

DICKERSON-GREEN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

GUIDELINES

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT



Dickerson-Green Theological Seminary Doctor of Ministry Program Project Guidelines

1. Vision and Purpose of the DMin Project

Every ministry has questions waiting to be asked, stories longing to be told, and deep wounds seeking healing. The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) project is not simply an academic exercise—it is a spiritual pilgrimage. It invites you to weave together sacred theology and lived experience.

At Dickerson-Green Theological Seminary (DGTS), your project should rise from the soil of your real ministry context, responding with theological imagination and pastoral presence. It is a gift you offer to your people, your tradition, and the ongoing work of God.

2. The Journey at a Glance

The DMin Project unfolds gently yet intentionally in three broad phases:

- **Listening and Designing:** Discover a need, read deeply, listen prayerfully, and shape a creative response.
 - **Doing and Dwelling:** Implement your response in the sacred ground of your ministry. Pay attention to what unfolds.
 - **Reflecting and Writing:** Gather the fruit, interpret the journey, and offer a thoughtful and coherent.
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3. Who is Ready? Prerequisites

You may begin writing once you have completed **18 credit hours** in the DMin program.

Preparation includes:

- A consultation with your academic advisor
 - Approval from the DMin Director
 - A signed covenant committing to a one-year project rhythm (extensions possible when pastoral realities require grace)
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4. The Roadmap of the Project Journey

1. **Discern the Question:** What ache in your context calls for response? Where is God's Spirit stirring you to act?

2. **Shape the Proposal:** A 5–10 page document capturing your vision, purpose, scope, methodology, and a timeline of grace.
 3. **Gather the Blessing:** Receive formal approval from the DMin Director and be paired with a wise advisor.
 4. **Design the Response:** Create a plan—this may be a course, a retreat, a workshop, a mentoring program, or another sacred experiment.
 5. **Walk the Path:** Implement the project. Record what you see, feel, hear, and learn.
 6. **Reflect and Evaluate:** Use both numbers and stories to understand what changed, what healed, what surprised.
 7. **Write the Report:** Tell the story in academic but soulful language—let it breathe.
 8. **Offer it Up:** Share your work in an oral defense—less a trial and more a sacred conversation.
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5. A Living Proposal: Listening, Designing, Committing

Your proposal is a living document—a map made with pencil and prayer. It should include:

- A specific and soulful title
 - A clearly named problem grounded in your context
 - A purpose statement that glows with clarity
 - Scope and limitations, naming what is in your hands and what is not
 - A biblical/theological rationale rooted in Scripture and sacred tradition
 - A methodology guided by Bloom’s Taxonomy and attentive design
 - A timeline, flexible but faithful
 - A bibliography in Turabian format
 - A reflection on the project’s contribution to the Church and world
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6. Telling the Story: Writing the Final Report

Structure your final work like a spiritual memoir grounded in academic clarity:

Chapter 1: Introduction

- The ministry problem
- Purpose and research questions
- Key definitions and the heart of the matter

Chapter 2: Literature Review

- What others have said—what wisdom you build upon - Theological, cultural, and pastoral voices

Chapter 3: Biblical and Theological Foundations

- Sacred texts that shine light
- Theological themes: justice, vocation, healing, reconciliation

Chapter 4: Ministry Context

- Your people, your place, your rhythms
- Historical and demographic notes

Chapter 5: Project Design and Implementation

- Step-by-step journey
- Materials, participants, sacred tools used

Chapter 6: Evaluation and Analysis

- What changed? What emerged? What remains unresolved?

Chapter 7: Reflections and Recommendations

- Insights for your ministry and the wider church - Next steps for you or others who may follow

Bibliography and Appendices follow at the end

7. Abstract and Submission Pathways

- The abstract must summarize the soul and structure of your project in one page.
 - Submit three printed copies (spiral-bound, double-sided) and one digital copy (PDF).
 - Follow Turabian formatting guidelines.
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8. A Sacred Conversation: The Oral Defense

The defense is a gathering of peers and mentors.

- Share a 10 to 15-minute overview of your work

- Respond to questions with humility and insight
 - Receive feedback as gift
 - Make any necessary revisions (in red font) and submit final copies
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9. Companions on the Way: The Faculty Advisor

Your advisor is not a gatekeeper but a guide. They:

- Help shape and sharpen your proposal
 - Offer timely feedback and encouragement
 - Ensure your work meets theological and scholarly standards
 - Help prepare you for your defense
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10. Ethical Footprints and Integrity

This is your work. It reflects your voice, your prayer, your care.

- Cite all sources faithfully
 - Protect the confidentiality and dignity of all participants
 - Obtain written consent where appropriate
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11. Rubric of Wisdom: How We Evaluate

- Clear articulation of problem and purpose
 - Integration of theology, context, and practice
 - Originality and relevance of intervention
 - Thoroughness in research and methodology
 - Clarity and grace in writing
 - Depth in spiritual and pastoral reflection
 - Professionalism in presentation and defense
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12. Embracing the Contemplative Way in Research and Writing

At DGTS, we honor not only action but deep listening. We invite you to engage contemplative practices throughout the DMin process:

- Begin each research session with silence or prayer
- Journal regularly during your implementation phase
- Let Scripture, not only books, speak into your writing
- Use practices like lectio divina, examen, or breath prayer to center your discernment
- Remember: the Spirit is your co-researcher, not just your subject

The contemplative method allows your project to become more than a paper—it becomes a prayer, a pilgrimage, and a prophetic word for the Church.

Appendix A: Project Formatting and Style Guidelines

Length:

The final DMin Project Report should be approximately 100–125 pages in length (not including front matter, bibliography, and appendices).

Spacing:

The document must be double-spaced throughout, with the exception of block quotes, footnotes, bibliography entries, and appendices, which should be single-spaced.

Font and Font Size:

Use Times New Roman, 12-point font for the body text. Footnotes should be in 10-point Times New Roman. Use bold or italics only as needed for headings and emphasis.

Margins:

Maintain 1-inch margins on all sides of the document.

Style Guide:

Follow the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian. Chicago/Turabian Notes and Bibliography Style is required. Use consistent citation formatting throughout the report.

Submission Format:

Submit three (3) printed spiral-bound, double-sided hard copies. Submit one (1) digital copy in PDF format to the DMin office.

These guidelines ensure theological rigor and academic integrity, while reflecting the beauty and clarity expected of a minister-scholar.