, music, tables, and graphs) that are not your original works, you must include a permission statement from the copyright holder. If your work includes interviews, you must include a permission statement from the interviewee to make their interviews public.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have obtained all necessary permissions and have included them in my work.

Signature:

Date:

Printed Name:

**Selection of Accessibility of Digital Thesis/Project**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that by signing this form I give WTS the right to digitally publish and provide free access via the internet to my thesis/project as detailed below. I understand that I retain all copyright and publishing rights to the work.

Please review the following statements and select the appropriate option by signing below.

**Open Access**

I agree to make my thesis/project available to the Western Theological Seminary community and to the global scholarly community in the Western Theological Seminary Digital Repository or its successor technology.

Signature:

Date:

Printed Name:

OR

**Restricted**

I do not want to make my thesis/project available to the global scholarly community. Access to the digital version deposited in the Western Theological Seminary Digital Repository or its successor technology will be restricted to the current Western Theological Seminary community.

Signature:

Date:

Printed Name:

*(Section to be filled out by staff)*

Date received:

Posted to repository:

Filename:

Registrar notified:

## APPENDIX M

### FORM FOR APPROVAL OF CANDIDACY STATUS

During the Second Year students will have a qualifying oral exam, conversational in nature, with their faculty mentor that focuses on the student's progress in the program. The faculty mentor will review student completion of all requirements to date and recommend whether he/she should continue in the program. Candidacy status is granted upon faculty mentor affirmation that the student has demonstrated a purpose and plan for completing the degree, and that the student is formally eligible to receive the D.Min. degree upon completion of the remaining work.

Student Name:

Upon review of progress by the above-named student, I affirm the following:

- The student has completed all requirements to date.
- The student has demonstrated a purpose and plan for completing the degree.
- The student is formally eligible to receive the D.Min. degree upon completion of the remaining work.
- The student should be granted candidacy status.

Additional comments:

Faculty Mentor Name:

Signature:

Date:

## APPENDIX N ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

### Assessment Rubric for Projects as an Artifact to Assess D.Min. Student Learning Outcomes

		Proficient			Competent			Novice			Inadequate	
	Score	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Critical Thinking</b>		At the highest level of scholarship, identifies the core issue and key assumptions; formulates a sophisticated, thorough research design resulting in pertinent data; draws specific, relevant conclusions from the data			Clearly identifies the core issue and key assumptions; formulates an appropriate research design resulting in pertinent data; draws specific, relevant conclusions from the data			Identifies an issue and assumptions with minimal precision, formulates a basic research design resulting in sufficient data to draw some conclusions			No identification of issue and assumptions. Unable to formulate a basic research design	
<b>Personal Transformation</b>		Articulates the way he/she has been genuinely formed and transformed			Reflects deliberately on specific aspects of personal transformation			Identifies an awareness of personhood and personal story as it relates to the project			No awareness of personhood or personal story as it relates to the project	
<b>Contextual Discernment</b>		Incisively and critically identifies ministry problems and/or challenges with understanding and insight of the socio-historical local ministry context			Identifies ministry problem in light of established norms with a descriptive understanding of the socio-historical local ministry context			Describes a ministry problem in the candidate's local ministry context			Inaccurate description of candidate's ministry setting within its socio-historical context	
<b>Theological Engagement</b>		Creatively engages a particular area/aspect of theology and contributes to a particular ecclesial			Engages a particular area/aspect of theology and connects to a particular ecclesial tradition/community			Engages a particular area of theology			No clear engagement with an area/aspect of theology	

		tradition/community			
<b>Ministry Innovation</b>		Offers an innovative contribution to the practice of ministry	Critically adapts an existing model for a particular area of ministry practice	Reviews pertinent literature and selects a model for a particular area of ministry practice	No coherent model for a particular area of ministry practice
<b>Coherent Expression</b>		Distinct voice, and writing style exhibits clarity, conciseness, correct grammatical form, creativity, and liveliness throughout the entire project	Maturing voice and writing style exhibits at least two elements of coherent expression: clarity, conciseness, and correct grammatical form throughout the entire project	Ambiguous voice, and writing style lacks consistency in clarity, conciseness and correct grammatical form and shows little sense of a personal theological voice	Inadequate writing style without consistency in clarity, conciseness and correct grammatical form. No sense of a personal theological voice

**WESTERN**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**EQUIPPING LEADERS, CHANGING LIVES**  
101 East 13th Street, Holland MI 49423-3622  
Ph 616.392.8555 | Fax 616.392.7717 | [westernsem.edu](http://westernsem.edu)