

DICKERSON-GREEN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY PROPOSAL GUIDELINES



Doctor of Ministry Project Proposal

Purpose of the Project Proposal

The Doctor of Ministry Project Proposal serves as the foundational planning document for the doctoral project. It demonstrates the student's ability to integrate advanced theological reflection with disciplined ministry practice in a specific context. The proposal is required before any project implementation, intervention, or data collection begins.

In alignment with the expectations of the **Association of Theological Schools** for the Doctor of Ministry degree, the proposal confirms that the project is rooted in ministry practice, engages relevant theological scholarship, and reflects appropriate doctoral-level research design. The proposal also establishes feasibility, ethical responsibility, and clarity of purpose.

Students are encouraged to consult **The Doctor of Ministry Project**, which provides models for ministry-based research, theological integration, and project design consistent with ATS standards.

Required Steps for Submitting a DMin Project Proposal

Step 1. Ministry Context Description

The student shall provide a clear and specific description of the ministry context in which the project will be conducted. This includes the institutional setting, community characteristics, leadership structure, and the student's ministerial role. The context must be sufficiently stable to support the duration of the project.

Step 2. Ministry Problem or Opportunity

The student shall identify a focused ministry problem, challenge, or opportunity emerging from practice. The issue must be concrete, contextually grounded, and appropriate in scope for a Doctor of Ministry project.

Step 3. Project Purpose Statement

The student shall articulate a concise purpose statement describing what the project intends to accomplish and why. The purpose statement must connect the identified ministry issue with a proposed ministry intervention or strategy.

Step 4. Theological Rationale

The student shall present a theological framework that grounds the project. This section must demonstrate engagement with scripture, Christian tradition, and theological scholarship relevant to the project's focus and context.

Step 5. Review of Ministry and Scholarly Literature

The student shall review selected literature related to the project topic. This includes theological sources, ministry studies, and relevant research. The review should demonstrate awareness of current conversations and clearly situate the proposed project within them.

Step 6. Project Design and Methodology

The student shall describe the project design in detail, including the intervention, activities, participants, timeline, and methods. The methodology must be appropriate to the ministry context and aligned with the stated purpose.

Step 7. Ethical Considerations

The student shall address ethical issues related to participation, consent, confidentiality, power dynamics, and institutional requirements. When applicable, the proposal must indicate plans for IRB or equivalent approval.

Step 8. Evaluation and Assessment Plan

The student shall explain how the effectiveness of the project will be evaluated. This includes measurable outcomes, qualitative indicators, or reflective practices appropriate to the project goals.

Step 9. Scope and Limitations

The student shall identify the scope of the project and acknowledge limitations such as time constraints, contextual boundaries, and external factors.

Step 10. Proposal Submission and Review

The completed proposal shall be submitted to the assigned faculty advisor or committee according to program timelines. Revisions may be required before approval is granted.

Step 11. Formal Approval

Written approval of the proposal is required before the student may proceed with project implementation or data collection.

Alignment with ATS Doctor of Ministry Standards

This proposal process reflects ATS expectations that the Doctor of Ministry degree

- is rooted in the practice of ministry
- integrates theological reflection with advanced professional practice
- demonstrates doctoral-level engagement with research and reflection
- results in the transformation of ministerial identity and practice

The proposal confirms that the project meets these expectations prior to implementation.

Student-Facing Project Proposal Checklist

Students should confirm that the proposal includes all of the following before submission.

- Clear description of the ministry context
- Clearly defined ministry problem or opportunity
- Concise and focused project purpose statement
- Explicit theological framework relevant to the project
- Engagement with appropriate scholarly and ministry literature
- Detailed project design and methodology
- Ethical considerations addressed, including approvals if required
- Evaluation and assessment plan
- Identified scope and stated limitations
- Proper formatting and complete bibliography

Faculty Project Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Faculty reviewers will assess proposals using the following criteria.

Ministry Context

The context is clearly described, specific, and appropriate for the proposed project.

Ministry Focus

The problem or opportunity is clearly defined, grounded in practice, and appropriately scoped.

Purpose and Clarity

The purpose statement is focused, coherent, and achievable within the degree program.

Theological Integration

The proposal demonstrates thoughtful engagement with scripture, tradition, and theology relevant to the project.

Engagement with Literature

The student shows awareness of relevant scholarship and ministry resources and situates the project within existing conversations.

Project Design

The methodology is clearly described, feasible, and appropriate to the ministry context and goals.

Ethical Responsibility

Ethical issues are identified and responsibly addressed.

Evaluation Strategy

The proposal includes a clear and appropriate plan for assessing project outcomes.

Scope and Feasibility

The project is realistic in scale and can be completed within program timelines.

Overall Readiness

The proposal demonstrates doctoral-level clarity, integration, and preparedness for implementation.