2015 – 2016
Bexley Seabury Seminary Federation

Doctor of Ministry Handbook
Congregational Development
Preaching
# Contents

Welcome and Introduction to Bexley Seabury .................................................. 3

**DMin in Congregational Development Program** .............................................. 4
  Anti Discrimination
  Divergent Perspectives
  Introduction ........................................................................................................ 5
  Program of Study Schedule ................................................................................ 8
  Registration Deadlines and Tuition and Fees .................................................... 9
  Learning Covenant and Student Goals .............................................................. 10
  Faculty Advising ................................................................................................. 11
  Core Group Process ............................................................................................ 13
  Core Group Facilitator ....................................................................................... 14
  Core Group Learning Goals ................................................................................ 15
  Critical Incident Report Instructions ................................................................. 16
    *Critical Incident Report Rubrics* .................................................................... 17
  Congregational Study Guidelines ...................................................................... 19
    *Congregational Study Rubrics* ..................................................................... 21
  DMin in Congregational Development Thesis Process .................................... 23
    Thesis Director
    Thesis Reader
    Options

**DMin in Preaching Program** ........................................................................... 28
  Introduction ....................................................................................................... 29
  DMin in Preaching Policies and Procedures Specific to Bexley Seabury ......... 30

**DMin Program Assessment Rubrics** ................................................................. 36

## Doctor of Ministry Thesis

**DMin Thesis Proposal Guidelines** ................................................................. 40

**DMin Thesis Proposal Approval Form** ......................................................... 41

**DMin Thesis Rubrics** ..................................................................................... 43

**DMin Thesis Deadlines** ................................................................................ 45

**DMin Thesis Guidelines** ............................................................................... 46

**How to Write an Academic Paper** ............................................................. 54

**DMin Thesis Certification Form** ................................................................. 59

**DMin Thesis Archival Submission Form** ..................................................... 60
Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Doctor of Ministry programs at Bexley Hall Seabury Western Seminary Federation. This Handbook is designed to offer greater clarity about the Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development and the Doctor of Ministry in Preaching degrees offered at Bexley Seabury. In addition, please refer to the Bexley Hall Seabury Western Theological Seminary Federation Student Handbook for questions of a general nature.

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is an advanced degree for ministry professionals interested in deepening one’s theological understanding of and practical skills for ministry. Oriented toward enhancing ministerial leadership, the DMin builds upon the student’s experience in ministry, bringing together theoretical and analytical insights, peer learning, skills development, as well as the research and writing of a thesis that contributes new knowledge and integration for the practice of ministry.

Our Mission

As an Episcopal center for learning and discipleship at the crossroads of the nation, the Bexley Hall Seabury Western Seminary Federation forms lay and clergy leaders to proclaim God’s mission in the world, creating new networks of Christian formation, entrepreneurial leadership and bold inquiry in the service of the Gospel.

Our Vision

Bexley Seabury is called to be a 21st century seminary beyond walls – open to all who seek to deepen their Christian formation in a generous spiritual and intellectual tradition.
Doctor of Ministry

Congregational Development

Anti-Discrimination

The Bexley Hall Seabury Western Theological Seminary Federation is an educational community that proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the church and to the world. Bexley Seabury embodies generous Christianity, grounded in the Baptismal Covenant (Book of Common Prayer, pp. 304-305) and the Episcopal tradition, as we educate lay and ordained women and men for ministry, build faith communities, and enrich people in their faith. Toward that end, Bexley Seabury seeks to affirm the ministry of all persons who are faithfully living out their vocations within the Bexley Seabury community, be they students, staff or faculty, without prejudice to any person regardless of race, color, gender, age, physical disability, height or weight, national and ethnic origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation/identity, or gender identification. We are intentional in following the Baptismal Covenant, striving for justice and peace among all people and respecting the dignity of every human being.

Divergent Perspectives

The Bexley Seabury community also makes it its mission to welcome and include divergent theological perspectives and social views. In our individual and common search for truth, the seminary encourages the vital discussion and debate that is integral to our academic program; that which makes tangible and visible in extraordinary ways our genuine learning, faithfulness and mutuality.

The Bexley Seabury community believes that the continuing purpose of preparing leaders for the mission of the church is its prophetic manifestation of the biblical, theological, and philosophical perspectives gained through addressing difficult issues as a part of Christian witness and ministry. In this way we continue in the apostles' teaching. It is in this that we seek and serve Christ and one another.
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development

Introduction

The Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development prepares leaders for vital, dynamic and diverse communities of faith. Our students have an unparalleled opportunity to learn, stretch, challenge themselves and others, and emerge at the end of three years with exceptional skills in leadership and deeper theological grounding for innovative and effective congregational ministry.

Students study with and learn from the outstanding faculty at Bexley Seabury, expert practitioners in fields related to congregational development, and peers. To integrate theory and practice, our DMin program includes collaborative study in small groups, lecture and discussion, online reflection throughout the year with a core group, case studies, a congregational study, and a thesis.

Bexley Seabury's DMin in Congregational Development encourages students to reflect theologically on the nature of the church, understand the challenges and opportunities facing today's faith communities, analyze congregations and their contexts, practice effective community organizing and strategizing, and develop a learning community with others who are asking similar questions.

Degree Requirements

This program requires a minimum of three years and no more than six years to complete. Coursework is offered in one-week intensive sessions in Chicago in January and June.

Required Courses

- Congregations in the 21st Century
- Congregational Systems
- Community Organizing for Missional Living
- Diversity and Context
- Nonprofit Management
- Nonprofit Management and Community Development
- Research and Writing (1/2 course)
- Writing the Thesis Proposal (1/2 course)

Each student is required to take two elective courses which may be online, an intensive, a regular residential semester course, or a transfer course.
**Additional Program Requirements**

Participation in on-line core group throughout the year, with expert practitioner supervision

Reflection papers on relevant readings shared on-line with core group

A critical incident report of an experience from your ministry shared on-line with core group

A congregational study of your local congregation

Thesis Project and Oral Defense

**Core Group Participation**

Students entering the program form a small core group. This cohesive group comes together in person twice a year at the on-campus intensives, and throughout the years of study as they engage in theological reflection, as well as offer each other constant support, encouragement and community. They work together on critical incident reports. They offer advice and perspective as members tackle the day-to-day challenges in congregational life. They both learn from and teach each other. Each core group is supervised by a faculty member who is an expert practitioner in congregational ministry.

**Admission Requirements**

Persons wishing to enroll in the Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development program must meet the following requirements:

- An M.Div. degree (or its equivalent) from an accredited theological school
- At least 3-years of experience in ministry following the M.Div. degree
- Evidence of desire to increase level of effectiveness in congregational leadership and development
- Evidence of the capacity to engage in advanced theological study and practical reflection.

Prospective DMin students may apply for admission at any time. The deadline for starting in June of each year is January 15 for priority admission. The final admissions deadline for starting in June of each year is April 1.

**Transfer of Credits*\**

Bexley Seabury accepts DMin credit in transfer for work done at the doctoral level at other accredited seminaries or institutions of higher education, subject to the degree restrictions on number of credits which can be transferred. With the permission of the Academic Dean, students in this program may transfer up to two doctoral-level course credits from another accredited seminary or institution of higher education. [For students in the joint DMin in Congregational Development program (2009 to 2014), courses taken at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP) are not considered transfer credits.]

---

*[Please note: The asterisk (*) indicates that this section contains detailed information about the transfer of credits, which is crucial for students planning to apply for admission or transfer credits.]*
Degree Program Extensions
In certain circumstances, a student in the DMin in Congregational Development program may be unable to complete the thesis within the six year time limit. Extensions of one year may be granted because of illness or other serious concern for those students with an approved thesis proposal. The student must complete the Degree Program extension Form available from the Registrar or online.

Removal from Program with Notification
When a student has been absent from the degree program without an approved leave of absence, has not enrolled in a Bexley Seabury Course, or paid the Continuation Fee for one year, he or she may be removed from the program with written notification.

Continuing Education and Non-Credit Opportunities
All courses taught in the DMin in Congregational Development program are open to all students of faith. Those who want to pursue advanced study, but don't want or need a degree, may receive a Diploma in Congregational Studies (all course work for academic credit but no thesis) or a Professional Certificate in Congregational Development (four required courses for credit and the congregational study). DMin tuition and applicable fees apply (see page 20).

People seeking enrichment or with an intellectual curiosity may take the courses for Continuing Education Units or simply for their own educational value for no academic credit [audit] at a significantly discounted cost.

For Academic year 2015-2016:

Audit: $375 per 3-credit course (recorded on official transcript)

Enrichment: $375 per course. D.Min in Congregational Development courses are open to Enrichment (non-credit) participants for $375 per course. An additional $25 fee is assessed for Continuing Education Units, if requested.

Students auditing or taking D.Min courses for Enrichment (no credit) are expected to read materials assigned and be prepared to participate in class discussions. Enrichment/Audit students do not submit the assignments required for the course. The instructor is not required to read or respond to assignments submitted by Enrichment/Audit students.

Students auditing or taking D.Min courses for Enrichment (no credit) are subject to the same policies as students taking these courses for credit.
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development
Program of Study Schedule
(June 1, 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>Congregations in the 21st Century Course</td>
<td>(full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
<td>Organizational Systems Course</td>
<td>(full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research and Writing Course (1/2-credit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Year</strong></td>
<td>Core Group On-Line Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ministry Critical Incident Report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading Reflections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elective Course (full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Two</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>Community Organizing for Missional Living Course (full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
<td>Diversity and Context Course</td>
<td>(full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thesis Proposal and Writing Course</td>
<td>(1/2-credit)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **All Year** | Core Group On-Line Participation |                           |                           |
|             | • Congregational Study |                           |                           |
|             | Elective Course (full-credit)   |                           |                           |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Three</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>Nonprofit Management Course: Leadership Skills for Clergy and Lay Leaders (full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
<td>Nonprofit Management and Community Development Course (full-credit)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Year</strong></td>
<td>Core Group On-Line Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thesis Proposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thesis Writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DMin in Congregational Development
Registration Deadlines

D.Min Courses are offered in an intensive format. This format requires students to complete reading and assignments before the first meeting of the class. Because of this requirement, the registration deadlines for intensive courses in the D.Min in Congregational Development program are as follows:

*Fall Term 2015* registration deadline is August 17, 2015
*January Term 2015*: registration deadline is December 14, 2015
*Spring Term 2016*: registration deadline is January 18, 2016
*Summer Term 2016*: registration deadline is May 16, 2016

Registration after these dates is by permission of instructor.

**Tuition and Fees**

The DMin in Congregational Development program has the following tuition and fee schedule for 2015 – 2016:

**Tuition:** $1620.00 per 3 credit hour course (includes advising fee)

**Candidacy Fee:** $650 charged upon approval of the thesis proposal

**Graduation Fee:** $150 charged after acceptance of thesis and before graduation

**Continuation Fee:** $400 per year charged 6 months following the completion of all core courses and annually thereafter until the Degree is completed.

The Continuation Fee will also be charged should a degree program student take more than a six-month Leave of Absence.

Financial aid is available to students with demonstrated financial need. Application information and forms can be found at [http://www.bexleyseabury.edu/financial-aid/](http://www.bexleyseabury.edu/financial-aid/).
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development

Learning Covenant and Student Goals

Each DMin student and all DMin faculty agree to honor the “Respectful Communication Guidelines” developed by Eric Law. These guidelines serve as a covenant in order that theological and practical reflection may occur in an honest and considerate manner. In addition to its academic components, the DMin program is a place where colleagues—learners and teachers—may come together to foster faithful witness to God’s unending grace in one’s ministry practice, leadership, and the shaping of the church for God’s mission.

Respectful Communication Guidelines

(Used by permission of Eric H. F. Law, Kaleidoscope Institute)

R  take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others
E  use EMPATHETIC listening
S  be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles
P  PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak
E  EXAMINE your own assumptions, perceptions and expectations
C  keep CONFIDENTIALITY
T  TRUST ambiguity because we are not here to debate who is right or wrong

I agree to uphold these guidelines for the time we have together and in the future in regard to any personal information shared by anyone during this program.

____________________________________  ______________________
Signature                                      Date
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development 
Faculty Advising

The DMin faculty advisor plays a critical role in the DMin experience at Bexley Seabury and is instrumental in the student’s success in and completion of the program. Faculty advisors provide support and encouragement to students who are usually balancing multiple responsibilities while pursuing the DMin degree. Faculty advisors serve in keeping DMin students connected to the school, especially during the long periods between residencies in January and June, working in tandem with the Core Group facilitator. Faculty advisors help students brainstorm thesis topics, develop research questions and chose relevant bibliographical resources.

The faculty advisor and student relationship is one characterized by mutuality. Both have responsibility to the other to communicate on a regular basis. At key times during the year the faculty advisor should check in with the student. In addition students should be sure to connect with their faculty advisors when they are on campus for classes and periodically throughout the year. This can be done in person, via email and by phone (or Skype-type call).

Faculty advisors work with students up through the approval of the thesis proposal. From that point on, in many cases faculty advisors become either thesis directors or thesis readers for the same students.

Student’s First Year

The Faculty Advisor is assigned prior to the first June Term of student entering program. Whenever the student is on the Chicago Campus for coursework, the faculty advisor should arrange to meet with the student if at all possible.

June: During student’s time on Chicago Campus, the faculty advisor should meet with the student (if possible) to welcome the student to Bexley Seabury and offer to answer any questions. If not, a Skype-type conference call would be helpful.

Fall: The faculty advisor should contact the student to review the prior June Term, to advise on elective courses, and to help student begin to think about direction toward thesis. This is also a good time for the faculty advisor to check in with students about their upcoming January Term and answer any questions they might have.

Spring: The faculty advisor should check-in with student post January Term and answer any questions related to student’s preparation for the upcoming June Term.

Student’s Second Year

Fall: The faculty adviser should contact the student to review June Term, to advise on elective courses, and to consult with student as she or he begins congregational study project.
(Core Group Facilitator/Adjunct Faculty Member is working with students throughout the academic year on congregational study. However, it may be helpful for faculty member to engage in this conversation early in the project also.)

This is also a good time to check in with students about their upcoming January Term and answer any questions they might have.

**Spring:** The faculty advisor should check-in with student to review January Term and to review draft thesis proposal student has created for the Thesis Proposal Writing Workshop taken in January. The faculty advisor will work with the student in developing a successful Thesis Proposal and Research Project and advise student regarding thesis directors and readers. The faculty advisor may read the student’s Congregational Study Paper and give evaluative comments. Often, student’s Congregational Study becomes a portion of his or her Thesis.

**May 15:** The Congregational Study is due.

**Student’s Third Year**

**Fall:** Continue to work with student in developing a successful Thesis Proposal and Research Project. Check-in with student to review June Term, to advise on elective and answer questions regarding preparation for January Term.

**Spring:** Check-in with student to review January Term and to continue to assist with preliminary Thesis Research

**Student’s Fourth Year**

The faculty advisor may take on the role of Thesis Reader for the student once he or she is granted Degree Candidacy and work with student and Thesis Advisor to direct the Thesis writing and research.

(Degree Candidacy is granted once student has completed all course requirements and Thesis Proposal has been accepted.)

**January 3:** Student’s first draft of Thesis due to Thesis Advisor and Reader

**February 1:** Thesis Advisor and Reader responses to draft due back to student

**March 1:** Second draft of Thesis due to Thesis Advisor and Reader. This version **must be** of a quality so that Oral Review may be scheduled.

**March or April:** Thesis Advisor and Reader conduct Oral Review with student with DMin Director present

**May 1:** Student’s Final Draft of Thesis due to Academic Affairs Office in order for student to graduate
DMIN in Congregational Development
CORE GROUP PROCESS

Year One

Purpose: To develop a learning group for theological and practical reflection; to engage in conversation around and inquiry into contemporary concerns in ministry; to deepen as a community of learning

Online Assignments:
  Critical Incident Report
  Reading Reflections

Year Two

Purpose: To continue theological and practical reflection; to explore in greater depth the religious congregation as a social institution; to deepen as a community of learning

Online Assignment:
  Draft Congregational Study Excerpt (12-15 pages; 3000-4500 words)

Year Three

Purpose: To continue theological and practical reflection; to explore in greater depth student’s ministry issue/concern informing the thesis; to deepen as a community of learning

Online Assignment:
  Draft Thesis Proposal
  Draft Thesis Excerpt (15-20 pages; 4000-5000 words)

All written assignments will be assessed in terms of quality of academic writing. Consult Kate Turabian’s A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations, 8th Edition.
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development

Core Group Facilitator

**Purpose:** To facilitate the year-round Core Group learning for an entering class of Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development students. To organize, convene and participate in theological and practical reflection related to the Core Group on-line assignments of critical incident report, congregational study, and sharing of thesis proposal and thesis draft, along with some book discussions and other items as appropriate.

**General Areas of Responsibility:**

- Facilitate Core Group on-line theological and practical ministry reflection and oversee student participation
- Arrange the flow of periodic Core Group on-line meetings and introduce the assigned topic for theological and practical ministry reflection
- Engage in on-line discussions with students in order to deepen reflection and add to dialogue, as appropriate, through sharing from your ministry experience and knowledge
- Assist DMin program director in defining content, flow and expectations of on-line work and in monitoring student participation
- Assist in the overall assessment\(^1\) of student on-line learning and the quality and fit of on-line work within the DMin in Congregational Development degree program
- Support students in their work in the DMin in Congregational Development program
  - Help create atmosphere of respect and encouragement while also honoring limits
  - Encourage student contact with appropriate person(s) in program oversight and/or teaching
- Liaison between students and DMin program director as occasion requires
  - Report to DMin program director(s) concerns regarding completion of student’s work, including timeliness, quality (including quality of writing), and adequacy.
  - Communicate with DMin director when students are experiencing difficulty with the program

---

\(^1\) Assessment is different from evaluation and grading in that it looks at the effectiveness of the institution in meeting its learning goals and program objectives. Assessment is conducted as indicated in Seabury’s 2015 Assessment Plan.
Core Group Learning Goals

Learning Objectives:
What do you intend to learn during this year through joining with colleagues in theological and practical reflection? Be as specific as possible.

(These objectives may be influenced by one's personal ministry interests and/or a potential direction for thesis research and writing.)

Learning Activities:
How might the components of this first year—sharing of critical incident reports, reading discussion, and ongoing Core Group interactions—enable you to meet your learning objectives?

How might you engage one-to-one with the faculty Facilitator as a colleague and an experienced ministry practitioner in order to move toward your learning objectives?

Evaluation:
How will you know what you have learned, or that you have achieved your learning objectives?

______________________________________________________       ___________
DMin Student Signature                          Date

______________________________________________________       _______
DMin Program Director                          Date
Critical Incident Report Instructions

Purpose: To develop a learning group for theological and practical reflection; to engage in conversation around and inquiry into contemporary concerns in ministry; to develop one’s skills in practical theology.

The Critical Incident Report assignment is an opportunity for self-reflection on one’s ministry that is then shared with your Core Group. By naming this ministry event a “critical incident” presumes no definition of what is critical for you; rather it encourages you to allow yourself the fullest latitude in recalling an event which, in whatever way it is important, seems to typify your recent experience in ministry and/or raises key concerns you may have about ministry.

A critical incident may be a personal involvement that may have caused anxiety; it may be a description of a particular leadership experience; it may be an experience that points toward need for further clarification of skills or learning; it may be an event that was exceptionally gratifying. In any case, it should be some experience that can be marked as a “high point” or a “low point.”

In a 2-3 page (500-750 words) report that you will post for Core Group review and comment:

1. Describe the event including critical verbal and non-verbal communication, attending to your personal feelings about the situation and emotions you perceived in others. Tell what happened and what you did.

2. What about this critical incident led you to share this event?

3. Identify issues and relationships involved in the critical incident. What changes took place? What were resistances to change?

4. The event can be a “low point” or a “high point.” What new insights or growth do you perceive in the situation?

5. Assess your role in the critical incident and the effectiveness of ministry practice there. What insight did you gain about your role in ministry leadership? List some other ways you might have handled the situation or responded to it.

6. What resources of pastoral leadership, prayer, self-awareness did you use?

7. Deal with the question, “How do I understand or make sense of this incident theologically?”

8. What “growth points” or needs for growth did this reveal to you about your ministry?

9. What would be most helpful to you in the responses of the Core Group? List any other concerns or comments you may wish to add.
## Critical Incident rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curricular or Learning Goal</th>
<th>Outstanding (3)</th>
<th>Sufficient (2)</th>
<th>Insufficient (1)</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Incident</td>
<td>Critical incident was “real,” substantive, and relevant to ministry practice.</td>
<td>Critical incident was “real” and opened a clear window into the practice of ministry.</td>
<td>Critical incident lacked substance or relevance, or was unclear.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Critical Incident</td>
<td>Incident clearly described with context thickly identified. Rationale for choosing this incident is clearly stated and illustrates complexity of ministry.</td>
<td>Incident described yet lacks detail. Some identification of context. Rationale okay.</td>
<td>Incident described in very cursory manner. Focus more on student than in describing the incident itself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Critical Incident</td>
<td>Clear identification of the issues and relationships involved in the incident. Perceptive description of the changes occurring and the resistances to change by the persons involved. Gives analysis of what is going on.</td>
<td>Identification of the issues involved in the incident, yet may lack critical insights into the complex relationships present. Able to describe changes occurring.</td>
<td>Analysis is weak and does not uncover the dynamics present in the incident</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Clear assessment of one’s role in critical incident and effectiveness of one’s ministry practice in that incident. Identifies factors and forces that emerged and were not anticipated. Frames substantive questions to facilitate Core Group discussion.</td>
<td>Includes assessment of one’s role and effectiveness of ministry practice in that incident. Frames good questions to facilitate Core Group discussion.</td>
<td>Weak assessment of one’s role and effectiveness of ministry practice in the incident. Generic questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Reflection</td>
<td>Includes references to biblical or theological themes (faith, guilt, alienation, reconciliation, justice, grace, sin, creation, redemption, incarnation, suffering, resurrection) that relate to the critical incident. Substantive reflection on these themes</td>
<td>Includes biblical and theological themes that relate to the critical incident. Some discussion of how theme relates to the critical incident and the practice of ministry</td>
<td>Shallow inclusion of biblical or theological themes. Surface discussion of how theme relates to critical incident.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congregational Study Guidelines

The Congregational Study puts to use the learnings of your first year in the Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development program and lays the foundation for your remaining work. The study is meant to be synthetic and creative, a resource for you and your ministry setting as you envision your future. This assignment will help you answer the questions of Practical Theology identified in the first year Research Methodology course:

Basic Questions
Practical Theology involves a spiral of action-reflection-analysis-action.
- How do we understand the concrete religious and cultural situation in which we must act?
- How should we act in this concrete situation, and why?
- How do we think through the norms and commitments and stories that shape our actions?
- Should any changes in our action be made, and if so, why?

DESCRIPTION
Practical Theology focuses on producing a “rich, thick, interpretive description of what IS.”
- What are we actually doing?
- How do we interpret that?
- What are the sources of authority for our actions?

ANALYSIS of Current Practice
Everything is done for a reason whether clearly articulated or not.
- Why are we doing what we are doing? How did we get doing this in the first place?
- What lies behind what we do?
- Where do our traditions come from?
- Out of what settings and cultures did our actions arise?
- Who has typically decided what we do?

MUTUALLY-CRITICAL CORRELATION
This movement brings together deeper understanding of what is presently happening in our current practices with the vision of the greater Christian traditions.
- What makes this new vision valid?
- In light of the Gospel, is what we are doing adequate?
- What new vision emerges when we bring past and present, tradition and culture, critically together?
- What makes this new vision valid?
- How does it challenge us?
STRAIGHT CHANGE

In this movement of Practical Theology, we articulate a (re)new(ed) vision that is more adequate for the context and setting. Our movements result in more new, adequate theory-laden religious and cultural practices. The Practical Theological spiral begins again.

Although named “Congregational Study,” the methodology for this assignment is useful in the study of settings other than a local congregation such as prisons, hospitals, schools, social service agencies, and denominational offices and structures.

A major resource you will need in crafting this study is Studying Congregations, edited by Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley and William McKinney (Abingdon Press, 1998). Each chapter in this volume is important, however focus your study on the first three chapters, “Theology”, “Ecology”, and “Culture and Identity”. The Congregational Study assignment is to help you identify aspects of your ministry setting that might feed into your qualitative research design. The Congregational Study is not an elaborate “quantitative” investigation utilizing statistical analyses of questionnaires or other survey and census data.

You may refer to such “data” in your study, however you are encouraged not to design original hard data research tools for this phase of your doctoral work.

You will share a portion of your study with your core group on-line. Post 10-12 pages on which you are working, especially aspects that emphasize the first three chapters of the manual. The final study submitted for credit should be 20-30 double-spaced pages long (5000 to 7500 words) with a bibliography and other supporting materials included as addenda. The final paper must conform to the latest edition of Kate Turabian, A Manual for the Writer of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.

Demographic information is available from http://factfinder.census.gov. Your diocese, synod, or national church offices may have access to other sources of data which will help you understand your context. The Hartford Institute for Religion Research also may be helpful, http://hirr.hartsem.edu. You have access to the United Library of Garrett-Evangelical and Seabury-Western as well as Northwestern University through your NetID, as well as the GTU Library through CDSP. You should also check your local public library.

Please e-mail Suzi Holding at sholding@bexleyseabury.edu with any questions or concerns.

Due Date for Final Congregational Study is May 16, 2016.

Developed from the work of Don S. Browning, Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Goals or Learning Component</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Insufficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systematic Description of Congregational Life</td>
<td>Contains thick description of ministry setting with insights into organizational, cultural, social, economic, and theological factors present; Unpacks complexities of local religious assembly; Explores conflict, spiritual practices, community outreach and mission</td>
<td>Contains thick description of ministry setting with insights into some of the social and organizational factors present; Unpacks some of the complexities of local religious assembly</td>
<td>Contains surface description of ministry setting; Names social and organizational factors present, yet lacks deeper explorations of implications;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual Theology</td>
<td>Identifies guiding theological perspectives; Surfaces the meanings of life held by congregational members and leaders; Uncovers theological rationale for ministry practices</td>
<td>Identifies theological and biblical underpinnings of congregation’s self-understanding;</td>
<td>Little substantive theological and practical reflection present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Utilizes critical thinking to identify the underlying assumptions and to synthesize understandings</td>
<td>Engages analysis to uncover assumptions, to identify patterns, to ask probing questions related to change</td>
<td>Analysis is fleeting with mostly personal opinion to support conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Explores social and cultural factors influencing congregational life; examines role of race/ethnicity, location, economic conditions, relationship with surrounding community</td>
<td>Identifies social and cultural factors influencing congregational life; Examines role of race/ethnicity, location, economic conditions with some attention to relationship with surrounding community.</td>
<td>Thin description of social and cultural factors influencing congregational life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authority and Power</strong></td>
<td>Examines history of lay and clerical leadership in decision making</td>
<td>Identifies instances of lay and clerical participation in decision making</td>
<td>Contains very little discussion of lay and clergy influence in decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conclusions and Learnings</strong></td>
<td>Reflects informed evaluation and student’s ability to synthesize project findings; Relates project learnings to one’s own ministry</td>
<td>Project evaluation and some synthesis present; Student relates learnings to one’s own ministry</td>
<td>Weak evaluation and synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Writing</strong></td>
<td>High quality academic writing</td>
<td>Well-organized academic paper</td>
<td>Weak academic paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development
Thesis Project Process

The Doctor of Ministry thesis project is the culmination of the course of study in congregational development and should contribute new knowledge to the understanding and practice of ministry. The dean, faculty and staff of the seminary stand ready to support the student in this process. There are two specific roles that will be of particular help to the student during this time, the Thesis Director and the Thesis Reader.

Students are expected to solicit the Thesis Director and the Thesis Reader and may do so in consultation with the Director of the DMin program, the instructor of the Thesis Proposal Workshop, their faculty advisor and their Core Group Facilitator. Both the Thesis Director and Thesis Reader are subject to the final approval of the Director of the DMin program. At least one of these should have a terminal degree (such as a PhD, ThD, DMin) and one should be a member of the Bexley Seabury Seminary faculty. Both should be approved no later than granting of candidacy.

General Timeline:
January Year 1: Begin thesis topic generation; take Research and Writing Workshop

January Year 2: Secure Writing Coach (see Writing Coach Guidelines); take Thesis Proposal Workshop and begin drafting the Thesis Proposal. This process will involve completing the questions in the Thesis Proposal Guidelines, including the annotated bibliography (Literature Review), the draft chapter outline (Table of Contents), and Human Subjects Research protocols and approvals.

January Year 3: The six core courses should be completed, as well as the Congregational Study. Electives should be completed or in process. Work towards the Thesis Project (reading and writing) may be done prior to the Thesis Proposal final approval.

Submission of final Thesis Proposal. The Thesis Director should be approved prior to final submission of Thesis Proposal and should review the proposal prior to submission. The Thesis Reader should be approved no later than notification of Thesis Proposal approval.

Once the Thesis Proposal is approved, students will adhere to the deadlines for the Thesis Project as outlined in the Doctor of Ministry Handbook. The student will work with the Thesis Director to establish an accountable timeline for review of portions of the project prior to the submission of the first draft of the thesis.

Candidacy for Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development:
A student will be granted candidacy by action of the Academic Dean and Director of the Doctor of ministry Program when all coursework is completed, the Congregational Study has been submitted and the Thesis Proposal has been accepted. Candidacy is awarded only when the student has met all financial obligations as listed in the Student Handbook.
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development
Thesis Director

**Purpose:** To work with the student to provide direction and supervision of the thesis project from the final thesis proposal submission through to thesis approval

**General Areas of Responsibility:**
Actively engage with the student and the student’s work in an appropriate and regular fashion as mutually agreed upon with the student
Ensure that the student displays sufficient mastery of the relevant theories and research methods in their work
Attentiveness to the Doctor of Ministry Thesis Rubrics
Attentiveness to deadlines as outlined in the Doctor of Ministry Handbook
Negotiate with student the chapter review dates and commit to a two week turnaround for feedback on submitted work
Approve changes to the Thesis Proposal. Substantive changes approved in consultation with the DMin Director.
Work with the thesis reader to establish a reasonable review schedule.

Regular progress reports are not required however in cases where the Thesis Director sees that the student is falling significantly behind in progressing towards completion by the stated deadlines, the Director of the DMin program should be notified.

**Qualifications:**
Knowledgeable in the relevant subject area
Common interest and competencies in the student’s research topic and methodology
May be a member of the Bexley Seabury Faculty
May have a terminal degree (such as a PhD, ThD, DMin)

The Thesis Director will receive remuneration at the completion of their work from Bexley Seabury Seminary Federation.
Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Development
Thesis Reader

**Purpose:** To review and provide feedback on the thesis draft and final document, from the final thesis proposal approval through to thesis approval.

**General Areas of Responsibility:**
- Ensure that the student displays sufficient mastery of the relevant theories, practices and research methods.
- Attentiveness to the Doctor of Ministry Thesis Rubrics.
- Attentiveness to deadlines as outlined in the Doctor of Ministry Handbook.
- Work with the Thesis Director to establish a reasonable review schedule.
- Provide timely and actionable feedback.

**Qualifications:**
- Knowledgeable in the relevant subject area.
- Common interest and competencies in the student’s research topic and methodology.
- May be a member of the Bexley Seabury Faculty.
- May have a terminal degree (such as a PhD, ThD, DMin).

The Thesis Reader will receive remuneration at the completion of their work from Bexley Seabury Seminary Federation.
Thesis Project Options

The Thesis Project at Bexley Seabury can take one of several directions. The project is to address a significant issue or concern related to the practice of ministry, while contributing to new knowledge and practice. It should give witness to the student’s critical and constructive theological, cultural, social, historical, and ethical reflection related to the project. It should also embody imagination and creativity leading to new or enhanced practices of ministry.

There are three forms that a thesis project, research, and the writing of the thesis paper may utilize:

Ministry Project

A student choosing this form will design, implement, and evaluate a particular project within their ministry. The particular project will focus on an important issue or concern for which the thesis project may bring about greater understanding of the ministry context, involve change or increase the effectiveness of the ministry practice in that local context. Reflection and research related to the ministry project is to contribute to the wider practice of ministry, not just one’s setting. Through the project and its evaluation, the student learns something new about ministry and can then help others by sharing the learning.

The Ministry Project Thesis is to be no longer than 75-double spaced pages, around 12,500 words. The student MUST consult Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, latest Edition, for style, format, foot/end note, and bibliographical references.

Research Project

A student choosing this form will engage in advanced study of some aspect of historical or contemporary ministry performed by others. While practice based, the thesis paper is to exhibit academic rigor and critical and constructive thinking. Its audience is those engaged in ministry and the wider church, not the academic community, per se.

The Research Project Thesis is to be no longer than 75-double spaced pages, around 12,500 words. The student MUST consult Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, latest Edition, for style, format, foot/end note, and bibliographical references.
Artistic Project

A student choosing this form will develop an artistic project which may involve a variety of media or artistic expression. The submission of a written rationale, design, documentation, and evaluation of the project is required. The student must get the approval of the Director of Congregational Development early on in the project planning. Examples of this form include such things as poetry, hymn writing, creating an object in the visual arts, computer gaming, musical composition, writing a drama, memoir, or other literary piece, and more. The artistic project must relate to the practice of ministry and the life of the wider church.

The written component of the Artistic Project Thesis is to be no longer than 30-double spaced pages, around 7,500 words. The student MUST consult Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, latest Edition, for style, format, foot/end note, and bibliographical references.
Doctor of Ministry

Preaching
Doctor of Ministry in Preaching
Introduction

The ACTS DMin in Preaching program is a unique collaboration of six Chicago-area theological schools that is known for its excellence in teaching, its practical preaching projects, its ecumenical approach, and its strengthening of accomplished preachers.

Growth in preaching involves curiosity, openness to the Holy Spirit, synthesis of imagination and reason, and power and authority to proclaim the Word of God. The Bexley Seabury Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Program joins with five other Chicago-area seminaries to sponsor the ACTS Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Program. This ecumenical program is designed to honor the dynamics above and to help each student become the preacher God is calling him or her to be in the context of ministry. Through this program students will improve their understanding of and skills in preaching, discover their own pulpit hermeneutic, claim and nurture their preaching voice and reconsider preaching within a variety of contexts, mentored by preachers and master teachers of international reputation.

The six seminaries in the Association of Chicago Theological Schools (ACTS) that sponsor this program are: Chicago Theological Seminary, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, McCormick Theological Seminary, Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, North Park Theological Seminary, and Bexley Seabury Seminary Federaton.

Program Outline
The program involves a three-week residency each summer for three years and independent parish projects conducted after each residency. The culminating project is a thesis of publishable quality. During each residency students will take a required core course and an elective course relevant to the student's learning goals, as well as participate in a colloquy. The colloquy serves to develop learning goals, determine electives, design the parish project and thesis, and examine students' preaching.

Between September and March, after the first residency, students design and conduct the Preaching Ministry Project. In this independent project, designed in collaboration with an advisor and a group from the congregation, students explore an assumption or idea about preaching through a rotation of videotaped sermons, which are evaluated by advisors, faculty, and parishioners. After the third residency, students research and conduct a final extended project and write a thesis.

Courses are taught by faculty from the ACTS schools and renowned teachers and preachers from across the country.

Each residency also includes the presence of a nationally known keynote speaker. Particular strengths of the program are the inter-seminary, interdisciplinary faculty; peer interaction during residency; and faculty/student collaboration between residencies.
Policies and Requirements Specific to Bexley Seabury Students

While guided by the requirements of the ACTS DMin in Preaching program outline, the Preaching Ministry Project Manual and the Preaching Thesis Manual, Bexley Seabury has some additional specific requirements for students enrolled through this school.

Program Goals

The program goals of the DMin in preaching are to enable participants to
- improve their understanding of and skills in preaching.
- discover their own pulpit hermeneutic.
- claim and nurture their preaching voice.
- reconsider preaching within a variety of contexts, mentored by preachers and master teachers of international reputation.

Bexley Seabury’s DMin in Preaching Program will enable participants to:
- engage in advanced theological learning related to ministry context, faith and vocational call, and the contemporary needs of the missional church (as it relates to preaching)
  - to reflect theologically and pastorally on the place of the sermon in the worship service, including the interplay between preaching, music, liturgy, and sacrament.
  - to preach out of a well-articulated theology of proclamation and stated purpose for each sermon
- think theologically about assumptions, biases, and knowledge about themselves and others (as it relates to preaching)
  - to assess the strength and weaknesses of one’s own style of preaching and critically reflect on the sermon event
  - to claim and nurture one’s own preaching voice
- contribute to a learning community characterized by dialogue, mutual respect, and appreciation of diverse views (in an ecumenical learning environment)
  - to engage in a collegial model of ministry through mutual interaction and reflection with colleagues in an ecumenical learning environment
- explore in a disciplined manner the dynamics, context, and organizational structures of a religious congregation (through collaborating with members of the ministry site in an ongoing process of reflecting on one’s preaching)
  - to collaborate with members of the ministry site in an ongoing process of reflecting on one’s preaching and to develop competency in an area of preaching that is relevant to the mission of the faith community

---

1 [http://actsdminpreaching.org/program/about-us](http://actsdminpreaching.org/program/about-us)

2 ATS DMin Degree Standard E.1.3
• develop knowledge and skills for leadership in the missional church (as it relates to preaching)
  o to learn from a diversity of styles and approaches to preaching
• enhance effectiveness as leaders of vital and healthy religious congregations and communities (as it relates to preaching)
  o to demonstrate improved skills in preaching in the areas of scriptural interpretation, performance, and prophetic engagement with society
• articulate one’s own beliefs, along with the connections among scripture and theological tradition in their preaching ministry
• develop preaching styles conversant with diverse cultural communities.
• enhance their hermeneutical and rhetorical skills to become accomplished preachers

These goals are consistent with Bexley Seabury’s additional curricular goals, below.

**Curricular Goals (goals for teaching and learning)**

Participants in Bexley Seabury’s academic programs will:
• engage in theological reflection on responsible life in faith.
• know the living tradition of Christian faith as richly diverse.
• recognize and respond to racism and other forms of oppression and exclusion in their personal and institutional manifestations.
• listen, read, and write effectively in order to contribute to the life of the church.
• be knowledgeable and effective leaders of worship in their communities of faith.

**Admissions**

In addition to the guidelines listed on the ACTS DMin in Preaching web site for admissions, Bexley Seabury requires **two letters of reference**, one from a peer who is familiar with your preaching and one from the leader (warden, etc.) of your congregation’s governing board or vestry.

**Residency and Preaching Ministry Project**

Bexley Seabury students are required to send a copy of all documents created within the program to the Bexley Seabury Office of Academic Affairs. These documents include the Student Learning Covenant, the Preaching Ministry Project sermons, reflection papers, and Parish Project Group Responses, and the Integrative Papers from year 1 and 2 of the degree program. Advisors are required as well to send a copy of the sermon evaluations and yearly integrative paper evaluations to the Bexley Seabury Office of Academic Affairs.
**Candidacy**

A Bexley Seabury student will be granted candidacy by action of the Academic Dean and Director of DMin Programs when all requirements for the first two-years of residency and preaching ministry projects are completed and Thesis Proposal is approved. Candidacy is awarded only when the student has met all financial obligations as listed in the Student Handbook.

**Thesis Proposal**

Bexley Seabury students will utilize a different form for developing a Thesis Proposal than the one found in the ACTS DMin in Preaching Thesis Manual. The Bexley Seabury Thesis Proposal form published later in this Handbook requires each student to identify the literature review that will undergird the thesis project as well as provides for a range of research methods.

**Thesis Project**

Bexley Seabury students will develop a Thesis Project that builds on, yet is not synonymous with, the three years of coursework, the Preaching Ministry Project, and the two Integrative Papers. The Thesis is to demonstrate theoretical grounding as well as advanced competence in the art of preaching while contributing to new understandings. The Thesis will conform to the guidelines published later in this Handbook.
DMin in Preaching Program

Tentative Schedule for Entering Student and Advisor
(May 28, 2015; dates may change)

Year One:

2015--2016
June--July Residency Period in Chicago—June 22-July 9, 2014
Plan Preaching Project and Create Learning Covenant with Student
Meet with Student Once during First Week of Residency Meet
with Student Once during Second Week of Residency Meet with
Student Two Times during Third Week of Residency

August 14, 2015—Student Learning Covenant Finalized. Copy sent to Bexley Seabury
Academic Affairs Office
September 6, 2015—Student Preaches Sermon #1 based on Core Course,
“Preaching as Interpretation”
• September 14, 2014--One (1) Week from Preaching Sermon, Student Emails to
Core Course Professor and Advisor the Sermon Video, Reflection Paper, and
Parish Project Group Response with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs
Office
• Week of September 28th—Three (3) Weeks from Receiving Material from
Student, Advisor Emails Evaluation to Student with copy to Bexley Seabury
Academic Affairs Office

November 1, 2015—Student Preaches Sermon #2 based on Elective Course learnings
• November 9--One (1) Week from Preaching Sermon, Student Emails to
Elective Course Professor and Advisor Sermon Video, Reflection Paper, and
Parish Project Group Response with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic
Affairs Office
• Week of Nov 30th --Three (3) Weeks from Receiving Student Materials,
Advisor Emails Evaluation to Student with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic
Affairs Office

January 10, 2016—Student Preaches Sermon #3 for Peer Review
• January 18, 2016--One (1) Week from Preaching Sermon, Student Emails to
Peer Evaluator and Advisor Sermon Video, Reflection Paper, and Parish
Project Group Response with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office
• Week of February 8th--Three (3) Weeks from Receiving Student Materials,
Advisor Emails Evaluation to Student with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic
Affairs Office
March 21, 2016—Nine (9) Weeks after Preaching Sermon #3—Student Emails Final Integrative Paper to Advisor with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office

- April 18, 2016—Three (3) Weeks from Receiving Student Materials, Advisor Emails Evaluation Response to Student and to ACTS DMin Program Office with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office

Year Two: 2016–2017
June-July Residency Period in Chicago—(June 20-July 7)
- Core Course is “Preaching as Performance”
- Revise Learning Covenant with Student based on course learnings, evaluations of first year sermons
- Begin discussion of Thesis Proposal
- Meet with Student Once during First Week of Residency Meet
- with Student Once during Second Week of Residency Meet with Student Twice during Third Week of Residency

August 15, 2016—Revised Learning Covenant Finalized. Copy sent to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office

September—March
- Students Preaches 3 Sermons in Schedule Found Above—September, 2016; November, 2016; and January, 2017
- Advisor Responds with Evaluations and Reflections in Schedule Found Above
- Integrative Paper Mailed to Advisor March 21, 2017 with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office
- April 22, 2017—Three (3) Weeks from Receiving Student Materials, Advisor Emails Evaluation Response to Student and to ACTS DMin Program Office with copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office

Year Three: 2017–2018
June-July Residency Period in Chicago—(dates not set as yet)
- Advisor Meets with Student Each of the Three Weeks of the Summer Residency
- Assist Student in Integrating Course Learnings into Thesis Project
- Give Comments on Draft Thesis Introduction and the Outline of the Topic and Methodology
- Work with Student to Devise Draft Thesis Proposal

Bexley Seabury Faculty Member appointed as Thesis Reader and involved in all thesis work from this Residency Period to the completion

August 1, 2017—Send Thesis Proposal to Advisor, Thesis Reader, and Bexley Seabury Academic Dean for Approval
September 1, 2017—Advisor, *Thesis Reader and Bexley Seabury Academic Dean*
Approve Thesis Proposal

*Student granted Candidacy by action of Bexley Seabury’s Academic Dean and DMin Director when all requirements for the first two years of residency and preaching ministry projects are completed and Thesis Proposal is approved. Candidacy is awarded only when the student has met all financial obligations as listed in the Student Handbook.*

2nd Sunday in September 2017—Student Preaches Sermon in Response to Core Course “Preaching as Social Transformation”
- Student Emails Video Tape, Thesis Proposal, Reflection Paper, Parish Project Group Response to Core Course Professor and Advisor with *copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office*
- Within Ten (10) Days, Advisor and Core Course Professor are to Respond. *(Copy of Response sent to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office)*

1st Sunday in November 2017—Student Preaches Sermon in Response to the Elective Course Taken in July
- Student Emails Video Tape, Thesis Proposal, Reflection Paper and Parish Project Group Response to Elective Course Professor and Advisor with *copy to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office*
- Within Ten (10) Days, Advisor and Core Course Professor are to Respond. *(Copy of Response sent to Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office)*

January 4, 2018—Student Sends First Thesis Draft to Advisor and *Thesis Reader*
January 18, 2018—Advisor and *Thesis Reader* Respond to Draft
February 12, 2018—Student Sends in Second Draft to Advisor and *Thesis Reader*
March—Oral Examination Takes Place at *Bexley Seabury*
April 8, 2018—Revisions Requested at Oral Review are Made and Final Copy of Thesis
- is Submitted to Advisor and *Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office*
  *No Later than* May 1, 2018—Advisor Makes Final Approval of Thesis and Thesis Copies Submitted to ACTS DMin in Preaching Program Office and *Bexley Seabury Academic Affairs Office.*
# DMin Program Assessment Rubrics

**Doctor of Ministry Program**

**In Congregational Development**

ACTS DMin in Preaching *(Rubrics specific to the Preaching Program are in Italics)*

## Program Assessment Outcomes and Rubrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Credit-Adequate</th>
<th>Credit-Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engages in theological reflection on responsible life in faith³</td>
<td>Able to draw connections between DMin studies, Christian ministry, and personal faith formation</td>
<td>Able to synthesize practice and theological perspectives into new coherent whole, offering original contribution to the life of the church and Christian living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engages in advanced theological learning related to ministry context, faith and vocational calling, and the contemporary needs of missional church</td>
<td>Able to reflect theologically and critically on the nature of leadership and ministry practice in today’s church</td>
<td>Able to identify new or enhanced directions and approaches for leadership and ministry practice in response to changing social and cultural context. <em>Able to reflect theologically and pastorally on the place of the sermon in the worship service, including the interplay between preaching, music, liturgy, and sacrament</em> <em>Able to preach out of a well-articulated theology of proclamation and stated purpose for each sermon</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinks theologically about assumptions, biases, and knowledge about themselves and others</td>
<td>Able to assess the strength and weaknesses of one’s own style of ministry and discern path for lifelong learning</td>
<td>Able to assess the strength and weaknesses of one’s own style of ministry and critically reflect on the nature of ministry and one’s own vocational calling. <em>Able to assess the strength and weaknesses of one’s own style of preaching and critically reflect on the sermon event</em> <em>Able to claim and nurture one’s own preaching voice</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra in *Introduction to Theology*, 3rd Edition (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002) write that “Christian theology attempts to understand and interpret...what God has done and is doing.” Theological reflection strives to situate the contemporary community of faith within that activity of God in order to shape and challenge Christians for daily living of faith.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Contributes to a learning community characterized by dialogue, mutual respect, and appreciation of diverse views</strong></th>
<th>Engages in peer learning through class interaction and with degree program core group Exhbits appreciation for multiple points of view and engages in respectful dialogue</th>
<th>Engages in peer learning through active class interaction and with degree program core group Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of individuals, communities and cultures Provides leadership in learning situations so that all participants contribute to the community process <em>Engages in a collegial model of ministry through mutual interaction and reflection with colleagues in an ecumenical learning environment</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explores in a disciplined manner the dynamics, context, and organizational structures of a religious congregation</strong></td>
<td>Able to reflect on the nature of the religious congregation from a systems perspective utilizing sociological research results and theology</td>
<td>Able to formulate imaginative response to complex faith community dynamics Engages in critical reflection on the nature of the congregation and communities of faith, exploring new and emerging models and fresh expressions of church Contributes to a deeper interpretation of ecclesiology in the contemporary context <em>Collaborates with members of the ministry site in an ongoing process of reflecting on one’s preaching and to develop competency in an area of preaching that is relevant to the mission of the faith community</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uses social and cultural analysis</strong></td>
<td>Identifies those social, cultural, and theological factors most immediately influential to her/his own ministry</td>
<td>Identifies social, cultural, and theological factors influencing the worldview of those with whom he/she ministers, both in the immediate geographical context and in wider settings (local, national, global, denominational, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Able to identify the diversity of their community context as well as develop the capacity to work with diverse groups</strong></td>
<td>Positions church/ministry as located within community, identifying possible social and institutional influences on local ministry Promotes others’ engagement with diversity</td>
<td>Positions church/ministry as integrated within community, and can articulate the connections, both direct and indirect, between wider social and cultural dynamics and local ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Able to listen, read, and write effectively in order to contribute to the life of the church</strong></td>
<td>Thesis and course papers demonstrate clarity of articulation, appropriate resources and examples supporting claims, and theological grounding</td>
<td>Thesis and course papers embody imagination and creativity, demonstrate excellence of articulation, provide sharp analysis and depth of theological insight while leading to new or enhanced understanding and practice of ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Develops knowledge and skills for leadership in the missional church</strong></td>
<td>Engages in learning opportunities to build confidence and skills for effective church leadership</td>
<td>Draws a broad variety of resources—leadership theory, social and cultural analysis, and theological reflection—into conversations with local and global sources and settings Able to articulate and embody expanded understandings of leadership and collaboration in order to bring about organizational transformation Learns from a diversity of styles and approaches to preaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exposed to skills and ministry approaches that enable them to be more effective as leaders of vital and healthy religious congregations and communities</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates exposure to different models and approaches to the practice of ministry</td>
<td>Demonstrates knowledge of, experience in, and commitment to collaboratively work across and within community contexts and structures to advance the common good Demonstrates improved skills in preaching in the areas of scriptural interpretation, performance, and prophetic engagement with society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

4 Applies also to ACTS DMin in Preaching
Thesis Proposal
and
Thesis Guidelines
GUIDELINES FOR A THESIS PROPOSAL

Name: __________________________________________

Working Thesis Title ________________________________

1. Describe the issue or concern in your practice of ministry that you would like to address in your thesis project. What one significant idea or hypothesis is your focus? What is your burning question?

2. Describe the location/context of your thesis project so that you reveal the relevance of your thesis for that context. WHY this thesis project in WHAT context?

3. What are your goals in your research and anticipated learnings?

4. What one sentence completes this phrase: “What I will show or argue or demonstrate in this thesis is _____________________________.“?


5. What theological principle or faith perspective undergirds your thesis project? For example, what do you believe about the nature of the church, ministry, and God’s call that makes your thesis project important/significant? For those in the Preaching Program, what is your theology of proclamation?

6. How will your thesis benefit the wider church and communities of faith? What do you propose that will be original and contribute to new understandings or practices in ministry?

7. Describe the steps involved in your project. What will you do?

8. What kind of information do you need, and how will you get it? What research methodologies will you employ?

9. Literature Review: What resources—printed and other—from your religious tradition, the wider culture, and your experience in the practice of ministry will you utilize in developing your thesis project and analysis? What books and journal articles will you use to support your analysis, your thesis statement, and your argument?

10. Include a draft Table of Contents with a paragraph description of the content for each of the chapters.

Approved By:

__________________________________________________       ___________
DMin Program Director       Date

__________________________________________________       ___________
Academic Dean       Date
Bexley Hall Seabury Western Seminary Federation

Thesis Proposal Approval

This is to certify that the Thesis Proposal for: ________________________________

Name of Student

And titled: ________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Is approved as partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Ministry degree requirements.

__________________________________________________________  _________
DMin Program Director                                            Date

__________________________________________________________  _________
Academic Dean                                                  Date
# Doctor of Ministry Thesis Rubrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Outstanding 3</th>
<th>Sufficient 2</th>
<th>Insufficient 1</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributes new knowledge to the understanding and practice of ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Thesis embodies imagination and creativity leading to new or enhanced understanding and practice of ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Thesis is rooted in the practice of ministry or the candidate’s ministry setting and contributes new understanding related to that practice or contextual setting</td>
<td>Thesis unrelated to practice of ministry. Fails to contribute substantive new knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document of sufficient quality that it contributes to practice of ministry or preaching as judged by professional standards</td>
<td>Thesis has strong and interesting topic, persuasively supported with well-chosen and well-analyzed examples. Thesis is well organized and well developed, with clear and effective transitions. The writing is clear.</td>
<td>Thesis is well-written, organized and conforms to assigned style manual. It is interesting to read and shows persuasive support for research data analysis and topic development.</td>
<td>Thesis poorly written. A number of instances not in compliance with style manual. Fails to provide persuasive support for analysis or argument.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has potential for application in other contexts of ministry</td>
<td>Thesis points to substantial implications of this work for other contexts of ministry</td>
<td>Thesis Conclusion points to implications of thesis for other contexts of ministry</td>
<td>Fails to articulate how thesis may be of value in other ministry contexts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates candidate’s ability to identify specific theological topic in ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Exceptional focus of thesis topic giving reader new information, sharp analysis and depth of theological insight</td>
<td>Thesis topic is clear, insightful and related to advanced learning in the practice of ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Thesis topic not clear. Introductory rather than advanced theological learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized as an effective research model</td>
<td>Possesses clear statement of research design and rationale for the approach used.</td>
<td>Exhibits clear research methodology that is contextual, explanatory, evaluative, or generative</td>
<td>Research methodology is poorly followed, designed or inappropriate for thesis objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses appropriate resources</td>
<td>Integrates a breadth of multi-disciplinary resources in conversation with each other and with the practice of ministry to create new possibilities</td>
<td>Research data and bibliographical sources support thesis topic or argument and are appropriate</td>
<td>Poor support for topic or argument from research data or bibliographical sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Outstanding 3</td>
<td>Sufficient 2</td>
<td>Insufficient 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluates and analyzes research results</td>
<td>Utilizes the various race, gender, class and critical theories to evaluate and analyze research data. Detects bias and identifies underlying assumptions in order to expose</td>
<td>Applies research findings to analyze situations, draw conclusions, and interpret meaning</td>
<td>Limited analysis of research results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflects candidate’s depth of theological insight related to ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Extensive theological reflection and attention to current and substantive resources evident</td>
<td>Demonstrates attention to current research and appropriate theological reflection</td>
<td>Inadequate theological reflection with little attention to current research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows that candidate has gained informed and improving practice</td>
<td>Demonstrates a high level of influence on candidate’s practice of ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Indicates how thesis process has added to candidate’s practice of ministry or preaching</td>
<td>Little articulation of how thesis process has enhanced candidate’s ministry or preaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total score</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average score</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DMin Thesis Deadlines

January 2, 2016—Student Sends First Thesis Draft to Thesis Director and Thesis Reader

February 2, 2016—Thesis Director and Thesis Reader Respond to Draft

March 2, 2016—Student Sends in Second Draft to Thesis Director and Thesis Reader. This version must be of a quality so that Oral Review may be scheduled.

April 1-15, 2016—Thesis Director and Thesis Reader conduct Oral Review with student and DMin Director present.

May 1, 2016: Student’s Final Draft of Thesis, electronic and hard copy, due to Academic Affairs Office in order for student to graduate.
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS GUIDELINES

Thesis Arrangement and Description of Contents

Students should observe the following requirements when writing a thesis. All must use the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* published by the University of Chicago Press.

**Formatting the Manuscript**

**Order of Contents**

The contents of the paper should be arranged in the following order:

- Title Page
- Abstract
- Copyright Page (or blank sheet of paper)
- Acknowledgments (optional)
- Dedication (optional)
- Epigraph or Significant Quotation (optional)
- Preface (optional)
- Table of Contents
- Lists of Illustrative Material (as appropriate)
- List of Abbreviations, Glossary (optional)
- Text (including an Introduction, if desired)
- Appendices (optional)
- Bibliography
- Blank sheet of paper

If a thesis includes items not on the above list, their placement should follow Turabian.
Front Matter

Title Page. The title page must conform to the following sample. All characters must be CAPITALIZED and all lines properly centered. Turabian offers an example in the Appendix. Although the title page counts as page i, the page number does not appear on it.

BEXLEY HALL SEABURY WESTERN
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY FEDERATION

[TITLE OF THESIS]

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY IN

[CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT or PREACHING]

BY [STUDENT'S FULL NAME] CHICAGO,

ILLINOIS

MAY [YEAR OF DEGREE CONFERRAL]
Abstract. The abstract summarizes your thesis in a single paragraph and will be used to help future readers decide on the relevance of your work to their own research. It should carry the generic heading ABSTRACT centered above the text (do not include the title or any other information).

Copyright Page. Copyright privileges in the United States and Canada vest immediately upon the creation of the thesis, without the requirement of notice or registration with the U.S. or Canadian Federal Government. (Canadians and other nationals should research copyright regulations in your country of residence.) However, insertion of a copyright notice is advisable for U.S. and Canadian citizens, for it notifies readers that the copyright owner acknowledges her or his legal rights. This notice should appear by itself on the page following the title page. It should be centered in the middle of the page and read:

Copyright by Jane Barbara Doe, [year of degree conferral]
All rights reserved.

The copyright page is counted in the pagination, but the page number is not shown and the page does not appear in the table of contents.

Optional Prefatory Pages. The acknowledgments, dedication, epigraph, and preface pages are optional. If included, they must follow Turabian. The dedication and epigraph pages are counted in the pagination, but page numbers are not shown and they are not listed in the table of contents. All pages of the acknowledgments and preface are numbered in lower case Roman numerals (e.g., iii) centered at the bottom of the page; these items appear in the table of contents.

Table of Contents. The table of contents must follow Turabian. This page is numbered in a lower case roman numeral centered at the bottom of the page. It is important that the table of contents accurately reflect the outline and organization of the manuscript; information in the contents (i.e., order of contents, headings, page numbers) must conform exactly to the material in the text of the thesis.

Lists of Illustrative Material. Tables, illustrations, graphs, etc., that appear in the text must appear in an appropriate list that reproduces the specific titles and page locations of the material. These lists must follow Turabian. All pages are numbered in lower case roman numerals centered at the bottom of the page; the lists appear in the table of contents.

List of Abbreviations, Glossary. These items are optional. If included, they must follow Turabian. All pages are numbered in lower case roman numerals centered at the bottom of the page; these items appear in the table of contents.
Text

Introduction. The text usually begins with an introduction, which provides an overview, rationale, and/or justification of the work. The introduction may be a separate section or it may appear as part of the first chapter; if it is a separate section, you may head it simply INTRODUCTION or you may designate it as a chapter, depending on its length. In either case, the introduction is part of the text, not the front matter. The first page is therefore page 1 (Arabic numeral) of the manuscript.

In order to assist the reader of your manuscript, the introduction will typically contain the following:

- Context and Background: Briefly situate your thesis in its ministry and literature context.
- Research Question or Concern: Within this context, how are you making an original and useful contribution to practical theology? Give a clear statement of the “thesis” of your manuscript.
- Significance of Research Question or Concern: Indicate why it is important to answer this research question or to examine this concern. So what? Help your reader understand the importance of reading your complete manuscript.
- Your Claim: What is your original and useful answer to the Research Question? What is your original and useful contribution to ministry and practical theology through your examination of a concern?

Use the above components of an introduction to lay out a roadmap for your reader.

Main Body. The main body of the text should follow a logical outline, with clear distinction between chapters and headings within chapters. You must divide your work into chapters.

Headings and Subheadings. Headings and subheadings must appear in a consistent manner that gives higher-level headings greater attention value (see Turabian for a suggested plan for five levels of headings). Headings must be used consistently across the chapters of a thesis and must be referenced consistently by the Table of Contents. Please do not separate sections within a chapter by using page breaks. Page breaks are only appropriate between chapters.

Footnotes. Footnotes are to be used rather than endnotes and should conform to Turabian.

Back Matter

Appendices. All appendices must appear in the table of contents (see Turabian for an example). If there is more than one appendix, each must bear a descriptive title. The first page of each appendix is a cover page with a generic heading and the descriptive title centered in the middle of the page and typed in full capitals. All pages of the appendices must have page numbers. All material must meet margin requirements.
Bibliography. The format of the bibliography must conform to Turabian.

Preparing the Manuscript

Paper

Draft copies may be copied on standard quality copy paper. All paper must be 8.5 x 11 inches, free from holes and perforated edges, and not fastened in any way.

Print Specifications

Printing must be on only one side of the paper. The typeface must be consistent throughout the manuscript. Type size should be 12 points and print should be letter quality with consistently clear and dense dark black characters. Please remember that bold print is of limited usefulness for drawing readers’ attention; underlining and italics are therefore more appropriate. The most consistently used typeface in academic writing is Times New Roman and thesis writers should choose it.

Margins

Every page of the manuscript must carry the correct margins. Do not include any text in a header or footer except footnotes and page numbers. All other material on a page must respect the following margins:

Standard Margins. All pages must have one inch margins on all sides except those pages enumerated below.

Special Top Margins. The first page of each of the following requires a top margin of two inches: acknowledgments, preface, preliminary lists (but not the table of contents), abstract, chapter, endnotes, bibliography or reference list, and vita. The first page of each of the following requires a top margin of three inches: dedication and epigraph.

Spacing

The main text throughout the manuscript must be double-spaced without extra space between paragraphs. Block quotations, captions, long headings, notes, and bibliographic material should be single-spaced with a double-space between items. Appendices may be single- or double-spaced, depending on the nature of the material.

Indentation. Each paragraph should be indented consistently from the left margin throughout the text. Block quotations should be indented this same distance from the left margin and paragraph openings within such a quotation should have an additional consistent indentation.
**Chapter Headings.** Begin each chapter on a new page. The space between the chapter heading and the beginning of the text is two double-spaces.

**Titles**

The first page of the following must carry generic titles, centered above the text and typed in FULL CAPITALS: acknowledgments, preface, table of contents, preliminary lists, abstract, chapters, and bibliography. As noted above, the first page of appendices is a cover page with the title centered in the middle of the page.

**Pagination**

Every page in the manuscript is counted in the pagination, but not all pages contain a page number. Manuscripts must conform exactly to the following requirements.

**Front Matter.** The title page, copyright page, dedication, and epigraph are counted in the pagination but do not carry page numbers. All other front matter must be numbered consecutively using lower case Roman numerals (i.e., iii, iv, v, etc.) placed at the bottom center of the page.

**Text and Back Matter.** All pages are to be numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals (i.e., 1, 2, 3, etc.). Placement of the page numbers is at the bottom center of the page.

**Illustrative Material**

Tables and figures (e.g., charts, graphs, maps, drawings) are to conform to Turabian. They may be reduced in size when necessary as long as they remain of sufficient size to be clearly readable. Titles and other descriptive matter should appear on the same page as the illustrative material; if it is not possible to fit this material on the same page, it must appear on the preceding page.

Handwork is to be of high-quality black ink. Colored artwork should be of high quality. Written permission must be obtained if the creator is someone other than the thesis author. This statement of permission will then become part of the Appendix of the thesis.

Photographs included in the thesis should have a good range of contrast. The photographer should be named and written permission must be obtained if taken by someone other than the thesis author. This statement of permission will then become part of the Appendix of the thesis.

**Proofreading**

The student is responsible for proofreading the entire manuscript to ensure that the manuscript is free of all errors prior to sending it to the thesis advisor and reader. Students
are encouraged to seek an outside person to proofread the manuscript prior to its submission in draft or final form.

**Using the Work of Others: Plagiarism and Copyright Law**

Students are responsible for knowledge of and compliance with Seabury’s policy on plagiarism as well as copyright law in the U.S., Canada or the student’s country of residence.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the taking of the words, ideas and methods of others as one's own. In academia, plagiarism involves the use of others’ words and ideas without adequate reference to the author or indication of quotation. It is a serious form of academic dishonesty or academic fraud, and offenders are subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion from the school. In order to avoid plagiarism, especially by inappropriate use or citation of quotations and ideas, students are expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements and practices of citation found in Turabian’s *Manual for Writers*. Unfamiliarity with these requirements and practices is not an acceptable reason for unintentional plagiarism. Plagiarism cannot be evaded through the alteration of occasional words from one's source.

When plagiarism is detected, the matter, together with evidence, will be referred to the Academic Dean who, in consultation with the faculty and President, will make an appropriate disposition of the matter, which may include failure of the course, academic probation for a designated period, suspension for a designated period, or expulsion from the program. The student’s bishop will normally be notified of the situation.

Those who have questions about the nature and scope of plagiarism should consult the Academic Dean.

**Copyright Law**

The use of another's work, even after giving full credit and citations, is not exempt from the obligations of copyright law. Notice the difference between copyright and plagiarism. Copyright is concerned with more than credit--a proper citation is not enough. The use of another person’s protected work beyond the lawful limits is an infringement of copyright law, even if one attributes full credit to the original author.

The use of lengthy excerpts of copyrighted material or the use of any protected work in its entirety may exceed the limits of “fair use” as defined by U.S. copyright law and therefore require permission from the copyright holder. Obtaining permission to use copyrighted material is the sole responsibility of the student. Letters of permission are to appear in an appendix of the thesis.

Students’ whose country of residence is Canada or another country besides the U.S. must follow the copyright laws of that country.
Submitting the Manuscript

Submission of Final, Approved Thesis Copies

Students submit three copies of the final version of their manuscripts in the following manner:

- Submit one copy electronically in .pdf document form to the Academic Affairs Office at Bexley Seabury
- Submit one copy in .pdf document form on an electronic disk mailed or shipped to the Academic Affairs Office at Bexley Seabury
- Submit one copy on white paper unbound and boxed to prevent damage to the edges mailed or shipped to the Academic Affairs Office at Bexley Seabury.

One digital copy will go to the United Library; the others will stay in the Academic Affairs office. It is understood that the thesis author grants Bexley Seabury permission to submit this copy to the United Library.

Abstract

Send the text of your abstract via e-mail to the Academic Affairs Office at Bexley Seabury.

- Your abstract will appear on Bexley Seabury's website as a way to alert others to your research. Please know that you will retain copyright to your work.

Approval Form

The approval form will be provided by Bexley Seabury bearing the original signature of your thesis director and reader. A copy of this approval form will be submitted along with the digital copy of your final thesis to the United Library. This will be taken care of by the Academic Affairs Office when your final version has been approved.
How to Write a Paper in an Academic Program

A guide for the occasionally perplexed

Rule Number 1: Whether you are writing a short paper, a term paper, or a thesis, always keep Turabian\(^6\) nearby. Always. A lot of what follows comes from this book.

This very short guide has the following sections:

1. Organizing your thoughts and your work
2. Research and finding out what you need to know
3. Theological reflection
4. Analysis and interpretation
5. Making your case
6. Citations and references

Organizing your thoughts and your work

Your aim is to write something that is coherent. That is, it makes sense to the reader; it’s understandable. And it sticks together. Organizing your paper is key to both things.

Every paper should have a thesis: a clear statement of what you’re going to accomplish in the paper. Try to state this in one sentence: I am going to write about X in order to do Y so that I can then do Z. Everything in your paper should relate to this directly, or in support of things you’ll say directly. There will be lots of other things you want to say, and you can—elsewhere. Not everything can go in this paper or thesis.

Remember that your audience is not you; it’s a reader who’s trying to follow your thinking. For a paper, the audience is usually the instructor and perhaps your fellow students, all of whom know a fair amount about what you’ll be talking about, in a general sort of way.

For a thesis, your audience is quite different: it’s people who have not been reading what you’ve been reading, not discussing it in the same conversations in which you participate, and are not as familiar with the topic you’re discussing as you are. In short: you know things they don’t, and so you have to tell them what they need to know that’s particular to what you’re working on.

---

\(^6\) Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press editorial staff. 7th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) or more recent. Note that this is a tricky citation to write, because of the revisers. To make sure that I did the citation correctly, I had to consult the big *Chicago Manual of Style*. If this were a class paper, it might be okay if I didn’t. If this were a thesis, it would be very important that I do so.
The question is: how do I say what I have to say so that my audience can understand it, follow it, and reach the same conclusions I do? How much do I need to say about what? How little?

So make a plan you’re able to follow. This can be an outline, a story board, a map—whatever helps you organize your thoughts. Talking through the topic with someone else may be helpful, or it may not. The “best practice” here is the one that works for you.

Keep your plan clearly visible in your work space at all times. Of course you will make changes as you go. But, it is to be hoped, the basic plan of your work will stay pretty much the same.

Research and finding out what you need to know

Take a look at Turabian, Part I chs. 1, 3, and 4. Review the Seabury document “Using Library Resources from a Distance.” DMin students: Review the materials and your own notes from your first-year writing and methods course and your second-year thesis proposal course. Review the Thesis Manual. Talk to a reference librarian for help finding sources. Use Google. Use Wikipedia as a starting place but not as a primary source. And keep these things in mind:

- Because you are writing as part of an academic program, regardless of your topic, you must use materials beyond those assigned in any or all of your classes. That means looking at formal studies (such as you would find in an academic library and academic journals) and being reasonably acquainted with the literature on your topic. You don’t have to know everything about everything; but you do need to know enough that you can talk to a group of others who are reasonably acquainted with your topic and be confident that you know what you’re talking about.

- You may be designing, conducting, analyzing, and interpreting both qualitative and quantitative studies. Be sure you know how such studies are best done, and what the benefits and limits of each type are, both in terms of the information they provide, and in terms of how they are legitimately interpreted and used.

- As part of your project, you may be using “experience”—by which is meant an account of something that took place in a particular context (time and place) and has been framed, consciously or unconsciously, by certain presuppositions, worldviews, and/or considerations about audience. Experience is always interpreted. “Experience” includes observation, narrative, anecdote, and the like. In order to be a compelling part of your project, the experiences/ narratives/ anecdotes of individuals and groups have to be clearly connected to a larger framework. You have to decide how they are pertinent. And you have to make it clear to your reader how you are interpreting them, and why the reader should find them a compelling part of your project. This is not self-evident.

- Your work is likely to be interdisciplinary, both within the broader field of religious/ theological studies, and across disciplines such as the human and/or social sciences, the arts, and so on. So do your research using the resources of these cognate fields, particularly if you’re working on something that is not “usual” in the church.

- Figure out a way to take notes effectively, and stick to it. Effective note-taking involves at least two things:

---

Recording information that you will need later. Generally you will want less than what the text says, but more than where a text says it. It’s better to take more notes than less.

Recording your sources and differentiating between what the source says and what you make of the source. Be very highly disciplined here. Use quotation marks for anything that you get from the text that is longer than four words. Keep track of page numbers. When you paraphrase in your notes, indicate it’s a paraphrase rather than your own thoughts. Identify the thoughts that you have while reading as your own, not the author’s. Being thorough here will save you a world of trouble, and possibly hurt, later.

- Remember that everyone does much more research than actually shows up explicitly in the paper or thesis. You shouldn’t use it all. But what you do is not wasted, because it has helped you figure out what you have to say and how to say it.

Theological reflection

You are doing your project in and largely for a theologically informed context and audience. So you need to consider and write about the theology (broadly understood) that’s involved here. The theology of what you are up to must be explicit. Here are some questions to help you do this:

- How is this topic/ analysis/ interpretation, presentation different precisely because it is within a Christian (rather than secular, Jewish, Buddhist, etc.) context? What do Christian faith, belief, and practice bring to this subject that wouldn’t be there otherwise?
- What are you presuming about God and Christ in relation to the world overall, to the structures, people, contexts you’re studying, and the like? (And what are your research sources presuming?)
  - How do you describe what God’s up to in the world? How does that shape your topic, research, analysis, interpretation, presentation, etc.?
  - Because there are so many ways to answer these questions, you have to be quite clear in yourself and with your readers about which version of God, Jesus, church, the Kingdom, etc., you have in mind and what it has to do with your topic.
- What resources will help you articulate all this in a way that appeals to your readers? Hint: Scripture, tradition, reason (including experience). Note that this does not mean you must have mastered the complete works of St. Augustine and/or Richard Hooker in the original language. But you may find some others’ works help you say what you want to say.

Analysis

Once you’ve found out what you need to know, you need to figure out what it means. You have to analyze it. Then you can interpret it. But analysis comes first. The basic questions here are:

- What do I make of this information? Or—now I know this, so what?
  - An important part of this is considering why you understand it in this particular way and not another. What are the presuppositions informing your analysis? What “counts”?
  - Another important part is considering how all the various aspects of your research and thought are informing your analysis (or not). Presumably, the studies by others that you’ve read will help you analyze the information you gather. This is the point at which the various parts of all your research really start interacting.

---

8 Howard Stone and James Duke, How to Think Theologically, and Owen C. Thomas and Ellen K. Wondra, Introduction to Theology 3rd ed.
• What might other people make of this same information? This is really a question about what you need to say to your reader about your own analysis. The importance of information is rarely entirely self-evident. Explain yourself so your reader will see what you see.

Try to separate analysis from interpretation; you want your analysis to be able to stand on its own, even if other folks wouldn’t interpret it as you do.

When you get to interpretation, make sure that you know yourself and have told your reader what your approach to interpretation is.
• What are you presupposing?
• How does your interpretation relate to your thesis statement?
• Why interpret things this way rather than that? What reasons and sensibilities make your particular interpretation make better sense than other interpretations might?
• Remember that the hows and why’s of interpretation are often even less self-evident than the hows and why’s of analysis. Explain yourself. Connect what you’re saying to what others have to say.

Making the case

While you may not be making the kind of formal argument that Turabian talks about,9 there are many structural similarities for how you make your case—that is, now you explain things to your reader, how you make your explanation coherent (understandable; easy to follow), and how you invite and persuade your reader at least to understand why you reach the conclusions you do and even to agree with you. From Turabian:
• What is your claim?
• What reasons support it? [“Because I say so” isn’t enough]
• What evidence supports those reasons? [anecdote isn’t enough]
• How do you respond to objections and alternative views?
• How are your reasons relevant to your claim?10

At least as important as what you say is how you say it. That is, you need to shape what you say so that it leads clearly and persuasively to the main points you want to make. And you don’t want to say things that aren’t necessary to get to the main points. Here’s an analogy:

Think of your favorite landscape (cityscape), still-life, or portrait that was created between the 15th cen. and the mid-20th century. The artist created that work with a particular focal point, to which your eye and your attention are drawn “naturally”—that is, by the artist’s design. There are various things that make that focal point relatively easy to see: size, shape, color, placement, etc. There’s also background, the purpose of which is to enhance the focal point in various ways. It all appears “natural.” But it’s deliberate work.

Similarly, your paper or thesis has a focal point—your thesis statement—with things that define it, draw attention to it, and shape it—research, analysis, interpretation, and how you present them. There’s background, but it’s there primarily to direct attention to the focal point. And it adds texture, color, interest, depth, etc. What you want your reader to say after reading your thesis or paper is something like, “Well, of course. What else might a reasonable person think about this?” You need to shape your writing so that attention leads “naturally” to the focal point that you have chosen, and to your conclusions.

9 Turabian, Manual for Writers, Part I ch. 5.
10 Turabian, Manual for Writers, Part I ch. 5 section 3.

Who your audience is informs how you go about making your case. How can you help your audience see what you see, and understand and even agree with what you say?
Citations, attributions, and the like

Your case, your presentation will be persuasive only insofar as it is considered trustworthy. And in this realm, trustworthiness involves the reader’s being sure that s/he knows who is saying what—i.e., what your sources are saying, what you’re making of what your sources say, and the like. Trustworthiness thus is demonstrated in part by the consistent, clear, and adequate citing of sources, attribution of ideas and thoughts, and so on. So read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest every thing said here and in Turabian and elsewhere about proper citation—from note-taking through final draft and bibliography. Pay attention to proper form, including citing sources from cyberspace.

When in doubt, add a citation. Trust your advisor to tell you what to take out. It’s easier to take things out than put them in later.

While your footnotes and bibliography don’t have to be complete until the final draft, think about how to do your citations while you write. Some people stick in footnotes as they write, including author, title, page number; this works really well for me. Other people may identify where notes are needed and then go back later and complete the information. What matters here is how much material you have and how your memory works. If you have few sources and a really good detailed memory, you may be able to go back and add notes fairly easily. If you have a lot of sources (or notes) and a fuzzy memory for detail, adding the notes as you go may save you a lot of aggravation later.

Rule Number 2:
Proof read. Yes, run the spell check and the grammar check. You still have to proofread. And it’s very helpful to have someone else proofread too. It doesn’t matter if you’re submitting a rough first draft: Proofread. Not doing means the errors distract the reader’s attention (including your advisor) from what you’re saying and how you’re saying it. So be sure to proofread. Always.

Ellen K. Wondra
Research Professor
Professor of Theology and Ethics
Bexley Hall Seabury Western Theological Seminary Federation
THESIS CERTIFICATION

I certify that the Thesis Project for [Insert Name]

And titled

[Insert Title]

Is acceptable as partial fulfillment for the Doctor of Ministry degree requirements.

Signature: [Insert Name], Thesis Director ____________________________ Date ____________

Signature: [Insert Name], Reader ____________________________ Date ____________

Bexley Hall Seabury Western Theological Seminary Foundation, Inc.
8765 W. Higgins Road, Ste. 650
Chicago, IL 60631
Copyright for theses written in partial fulfillment of degrees at Bexley Hall Seabury Western rests with the author. Nevertheless, the school requires that the appropriate archiving be made of final copies of theses in institutional archives and in the United Library and any successor libraries located at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

This includes the option for the United Library to retain two hard copies for physical archiving and circulation as well as retention of a digital copy that will be made available in the United Library’s publicly accessible web-based archive and on a server at Bexley Seabury.

The decision not to exercise either the digital or physical archival option does not imply a waiver of the rights to access the copy in that format at a later date. Further, as technologies advance, the student grants the right for the migration to new archival formats and official Bexley Seabury and United Library web-based archive interfaces. The student also grants the right for the institutions to retain appropriate back-up copies to ensure protection in the event that digital files become corrupted and to make replacement hardcopies should flooding, fire, or other means render the original unintelligible.

As a function of archiving, the thesis will be cataloged and the United Library retains the option to provide indexing in appropriate indexing and abstracting agencies.

I, ________________________________ (Print first and last name), understand the archival requirements related to my thesis and grant permission for archiving and digitizing my thesis entitled ________________________________ (print title of thesis) for the archives to Bexley Hall Seabury Western and the United Library at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.

____________________________________ (Signature)

____________________________________ (Date)

OPTIONAL PERMISIONS:

I further

- ___do ___do not grant permission for an electronic copy to be shared with the RIM (research in ministry database) currently owned by ATLA.

- ___do ___do not grant permission for an electronic copy to be shared with TREN (Theological Research Exchange Network)