



# United Lutheran Seminary

## **DOCTOR OF MINISTRY MANUAL**

### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Unifying, Learning, Serving:** United Lutheran Seminary is a welcoming and diverse learning community equipping people to proclaim the living Gospel for a changing church and world.

Revised October 2022

United Lutheran Seminary is fully accredited by the  
Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE),  
3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104  
Telephone: 267-284-5000

*Complaints may be submitted to MSCHE following the procedures outlined at  
<http://www.msche.org/documents/Complaints.pdf>.*

ULS is also fully accredited by the  
Association of Theological Schools (ATS),  
10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275  
Telephone: 412-788-6505.

*Students having a complaint related to ATS accrediting standards may file a complaint  
with the Commission on Accrediting. See section XII of the Commission Policies and  
Procedures at [http://www.ats.edu/uploads/accrediting/documents/commission-policies-  
and-procedures.pdf](http://www.ats.edu/uploads/accrediting/documents/commission-policies-and-procedures.pdf). Please note that complaints must be filed in writing and must  
provide evidence that the member school is in violation of a stated policy or accrediting  
standard or membership criterion.*

United Lutheran Seminary is a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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The Seminary's web site has the latest information about the Seminary, including special events,  
application and registration information, faculty and staff directories, and much more.

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## THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is an advanced professional degree designed to enhance the practice of ministry. Admission requires the completion of a Master of Divinity degree or its educational equivalent, at least three years of experience in ministry subsequent to the first theological degree,<sup>1</sup> and evidence of capacity for an advanced level of competence and reflection. Qualified applicants may be pastors, ministers, chaplains, directors of ministries, or members of religious orders in formally recognized ministry settings, either parish or non-parish.

The program of studies takes place “in ministry,” that is, in the course of the practice of ministry rather than as a “post-graduate” academic program of advanced studies in residence at a theological school. Thus, this program is an advanced-level professional degree and should not be confused with other doctoral programs designed primarily to prepare graduates for scholarship and research or as teacher/scholars in schools of higher education.

Authorization to confer the Doctor of Ministry degree at the United Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia (ULS) is granted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Higher Education. Periodic evaluation and accreditation is undertaken by the Association of Theological Schools and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The DMin program functions under the direction of the Graduate Studies Committee. The Dean and the Director of the Graduate School exercise administrative responsibility. Registration and management of student records are handled by the Office of the Registrar. The Business Office is responsible for the administration of fiscal matters.

The Faculty reserves for itself such prerogatives as (1) admissions, (2) approval of learning goals, (3) admission to candidacy, (4) appointment of advisors and supervisory committees, and (5) final evaluation of a candidate's work and recommendation to the Board of Trustees for the conferral of the degree.

This manual describes policies and procedures currently in effect in the Doctor of

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<sup>1</sup> According to ATS Standards, “Students without an accredited Master of Divinity degree may be admitted, provided the school has publicly stated admissions criteria that address the following six areas and provided the school documents how each applicant meets each of these criteria: (a) the ability to thoughtfully interpret scripture and the theological tradition of one’s ministry context, (b) the capacity to understand and adapt one’s ministry to the cultural context, (c) a basic self-understanding of one’s ministerial identity and vocational calling, (d) a readiness to engage in ongoing personal and spiritual formation for one’s ministry, (e) an accredited master’s degree (or its educational equivalent) in an area related to one’s ministry setting or vocational calling, and (f) significant ministerial experience that enables the applicant to engage as a ministry peer with other students in this advanced professional doctorate.” ULS Admissions staff take these requirements seriously and work to evaluate student applications based on these criteria.

Ministry program sponsored by The United Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia. Revisions of the Manual may affect your program so be sure to check with the Director of the Graduate School if any changes have been made since you entered the program.

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| In addition to this Manual, please check the <i>ULS Student Handbook</i> for all other seminary policies and procedures. |
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## **BRIEF HISTORY**

The DMin program at ULS began as the product of program planning by the faculties of two schools, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and The Lutheran Seminary–Gettysburg, in conjunction with the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (January 1972) and the Council for Lutheran Theological Education in the Northeast (March 1973).

Fourteen students were admitted to the first class in spring 1974 and began their studies in June 1974. First conferrals of degrees took place in May 1977.

While the first students were primarily Lutheran, the program now represents a variety of faith traditions. Students are engaged in a wide variety of ministry situations. Some take advantage of the opportunity to transfer up to three courses from other accredited graduate programs.

This manual reflects compliance with all standards originally adopted by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in 1972 and revised by ATS in 1976 and 1996, most recently, in 2020. Preliminary approval of the DMin program was granted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in 1974. Full approval by the Commonwealth and from ATS and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) occurred in 1979–80. The most recent re-accreditation review took place in 2020.

## ULS MISSION STATEMENT AND DMIN PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

### Mission Statement of United Lutheran Seminary

Unifying, Learning, Serving: United Lutheran Seminary is a welcoming and diverse learning community equipping people to proclaim the living Gospel for a changing church and world.

### DMin Mission Statement

The Doctor of Ministry program offers those in leadership positions within the ministries of the church the opportunity to reflect academically and pastorally on their vocation, ministry, public leadership, and transformative praxis.

### DMin Learning Outcomes

- A. **Unifying** – Developing advanced ministerial skills in bringing people together as an engaged learning community in the diverse unity enabled by the Triune God
  1. Actively draws on faith traditions as well as diverse perspectives, including biblical, theological, scientific, ecumenical, and interfaith, when engaging contemporary events
  2. Consistently advocates for the development of a shared vision in groups of diverse learners
  3. Demonstrates an advanced ability to lead and teach with biblical and theological integrity in a particular community of faith in a particular ministerial discipline/focus
  4. Presents a biblically and theologically clear and consistent message when proclaiming and engaging the gospel in a particular context
- B. **Learning** – Developing advanced skills in critical thinking and research and the ability to integrate those skills within the practice of ministry through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit
  1. Interprets the Bible through various methodological approaches in light of both historical and contemporary contexts.
  2. Recognizes interrelationships among concepts and commitments, combining them to interpret past and present realities within biblical, historical, theological, sociological, and cultural contexts
  3. Understands one's rootedness in a living theological tradition, its place in the context of human living, articulates it to others, and cultivates a capacity for self-critique
  4. Draws on contextual experience as a source of continuing critique and ongoing education
- C. **Serving** – Developing advanced ministerial skills and confidence in leading a particular community for outreach and public witness grounded in the risen Christ
  1. Utilizes conflict management, counseling, and pastoral theology effectively in individual and group situations, while also understanding the limits of one's skills
  2. On the basis of sound theological and biblical understanding, establishes opportunities to accompany those who are marginalized, actively

addresses the systems that cause and perpetuate such marginalization, and works to transform the community

3. Articulates a mature, sound and ethical approach to management of human, cultural, institutional, and financial resources
4. Celebrates opportunities and challenges in building communities of diverse peoples and the gifts they bring

## **THE DMIN PROGRAM**

### **OVERVIEW**

The DMin program includes the following components, which will be described in detail later in this document:

- Non-Credit Requirements:
  - On-Site Visit
  - Candidacy Review
- Supervised Instruction (24 credits)
- An Independent Project in Ministry (6 credits)

### **PROGRAM DURATION**

The DMin program is to be completed in no less than three years and no more than six. The actual duration will vary with each candidate, depending on the scope of the candidate's professional responsibilities and the pace of progress toward the stated goals of the program. Under specific circumstances, students may petition for a one-year leave of absence (which can be renewed once) or for an extension of their program beyond the sixth year. Such petitions must be submitted in writing to the Director of the Graduate School.

Only in extraordinary cases will extensions be granted beyond ten years from the onset of studies. However, students need to be aware that, in such cases, the first course(s) to have been completed will no longer count toward their degree, since courses may be counted for no more than 10 years. Thus, extending the program beyond ten years will result in the student's needing to do additional coursework.

### **RESIDENCE**

“Residency” involves student participation in courses that are offered on campus; students are not required to live on campus. Hybrid courses for which at least 51% of the course is delivered at a single campus qualify as residency courses. Online courses, travel seminars, and courses taken through cross-registration or transfer do not qualify as “residency” courses. The minimum residency requirement for the DMin program is 9 credits.

### **FOCUS**

One of the strengths of the ULS DMin program is its broad scope. Each student will be exposed to various disciplines but will also choose one Focus within a field of ministry.

The Focus will include at least two designated courses, one Independent Study, and the final Project in Ministry. The Focus should be identified early on and defined in the Student Learning Goals.

Foci can be chosen from the following broad areas: Biblical Studies, Black Church Studies, Christian Education, Church Administration, Church and Society, Evangelism/Mission, Interfaith Studies, Rural/Small Church Ministry, Mission and Cultures, Pastoral Care, Preaching, Spirituality, and Worship.

### **PERTINENT FORMS**

- DMin Intake Questionnaire
- Student Learning Goals (Section 1 and Section 2)
- On-Site Visit Form and Guidelines
- Student Candidacy Review
- Project Proposal Form
- Status During the Writing Phase Declaration
- Project Panel Action Form
- DMin Graduating Student Questionnaire

All of these forms are available on the Graduate Studies page of the ULS Website: [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/academics/graduate-school](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/academics/graduate-school)

## **THE ADVISOR AND SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION**

Guidance of DMin students in their entire program of studies rests with an Academic Advisor. An Advisor will be assigned to the student upon entrance into the DMin program. When the student has completed roughly half of their coursework, the Director of the Graduate School in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee, will assign a project advisor, based on the student's area of focus.

After the Student Candidacy Review and in preparation for the Project in Ministry, the Director of the Graduate School in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee appoints a supervisory committee made up of the Advisor and at least two other persons, normally another faculty member and a non-academic practitioner who has demonstrated a special competence in the candidate's proposed area of study. The second faculty member may be from a field of study other than the area of specialization selected by the candidate. Other faculty members may be added to the committee as necessary. It will be the committee's task to supervise the prospective candidate's work in the program.

If the Advisor or a member of the supervisory committee is "on leave," "on sabbatical leave", or leaves the faculty of the school, the need for replacement should be discussed by the candidate with the Director of the Graduate School. In the event of any change in the plans for the Project in Ministry, the candidate or Advisor may

initiate substitute or additional appointment(s) to the committee, which shall be approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and reported to the Faculty.

### **FUNCTIONS OF THE ADVISOR**

1. The Advisor assists the student in developing the Student Learning Goals.
2. In preparation for the Student Candidacy Review the Advisor (or representative) will conduct an on-site visit to observe, support and evaluate the prospective candidate and the candidate's ability to integrate theological theory with professional activities and practice. (See **On-Site Visit** under **Student Candidacy Review** (below).)
3. In preparation for candidacy, the Advisor should review and evaluate the student's performance (e.g., in course work, and professional practice) with respect to the Student Learning Goals.
4. The Advisor should monitor the student's progress and hold a Student Candidacy Review following the completion of the first four courses and before submission of the Project in Ministry Proposal. (See **Student Candidacy Review** (below).)
5. The Advisor will receive any request by the student for Advanced Standing and present the request to the Director of the Graduate School for consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee. (See **Advanced Standing** (below).)
6. Near the completion of the student's coursework, the student should arrange with the Advisor to undertake an Independent Study on the Focus Area that will serve as the basis for research for the Project in Ministry. Initiative for consultation will always rest with the candidate.
7. The Advisor will guide the student to develop the Project in Ministry Proposal and Review Copy (see **Guide to the Preparation of the Project** (below)). Initiative for consultation will always rest with the candidate.
8. The Advisor will chair the panel that reviews the Project in Ministry and conducts the student's defense of the Project. The Advisor will then report the panel's action to the Director of the Graduate School.

### **SUPERVISED INSTRUCTION**

Students in the DMin program complete the equivalent of eight courses (24 credits, each the equivalent of 1 semester hour) and a six-credit Project in Ministry. RSM 700 Research Methods is required of all DMin students. At least five of the courses (15 total credits) must be offered by ULS at the 700 level. There is a residency requirement of at least nine credits (equivalent of 3 courses). Online courses, independent studies, and courses taken at other institutions do not count toward residence.

All ULS courses require that students have access to the appropriate electronic tools and computer literacy. Please see the **Computer Literacy and Ownership Policy**, found on [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/faq](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/faq).

The specific nature and scope of the student's courses are to be defined in the initial Student Learning Goals, negotiated between the student and the Advisor. Such studies focus on the candidate's area of special interest and are related to the future Project in Ministry.

It is recommended that students register for the DMin Collegial Seminar within their first four courses. This course utilizes a case study approach to the students' own contexts of ministry, where faculty and peer reflection/theological analysis are central. In addition, students are encouraged to consider doing an Independent Study (usually with their Advisor) within their focus area as one of their final courses to assist in their Project in Ministry.

In addition to the Focus courses, the student's electives would normally include one course each in Bible, Theology, Praxis (Preaching, Worship, Spirituality, Pastoral Care, or Christian Education), and the Collegial Seminar. Hence, a typical program would normally comprise the following coursework (in no particular order):

- Focus Course #1
- Focus Course #2
- Research Methods
- Bible Course
- Theology Course
- Preaching Course, Spirituality, Christian Education, or other Practical Area Course
- Collegial Seminar
- Independent Study on Focus Topic (to be taken near the end of the course work, before the submission of the Project in Ministry Proposal)

Non-ULS course options include courses taken at other fully accredited institutions (see **Supervised Instruction at Other Institutions**, below) and work submitted for Advanced Standing, including certified advanced CPE programs beyond the first unit (see **Advanced Standing**, below).

**NOTE:** For post-MDiv-level work completed prior to admission to the DMin program, see **Course Transfers** and **Advanced Standing**, below.

## ULS COURSE OFFERINGS

For a full listing of available course offerings in any year, consult the ULS catalogue and course schedules found on the registrar web page ([my.uls.edu/registrar](http://my.uls.edu/registrar)).

ULS courses are available in a variety of formats, including:

- Semester-long courses (weekday or evening)
- Intensives, normally 5 days in duration (offered in October, January, March, June, and August)
- Asynchronous online courses (generally semester-long)
- Independent Studies (see **Independent Studies**, below)
- Upgrades of courses offered at the first theological degree level (see **Upgraded Courses**, below)

ULS does not offer the DMin degree as a complete distance education program. Students are required to take at least 3 courses in residence (semester-long or intensive) on one of the two ULS campuses.

### **Intensive Courses**

Graduate Intensives normally meet for 5 consecutive days on one of the two campuses. Intensives normally include both pre-intensive week and post-intensive week requirements. It is a student's responsibility to follow all instructions and be fully prepared for the intensive week.

Students needing on-campus housing for the week should plan to apply one month prior to the start of your course. Room requests submitted later than this cannot be guaranteed. For more information, see Student Housing at MyULS ([my.uls.edu](http://my.uls.edu)).

### **Independent Studies**

The DMin program encourages the student to negotiate at least one independent study (3 credits) through ULS in the course of their program. Several rubrics are important.

1. The student is to consult with their Advisor prior to negotiating an Independent Study. Independent Studies follow the same rules and deadlines as regular courses as to registration, withdrawals, and extensions.
2. The student should then consult with the faculty member they hope will be the Supervisor of the study. (Normally, Independent Studies are to be supervised by faculty members from ULS.)
3. The student will register for the independent study by preparing and submitting to the registrar, in consultation with the Supervisor, a ROSA statement which describes:
  - (R) The Rationale for the independent study:** Why you want to undertake this study; how this study will serve the degree outcomes and competencies.
  - (O) The Outcomes of the study:** What you should be able to demonstrate, articulate, or accomplish at the end of the course.
  - (S) The Strategies used in the study:** How you will study the material, including reading assignments and meetings with the instructor
  - (A) The Assessment instruments to be used in the study:** How you will demonstrate your mastery of the promised outcomes; what instruments

will be used by the instructor, including tests, papers, projects  
This ROSA statement must be approved and signed by both the supervising instructor and the Dean and submitted to the registrar and the Director of the Graduate School. A form for this purpose is available here: [my.uls.edu/registrar](http://my.uls.edu/registrar)  
If the approved ROSA statement is not received by the end of the drop/add period for the term, the student will be withdrawn from the independent study.

4. The tuition, begin/end dates, and deadlines for an independent study are the same as for a regular course in the same semester.
5. Independent Studies may occasionally incorporate certain continuing education programs or other forms of instruction. (Negotiate in advance with the Independent Study Supervisor, in consultation with the Director of the Graduate School.) Any additional fees or expenses will be responsibility of the student and will be paid directly to the continuing education program or institution responsible for the form of instruction.
6. Should the Director of the Graduate School agree to assign a Supervisor for the study who is not a full-time ULS faculty member, then reimbursement will be governed by accepted school policies and will be negotiated by the Dean's Office with the instructor concerned. Such an instructor will be considered as ULS adjunct faculty for the purpose of the independent study.

#### **Upgraded MDiv-Level Courses**

A student may take a limited number of MDiv-level courses that have been upgraded to meet DMin requirements. Criteria for upgrades of MDiv-level courses for credit at advanced-degree level (STM or DMin) are as follows.

1. Courses to be upgraded should normally be electives.
2. The should normally not take more than two such courses in the DMin degree program.(In special circumstances, more may be allowed, provided that "at least one-half of the work required shall be in courses in advanced, academically oriented degree programs" [ATS 4.11].)
3. Upgraded courses may not have been used for credit towards another degree.
4. Upgrades are appropriate only in courses that are taught by faculty with a PhD or ThD or nearing the completion thereof.
5. It is the responsibility of the student to ask the instructor to provide upgrade requirements prior to taking a course. Faculty members have the right to refuse if they consider a particular course to be unsuitable for this purpose. Normally the total requirements for an upgraded course would include at least 10 sources in the bibliography and writing equivalent to a 30–35-page paper.

#### **SUPERVISED INSTRUCTION AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS**

The Seminary's educational programs are enhanced through a variety of domestic and international institutional relationships that enable the student to maximize educational resources available. In particular, ULS has cross-registration with the schools of the

Washington Theological Consortium. Courses available through the Consortium may be researched via the ULS [registrar's home page](#) at My ULS, where students will also find the appropriate registration form.

Students seeking to take courses at schools with which ULS does not have cross-registration are responsible to make sure that the school is fully accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). Students are to adhere to the policies and practices of the host school when registering and are responsible for all tuition and fees incurred.

Up to nine credits may be taken through advanced-level courses offered by any accredited theological school or graduate department of an accredited college or university. A student who transfers courses from other institutions should ensure that each course (by itself or in combination with another course) earns the equivalent of three semester hours of credit.

The student shall initiate all proposals to take coursework at institutions other than ULS. They must be approved in advance by the Advisor and written into the Learning Contract. The student is responsible for having the final grade transferred from any course taken at another institution.

### **COURSE TRANSFERS**

Not more than nine credits in the DMin program may be fulfilled through transfer credits. To be eligible for transfer, a course completed at another school shall meet the following requirements:

1. The course was taken for credit at a fully accredited institution.
2. The course was taken in an advanced-level (e.g., post-MDiv) degree program.
3. The student had completed the appropriate basic-level theological degree requirements of the advanced-level program before taking the course (i.e., MDiv or equivalent).
4. The course is clearly relevant to the student's DMin program and is approved by the student's DMin advisor.
5. The course was taken no more than 7 years prior to the student's admission to the advanced-level ULS degree program. All courses expire when they are 10 years old.
6. The course was not previously credited toward another degree, either received or anticipated.
7. The student received a grade of B or better (or a grade of "pass" in the case of a pass/fail course).
8. Transfer courses will normally be considered "electives" and not as part of the DMin Focus.

### **ADVANCED STANDING**

#### **Advanced Standing for Prior Conferred Degrees**

Up to four courses from an STM degree conferred by ULS (or its predecessor schools)

may count towards a DMin, provided that

1. no further credit may be received for Advanced Standing, CPE, or transfer of courses from other institutions (i.e., four courses must be done at ULS);
- the STM precedes the DMin, and, if any or all of it was done within the three years of ministry that followed completion of the MDiv degree, then the candidate must petition the faculty through the Director of the Graduate School to be exempt from the requirement of completion of three years in ministry prior to commencement of DMin studies.

### **Advanced Standing for Work Not Completed in a Post-graduate Theological Context**

Advanced Standing for work undertaken beyond first theological degree requirements and for carefully supervised training programs done at other institutions when no transcripts of graduate credit are presented may be granted by the faculty after the completion of four courses at ULS, provided the student is in good academic standing (i.e., GPA of 3.0 or better in any completed ULS courses). The Advisor will recommend to the Director of the Graduate School that Advanced Standing be granted to the student, and the recommendation will be presented to the Graduate Studies Committee for final approval. The maximum credit that may be granted through Advanced Standing is 6 credits (equivalent of two courses).

Considerations for granting Advanced Standing include the following:

1. Coursework shall not be more than ten years old.
2. Was the coursework undertaken from a reputable educational institution, program or instructor? Some qualitative assessment of the caliber of courses should be made.
3. If credits were part of a degree program, what was the performance level in the entire program? Was a degree awarded? (Inquire re: thesis, special projects, comprehensive exams, honors, etc.)
4. Are the courses submitted for Advanced Standing related to the candidate's DMin Student Learning Goals?
5. Are non-academic supervised instruction experiences offered under certified auspices (or other demonstrably competent leadership)?

Limitations for granting Advanced Standing:

1. Not more than six of the total credits for the degree may be granted by Advanced Standing.
2. The total of Advanced Standing for credit, credit for conferred STM or equivalent degree, CPE advanced units, and courses transferred from other institutions during the DMin program shall not together exceed 9 credits (3 courses). (i.e., the student must take at least 5 courses offered by ULS during the DMin program.)
3. A minimum of 42 contact hours in instruction plus 80–100 hours of preparation or practice under supervision may be translated into an equivalence of not more than one course (3 credits) of Advanced Standing.
4. One unit of advanced CPE (that is, beyond a first basic unit) may be granted as an equivalence of 3 credits of Advanced Standing. No more than 6 credits of

advanced CPE may be granted toward Advanced Standing.

#### Unusual Requests for Advanced Standing

When a candidate presents an unusual request for Advanced Standing (e.g., credit for a book written), the Graduate Studies Committee will expect that the following will pertain:

1. The work shall be documented as to precise content with time parameters noted and format described.
2. The work shall have been supervised by a competent supervisor whose credentials have been provided to the Seminary for filing in the candidate's dossier.
3. The work shall have been evaluated, and the evaluation of the supervisor shall be available to the Seminary for filing in the candidate's dossier.

The process for granting such unusual requests is as follows:

1. The student should collect all the appropriate data to describe the nature of the work for which credit is desired.
2. The student should make clear whether the work was supervised and, if so, what credentials are held by the supervisor. Also, was the work evaluated and what was the nature of the evaluation (e.g., a grade, a written statement)? Can the student present a copy of the evaluation?
3. The material submitted by the student will be considered by the Graduate Studies Committee prior to the Student Candidacy Review.
4. The committee will make a recommendation to the faculty concerning Advanced Standing, if any, and candidacy at the same faculty meeting.

### **NON-CREDIT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

*Digital forms for completing these requirements can be downloaded from [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/academics/graduate-school](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/academics/graduate-school), signed, and submitted to the Graduate Studies Office.)*

### **THE STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

Student Learning Goals will be initially developed during RSM 700 Research Methods. This will be a unique document specifying the student's own goals and expectations and prescribing the kinds of courses that will move the student toward those goals and objectives. Individual programs will vary according to the student's specific needs and competencies, intended focus, ministry context, and educational resources available. Students will be assessed against their own learning goals at the **Student Candidacy Review**.

The **Student Learning Goals** document has two components. Section 1 is a student narrative based upon the ULS DMin Learning Outcomes. Section 2 is an initial plan for the student's proposed coursework and path to completion of requirements.

#### **Submission of Student Learning Goals**

1. The student narrative of the Learning Goals is to be completed soon after the end of Research Methods. The student will submit the Learning Goals to the Director of the

Graduate School for inclusion in the student's dossier, and it will be shared with the Advisor.

2. The program audit portion may be revised at any time at the initiative of the candidate or Advisor. After the Advisor's approval of any revision, the student will submit the revised contract to the Director of the Graduate School for inclusion in the dossier. The candidate bears responsibility for ensuring that his or her dossier is on file in the Graduate Studies Office and is current at all times.
3. The complete **Student Learning Goals** document will serve as the basis of the Student Candidacy Review and the Student Learning Assessment of the program.

### **ON-SITE VISIT(S)**

The purpose of the On-Site Visit is to observe, support and evaluate the prospective candidate in the integration of theology and theory with professional activities, competencies and skills. It is a pre-requisite for the Student Candidacy Review.

1. It is the Advisor's prerogative whether personally to make the visit or to recommend another person to do so. In the latter case, the student should inform the Director of the Graduate School, who will invite the designated visitor and send guidelines of the visit. Once the visitor has been determined, the prospective candidate should take the initiative in arranging for the visit.
2. The prospective candidate will take the initiative in scheduling the visit. The visitor will share the written evaluation with the student and file the report with the Graduate Studies Office as part of their Student Candidacy Review.
3. The visit should be made at the student's regular ministry setting. For parish pastors this would normally be on a Sunday and include a worship service. If necessary, the visit can be on a weekday when private conferences, attendance at group sessions, and/or interviews with congregational members may be arranged.
4. The visit should take the following form:
  - Observe worship/program/clinical/educational/fellowship activities.
  - Meet with a Parish Advisory Committee, Mutual Ministry Committee, Supervisory committee, or other "ad hoc" group of members.
  - Speak with members of the ministry setting.
5. The evaluation criteria, including areas of weakness and growth, should be mutually understood by the Advisor (or representative making the visit) and the prospective candidate from the outset of the visitation program. The focus area of the Project in Ministry should have priority. Suggested areas of mutual concern might well be:
  - a. Preaching, teaching and leadership in worship or public leadership in society.  
Is the student a good communicator? Is the sermon or presentation exegetically accurate and theologically coherent? Does the minister conduct their ministry with effective and mature leadership skills and style?

- b. Ability to reflect theologically. Is ministry informed by and consistent with the theological tradition to which the prospective candidate is publicly committed? Are pastoral work and activities interpreted theologically? Is there competence in the delivery of theology?
  - c. Style of Ministry. Is the ministry authoritative or collegial, flexible or rigid? Is the minister able to delegate responsibility and work with colleagues? Is there evidence of participation in the life of the synod, diocese, denomination, or secular community?
  - d. Professional identity. Is the minister self-assured, confident, or insecure in their leadership role? Is the minister defensive, or open to discussion and learning? Does the minister seem to have an understanding of appropriate social boundaries?
  - e. Professional development. Is the minister able to set goals and establish priorities? Is the minister self-disciplined? Is the minister committed to ongoing theological and professional reflection?
6. After the visit, the Advisor (or other visitor) will prepare a written report on the visit. The report is to be shared with the prospective candidate and sent to the Director of the Graduate School for filing in the student's dossier.
7. Following the Student Candidacy Review, the Advisor may, if deemed advisable, recommend to the Graduate Studies Committee that, in the light of individual needs, additional on-site visits should be made according to a schedule negotiated between the student and the Advisor. Any additional visits will be guided by previous evaluations that are a part of the student's review.

### **STUDENT CANDIDACY REVIEW**

Until candidacy is granted, a student's participation in the DMin program is provisional. Candidacy may be granted upon completion of four courses (exclusive of transfer credits) with a 3.0 average and upon satisfactory completion of the Student Candidacy Review. Students will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate and articulate growth in the practice of ministry as set out in their own Student Learning Goals in light of the ULS DMin Learning Outcomes. The successful completion of the Candidacy Review removes the "provisional" nature of acceptance into the program.

The Candidacy Review is to be conducted after the student has successfully completed four DMin courses at ULS and prior to submitting the Project in Ministry Proposal. The Advisor and student will review and assess the learning goals and outcomes and make recommendations to the ULS Graduate Studies Committee with regard to candidacy for the degree according to the following guidelines:

- 1. Review of the Student Learning Goals, assessing the student with respect to:
  - a. the ability to integrate comprehensive and critical understandings of theological disciplines in the context of the practice of ministry in which theory and practice inform and enhance each other (DMin Learning Outcome A);

- b. the development of specific effective skills and competencies in relation to the chosen Focus Area (DMin Learning Outcome B);
  - c. the commitment to developing sensitivities and mature leadership in response to diversity in light of the student’s spiritual, denominational, professional values in the student’s own ministerial context (DMin Learning Outcome C).
2. Evaluation of the prospective candidate’s course grades in at least four courses with a minimum GPA of 3.0, exclusive of transfer credit or advanced standing (indirect assessment of DMin Learning Outcomes A and B).
  3. Successful completion of an On-Site visit by the advisor (or appropriately designated evaluator) to evaluate the student’s performance, integration of learning, and assist the advisor in gauging the student’s ministerial context.

In certain circumstances, the student or the Advisor may request either the Director of the Graduate School or the Dean to sit in on the Student Candidacy Review. Both the student and the Advisor will be notified of this prior to the review.

The Advisor will be responsible for recommending to the Graduate Studies Committee either of the following, 1) nomination for Candidacy or 2) postponement of Candidacy, in which case a plan of action will be submitted in written form. The plan of action may include remedial work, another On-Site visit, or additional courses.

**NOTE:** At the time of the Student Candidacy Review, the faculty may require further “remedial” work in one or more fields through additional papers or the successful completion of another on-site visit. Ordinarily, such work will carry no credit. If the required additional papers are completed within any course taken for credit, the course will appear on the student’s transcript and may count toward the DMin.

Upon receipt from the Advisor of an official hard copy of the Student Candidacy Review report recommending Candidacy, the student’s name will be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee for nomination to Candidacy status. Achievement of Candidacy status will allow the candidate to submit the Project in Ministry Proposal.

### **STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

ULS is committed to providing opportunities to assess the effectiveness of its teaching and student learning. Student learning in the DMin Program will be measured against the ULS Mission Statement, the DMin Mission Statement and the Learning Outcomes at four points throughout the program (MSCHE V):

1. Development of Student Learning Goals, normally undertaken during RSM 700 Research Methods
2. A Student Candidacy Review, undertaken with the Advisor;
3. A Project in Ministry Review, undertaken with the Supervisory Committee.

All of these items will be kept in the student's official dossier. Upon the student's graduation, these documents will be utilized for an annual program assessment, as described below.

## **DMIN PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

At the end of each academic year, the Director of the Graduate School, in partnership with the Director of Institutional Assessment, will utilize the following direct and indirect evaluation data in aggregated, anonymous form for the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the DMin Program based upon the stated ULS Doctor of Ministry Mission and Learning Objectives (ATS 2.5 – 8, 5.6; MSCHE V).

1. DMin Intake Questionnaires
2. DMin Student Final Self-evaluations
3. DMin Student Learning Goals
4. Course assessments
5. On-Site Visit Report
6. Student Candidacy Review Evaluations
7. Project in Ministry Review Evaluations

A report will be made to the Faculty through the Graduate Studies Committee to suggest any necessary adjustments, corrections or additions related to courses offerings, pedagogy, methodology, advising, evaluation procedures, as well as institutional and student services.

## **THE PROJECT IN MINISTRY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

DMin Candidates will select an issue or task related to their ministries for intensive study. The area of investigation shall be sufficiently limited to allow the candidate to gain some mastery of it within the design of the DMin program. Each candidate will be guided in this phase of the program by an Advisor, appointed by the Graduate Studies Committee. In developing these projects, the candidates may either draw upon the resources of one of the areas of the contemporary theological curriculum, appropriating in depth the insights of that area for the practice of ministry, or focus attention on a specific problem of ministry, treating it within a general theological frame. Candidates will be expected to submit a Project demonstrating the ability to reflect analytically on a particular issue or task in ministry, to use research and communication skills, and to integrate findings with a developing competence in ministry.

As a guide to the candidate, the following suggestions are offered:

1. The student should develop a Project in Ministry Proposal in close consultation with the Advisor and in some cases other professionals on the supervisory committee. This proposal should be related to other components of the **Student Learning Goals**. Students should plan to have submitted a Doctor in Ministry Project Proposal (See

IV.C) at least one year in advance of the expected date of graduation.

2. Attention will be given to developing the Project in Ministry Proposal during RSM 700 Research Methods.
3. Types of Projects in Ministry include:
  - a. **Action/reflection model**--a presentation of the results growing out of some direct engagement within a context of ministry.
  - b. **Program planning model**--the presentation or description of program possibilities (educational, homiletical, liturgical, pastoral, etc.) designed by the candidate for the student's work.
  - c. **Thesis/essay model**--a study of some topic related to the integration of one's academic and professional work.
  - d. **Research model** -- an empirical testing of a hypothesis with respect to an aspect of ministry (preferably one's own). (below)
4. Illustrative of appropriate projects are such topics as:
  - Analysis of a congregation's evangelism program;
  - A pedagogical model for innovative instruction prior to first communion/confirmation;
  - A proposed ministry to the unchurched or underchurched;
  - In-service training for staff and elected church leaders;
  - Analysis of how a congregation has dealt with internal conflict;
  - Study of parishioners' perceptions of preaching;
  - Parish stewardship: a study of the success/failure of innovation;
  - Exegesis to proclamation: an analysis of preaching the Advent cycle;
  - Report and analysis of a congregation's experience in utilizing selected liturgical texts;
  - A congregation's involvement in a community program;
5. Each Project in Ministry topic should include some aspect of the reflective nature of the role of Public Leadership and/or Public Theology.
6. Each Project in Ministry topic should include a reflection or evaluation of the Church's biblical and theological heritage.
7. The student should negotiate, in consultation with their advisor(s), a time schedule for the completion of the project in ministry. It is helpful if this timetable is shared with the Graduate Studies Office.
8. The candidate is advised to clarify and negotiate with their advisor(s) the specific criteria that will be employed in the evaluation of their project reports. Projects in Ministry are typically 100–125 pages. Criteria for the evaluation of the project will comprehend the usual tests of academic rigor, intellectual competence, theological/biblical insights, and communication skills. Candidates for this degree are expected to demonstrate achievement at a level significantly higher than that expected of first theological programs. They shall also, as candidates for a “professional”

doctorate, provide evidence that their specialized intensive studies have materially improved their competence as practicing ministers.

9. A complete review copy (the final draft) of the Project document must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office electronically by February 1 at the latest, in the year of expected graduation. Two completed library copies (archival copies) of the project must be deposited at the Library by May 1 of the year in which the degree will be awarded.
10. The final evaluation of the candidate's work shall be the responsibility of the full faculty. A recommendation from the candidate's supervisory committee, based on an evaluation of the candidate's entire program of studies at an oral defense (to be held no later than three weeks prior to the date when the faculty meets to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees for the awarding of the degree in any given year) shall go before the faculty for consideration and approval. In addition to the supervisory committee, other faculty members may also participate in the final evaluation of each candidate.
11. The Advisor and supervisory Committee may recommend to the Faculty that the Candidate's name be presented to the Board "With Distinction" if the quality of the Project in Ministry justifies such a designation.

## PROJECT IN MINISTRY: MODELS

### Action/Reflection Model

A reciprocal relation between action and reflection has been firmly established as a model for many types of learning, including theological education. The Action/Reflection model is a presentation of the results from some direct engagement within a context of ministry.

A Project in Ministry that follows the action-reflection model starts with an action/program in ministry that the student has designed and carried through. This is followed by a theological/historical/biblical reflection that establishes the appropriate criteria for evaluating the situation, and, if necessary, calls for a revised model of ministry or recommendations for how such a model could be developed.

The “action” should be identifiable as a completed event; yet it should be a significant action manifesting and thus testing underlying Christian convictions and principles. Examples might be: re-locating the congregation or merging with a neighboring congregation, building a new church or making additions to the present structure, establishing a day-care center, living as a homeless person for a specified period of time to help determine the needed ministries, trying door-to-door evangelism, etc. Or, the “action” might be an event which actually originates elsewhere as a community crisis to which the congregation is called to respond. These are harder to schedule!

### Program Planning Model

The program planning model is the written report(s) of program possibilities to be implemented in the future by the writer in the context of the candidate's own ministry. It may center on a specific plan related to pastoral or other aspects of ministry.

Such a model should incorporate in the written document(s) the following elements:

1. Analysis of a particular issue or task. The writer will provide appropriate empirical data that support the need for the proposed activity or program; these may include relevant social statistics, survey findings, analysis of the parish situation and a brief history of recent efforts related to the goals of the project proposal. The candidate shall also demonstrate how the program design is informed by serious attention to the church's biblical and theological heritage. Some analysis of how the church's total mission might be enhanced by the specific proposal should be included.
2. Use of research and communication skills. The student will demonstrate carefully surveyed previous research or experimental work in the field in which the student is writing and reporting. This implies a careful "review of literature," namely, an exhaustive survey of work done by other researchers or experimenters that will serve to show both the sources of the new design and any difficulties in previous work. The proposal will include such sections as: purpose (including theological rationale), anticipated consequences, steps in the planning process, organization of personnel, time sequence, financial enabling, and provisions for evaluation. The key elements of the proposed program will be detailed.

3. Integration of findings with ministerial competence. Since this model is future-oriented, that is, not yet implemented, "findings" in this case refer to demonstration of feasibility and viability rather than evaluation. A portion of the proposal, however, may be pre-tested to add credibility to the project's implementation. It is anticipated that in most projects of this type the writer will be involved in the program proposal as "change-agent," innovator, leader, enabler or participant. The report, therefore, shall delineate how the minister will combine appropriate theoretical perspectives and professional skills in achieving stated objectives. Where appropriate, the writer may show how such disciplined attention to the issue or task provides a methodology broadly applicable to other tasks of ministry, now and in the future.

### **Thesis/Essay Model**

The "critical study or series of studies" which candidates must submit as an independent project in ministry to demonstrate the ability to reflect analytically, use research and communication skills, and integrate findings with a developing competence in ministry may take the form of developing a thesis and expanding it in an essay (of perhaps 100 pages).

The communication skills here called for would be those particularly of writing; the research methods might be those of historical study or some other discipline appropriate to the topic. A good part of the study would have to do with books and library research, along academic lines.

What distinguishes this model of DMin project from an STM thesis (or PhD research) would be its professional orientation to the tasks of ministry, so that the individual would seek to integrate theological/biblical/historical material with ministry; and to analyze findings in the light of one's ministry.

Thus, e.g., the study of some figure in past church history might be carried on under the thesis/essay model, not as pure research about the past, but for relationships with church life and situations today in which the candidate ministers. An investigation of some aspect of the history of liturgy would be carried out because of its pertinence to needs and worship practices today. Exegetical study of the Bible might be directed to current lectionary use or to a parish preaching endeavor. Integration of the thesis research to the candidate's professional ministry is the characteristic feature of the model.

In pursuing this model, the candidate, with guidance from the advisor, will want to –

- 1) Develop a general statement of the problem as it grows out of ministry;
- 2) Investigate the background of the problem, including previous study materials concerning it;
- 3) Carefully analyze the relevant theological/biblical foundations/issues;
- 4) Formulate the thesis, being careful to delimit the topic to workable proportions, with sources and procedures of investigation made clear;
- 5) In all of this, as well as in research and writing, the candidate will need to keep in mind the task of professional integration and "developing competence in ministry."

In this connection, for church history, biblical studies, and any topic relating to the past, “historical method” of investigation is often involved, in which standard works should be consulted, especially those relevant to the area to which the supervisory committee may direct a candidate.

### **Research (Hypothesis Testing) Model**

To engage in this kind of research first, choose a topic in ministry that holds some interest for you. Ask yourself, “What do I know and suspect about this topic?”

Your answers to this question help to develop a thesis which is simply a concise statement about the topic. That in turn leads to the development of hypotheses.

Hypotheses are testable statements that derive from the thesis; they are specific applications of a general idea. More than one hypothesis may derive from a thesis; however, each hypothesis should point toward evidence supporting the thesis.

An example of a hypothesis which would lead one into the social ministry field would be: “That the majority of the parish members see the church as a place of quiet refuge and retreat.” Another hypothesis which might lead one into the parish management field would be: “That the expectations of the lay members of St. Paul’s concerning the way a pastor uses her time differ significantly from the actual way such time is used.”

The thesis and hypotheses define and direct the research. Some may be tested by library research where one infers answers from books and articles by writers responding to other questions. Most hypotheses are tested by field research where one contacts individuals directly through interviews, questionnaires, or other procedures.

While some library work is necessary to provide a context for the research (establishing the depth and breadth of information available on the topic), in a field project, most of the time is spent organizing and analyzing questionnaires, interviews, or observations. Each of these means requires careful attention to methodology. The methodology should “fit” the purpose of the inquiry. Consider the quantifiable and qualitative procedures that may be appropriate. All instruments used in collecting data must be approved by the Advisor in advance of their use. Specialists in data analysis may need to be consulted in advance and during the process of arriving at “findings.” Because of the need to undertake research on human subjects candidates should consult the United Lutheran Seminary **Protocols Regarding Human Subject in Research** (below).

Although much of the project will involve research, nevertheless serious attention must be given to biblical/theological foundations that undergird the area of ministry being researched.

### **ULS Protocols Regarding Human Subjects in Research**

United Lutheran Seminary, in conformity with "The Common Rule" guidelines established by the U.S. government Office of Human Research Protections and general

practice in academic research, requires all research<sup>2</sup> that is formally conducted under Seminary auspices be reviewed to protect human subjects and minimize potential risks or harm.<sup>3</sup> In order to do so the Faculty has established an Institutional Review Board (“IRB”) and an institutional review process. Details of the ULS IRB policy and the required forms can be found at MyULS (my.uls.edu). See “Institutional Review Policies” under “Faculty & Staff” in the left-hand menu. (<https://my.uls.edu/faculty-staff/institutional-review-policies>).

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<sup>2</sup> “Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge,” (Code of Federal Regulations, 45 CFR 46.102[d]).

<sup>3</sup> The Common Rule, formally titled “Protection of Human Subjects” is part 46 of Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations (“45 CFR 46”). See also American Association of University Professors, “Protecting Human Beings: Institutional Review Boards and Social Science Research,” <http://www.aaup.org/statements/Redbook/repirb.htm>.

## GUIDE TO PREPARATION OF THE PROJECT

### **Nature, Purpose, and Scope**

The DMin project is a systematic observation of and actual involvement in some area of interest and/or potential growth in one's own ministerial setting which culminates in a definitive document (a critical study or series of studies). The independent project in ministry seeks to integrate the theory and practice of ministry so that both are illumined in the interest of a better understanding of ministry and of being more effective in ministry.

A typical DMin project document is 100 to 125 pages in length, but the number of pages alone is not a sufficient measure of adequate scope. It needs to be long enough to provide the specificity and depth appropriate to the study, and short enough to maintain the requisite focus.

### **Supervision and Evaluation**

Each candidate is guided in this phase of the program by a faculty Advisor appointed by the Director of the Graduate School in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee. The Advisor chairs the student's DMin Review Panel.

You are to take the initiative in arranging conferences with your Advisor. Conferences may be arranged at any time, but it will be beneficial for you and your Advisor to discuss your expectations for this part of the process. This will assure that you have prepared for and been engaged in adequate consultation at those stages which are especially important in the development of your project.

An electronic copy of your final draft (also known as the Review Copy) is to be presented to the Graduate Studies Office, which will distribute them to the Supervisory Committee. (Electronic copies may be submitted directly to the Supervisory Committee, if they are agreeable.) If a member of the Committee would like a paper copy, it is your responsibility to furnish it to them. The Committee will read the document and meet with you for formal discussion and final adjudication of your project.

### **Sequence and Calendar**

The sequence of steps in Project document preparation is set forth below. The timing (calendar) of the steps will vary according to the candidate's circumstances. It is helpful in planning for a project document to begin with the end date and consider the steps in reverse order to establish a candidate's individual calendar.

The awarding of degrees occurs at the annual Commencement in mid-May. To assure completion in the time for award of the DMin degree, a complete review copy of the Project document must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office by the February 1 at the latest, prior to the expected May graduation. The timing of the preceding steps will vary according to the time available for study, research, and writing. In all cases, the limit is six years from inception of program until award of degree. Program extensions are available only with faculty approval one year at a time. You should plan to have

submitted a project proposal at least one year in advance of your expected date of graduation.

### **Steps in the Process**

#### **Selection of Subject**

You are expected to take the initiative in selecting the subject area for your project. The subject will be delineated in consultation with your Advisor, with consideration given to the following queries:

1. Is the subject significant? This is a judgment in which the Advisor and the student must concur since the subject should be meaningful to the student.
2. Is the scope of the subject sufficiently limited to allow adequate treatment within the allotted time and with the facilities at the student's command?

#### **Selection of Methodology**

Read the sections above on Project in Ministry, Introduction and Models. Choose an approach that is appropriate for your subject. Remember that these models are not totally discrete. Your project may be a mixture of models. Should your methodology include research on human subjects, be sure to consult the United Lutheran Seminary **Protocols Regarding Human Subject in Research** (below) and submit your research design for review, if required.

To help in research, consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 7th ed., 2007 or latest edition) and Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008 or later edition).

#### **The Proposal**

Once you and your Advisor have agreed concerning the subject and provisional title, you will prepare a Project in Ministry Proposal according to the guidelines below. Consultation with your Advisor in this stage is crucial. It will be helpful to consult the criteria for evaluation of a project (below).

1. Writing the proposal.
  - a. State the title. Keep the title short and descriptive of the project.
  - b. Describe the rationale of the project. This involves setting forth the origin and background of the study, its implications, the reason for interest in it, and the need for it.
  - c. Give a general statement of the project. It is from this general statement that the specific formulation of the project will be derived. Define the area and scope of the study, and indicate the basic proposition, situation, question, or technique that the project will examine.
  - d. State the formulation and limitation of the project, that is, precisely what you propose to do. State clearly the desired goal or outcome of the project. In some instances, it will be helpful to clarify your intentions by adding to the positive statement an explanation of matters that lie beyond the limits of the study.
  - e. Indicate in a preliminary way the theological/biblical issues/foundations that are relevant and will be developed in the project.

- f. Indicate previous studies relating to the project. This is often called a “literature review.” Present a brief description of earlier studies that have bearing on the proposed investigation. This description should contain a statement of what earlier studies have revealed and should carry reference to areas of the general problem, which remain unexplored or which have been inadequately explored. In the event you find no studies relating to the investigation proposed, note shall be made of that fact. The findings in this step ought to indicate why the student feels justified in carrying out the investigation.
- g. Identify sources and prepare a preliminary bibliography. When sources are contemporaneous with the investigator, a relatively full description is required. Indicate how source materials are to be handled. Include the bibliography you have compiled to this point with the proposal.
- h. State the procedures or method of investigation. This would be the Methodology. Describe fully the procedure(s) to be followed in making the study. This should include a clear explanation of the steps one expects to follow in carrying out the investigation. This is not a preview of conclusions, but a statement of the processes to be used in the various phases of the Project. If there are procedures of questionnaire or experimentation type, the greatest care must be observed to shape the instrument for obtaining data. It is particularly important to work out such matters with your Advisor in advance of presenting the proposal to the IRB. Consult **Protocols Regarding Human Subjects in Research** (below).
- i. Include a tentative outline of the document. This outline should show at least the larger sections, such as chapters and major subdivisions. It should indicate how you intend to articulate the work and should reflect careful preliminary investigation and planning. It will be helpful to your Advisor if your proposal roughly follows the anticipated project outline.

Expect to revise the draft proposal several times under the guidance of your Advisor/Supervisory committee before it is developed into the final form. The time spent is worthwhile because the proposal will be used as the yardstick by which you develop the project and by which the committee will eventually evaluate the final product.

2. Submitting the proposal.
 

Your Advisor will review the Proposal and may request a meeting(s) with you as part of this review.

  - a. If the proposal is accepted, your Advisor will sign the registration form to indicate acceptance and present the form to the Graduate Studies Office. The Graduate Studies Office will forward the original on to the Registrar who will register the project. The student will be assessed for 6 credits of tuition, but as long as the tuition assessed for the student in a given semester does not exceed 6 credits, the tuition will be covered by a tuition scholarship.
  - b. If not accepted, the proposal will be returned to you with the registration form

for revision and resubmission. When the proposal is accepted, the steps of paragraph (a) above will apply.

Only after your Advisor has agreed that the Project Proposal may move forward, submit one copy of the completed proposal, along with a Project Registration Form, to the Advisor and the Graduate Studies Office. There is no set deadline for submitting the Project Proposal. It is governed only by the February 1 deadline for submission of the complete review copy in the year in which you hope to graduate. In general, students are well-advised to submit a proposal one year in advance of the expected date of graduation.

### Drafts

The number and nature of preliminary drafts will depend upon a combination of Advisor expectations, student capacities, and the nature of the topic. In some cases, submission of material chapter by chapter may be requested; in others, it may be appropriate to develop a series of complete drafts at varying levels of refinement. Follow the direction of your Advisor.

It will be helpful at this stage to have previewed the requirements of style and presentation which apply to the final version of the Project document (below).

### The Review Copy

This is the complete project document, including abstract, title page, table of contents, chapters, headings, and bibliography. It is prepared according to the style and formatting requirements of the final archival copies (below), except that it is submitted to the Graduate Studies Office in three copies on plain photocopier paper. Students may print on both sides of the paper for the Review Copies, but not the Archival copies. Electronic copies may be utilized if requested or agreed to by the Committee.

The following considerations regarding the Review Copy should be kept in mind:

1. Write so that the reader can readily gather your ideas about the subject – write for the reader.
2. Pay special attention to accuracy in the choice of words and to variety in both vocabulary and sentence structure. The student is responsible for typographical corrections; copyread meticulously. Use a spell-check and grammar check.
3. The Introduction should contain:
  - a. a statement of the specific issue to be studied;
  - b. a review of previous studies of the subject (“literature review”);
  - c. a brief description of the sources, the materials, and the methods employed in the investigation;
  - d. the limitations of the present study (geographical, chronological, topical, institutional, and the like);
  - e. background information to assist the reader's understanding; and
  - f. an indication of the order in which the main divisions of the subject are to be treated in the body of the document.
4. Pay special attention to logical development and to connections between the

divisions. The divisions, subdivisions and subordinate heads must be so chosen and stated that each will lead to an exhaustive treatment of its part of the subject and at the same time contribute to the progress of thought. Special care must be taken to indicate the relations of each part by means of topical and transitional sentences. Each division and subdivision should begin with a paragraph, which will link it to the preceding paragraph and introduce the next stage of the argument, and it should close with a paragraph which will summarize its contents and indicate its bearing on the report thus far.

5. After the data of the document have been presented clearly and logically, the conclusion of the whole should be stated succinctly. The final interpretation, solution, or statement of findings is the culmination of the study.
6. Remember that biblical and theological reflection is a required part of all DMin projects. Integration of theology and practice of ministry is to be demonstrated.

### Review and Defense

When the Committee has read the Review copy, a meeting will be scheduled between you and the Committee. This is the occasion for a sharing of the Committee's analysis and your defense of the project. The Oral Defense of the Project will normally be no more than two hours. After the Oral Defense, the Committee may

- approve the project document as submitted, without changes;
- approve with minor typographical corrections required;
- approve with substantive revisions;
- disapprove the project, recommending a grade of “fail”.

The Project can be submitted and reviewed at any time throughout the academic year.

### Revisions

If required revisions are minor, you will make the corrections and move directly to the final submission copies, describe below. Your Advisor will make a final inspection before ratification.

If revisions are to be substantive (matters of organization or argument, or even a large number of typographical errors), you will be asked to submit a second (revised) review copy, and the step above then applies.

**Note about timing:** Review Copies may be submitted at any time throughout the year, with approval of your Advisor. However, **February 1** is the last possible date for submission for those students wishing to graduate the following May. In addition, students must submit the “Application to Graduate” by January 3 to the Registrar’s Office.

Consult with your Advisor or the Director of the Graduate School so that you are clear on dates.

### Final Submission (Archival Copies)

1. Before printing your final copies, email your final draft to the library staff so they can confirm that your formatting conforms to institutional requirements and any

- quoted material falls under fair use (listed below). You will not be approved for graduation until the library approves of your final copy.
2. After library staff have approved your final draft, prepare at least two copies of the thesis document. One copy is for library archives and one is for library circulation. (Upon request to the Library and payment of costs, you may present additional copies for personal binding.) If desired, the Library may be willing to print your project and charge for materials. If you wish to do this, please check with the library.
  3. To ensure archival quality, the seminary requires that the final copies of your thesis be printed on high-quality, white, acid free, 8 ½ x 11-inch paper, composed of 25% or greater of cotton.
  4. The quality of print needs to be clear and dark. (Many students utilize the services of photocopy companies, such as FedEx Kinkos, or Staples.)
  5. Print only on one side of the page.
  6. Do not punch holes in the pages or bind them in any way.
  7. Submit your final copies to the Graduate Studies Office by May 1 preceding graduation. The Graduate Studies Office will send your copies to the Library for binding.

#### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT DOCUMENT**

1. Accuracy. Have the data, quotations, and references been checked, and are the facts on which the conclusion is based stated clearly and accurately?
2. Objectivity. Do the conclusions largely depend on the writer's own opinions or opinions quoted from others? Where opinions are given, are they supported by factual data? Are the opinions of reputed authorities accepted as fact without further investigation or criticism? Is the significance of the findings judiciously discerned and stated?
3. Impartiality. Is there a sincere search for the truth regardless of whether or not it may require the revision or even the abandonment of a hypothesis? Is any evidence omitted which speaks against the conclusion drawn by the writer? Is any evidence omitted which speaks in favor of it? Are the data fairly interpreted, so that merely possible fact is distinguished from probable or certain fact?
4. Logic. Is the document developed logically, and is it free from fallacies? Does it avoid ambiguous and shifting terms, reasoning from analogy, reasoning from silence, begging the question and all forms of irrational evidence?
5. Literary Style. Is it written in language that is accurate, suited to the theme, interesting and cultured?
6. Length. Normally 100–125 pages of text (excluding appendices if any). There is no virtue in "padding." Quotations from secondary sources should be kept to a minimum, and all extraneous and repetitious matter should be rigorously excluded.

7. Clarity. Can the reader understand exactly what the writer has done and said?
8. Creativity. While the project document is not required to be a new contribution to knowledge, it should show imagination in the various steps of selecting and defining the subject, assembling the material for the body of the report and drawing conclusions. Such things as a fresh approach to the subject, new interpretation of data, raising questions that arise in the course of the study, and suggestions for further investigation add to the value.
9. Theological Integrity. Has the author accurately and thoughtfully engaged the Scriptures and the theological tradition of the church (either historical or contemporary)?
10. Integration. Theology and Practice of ministry must be clearly integrated. Theological insights should inform ministerial approach and practice. The reader should be able to perceive this integration.

## STYLE

### **General Layout**

1. Leave a one and one-half inch margin at the left on each page and at least three quarters of an inch on the other three sides. The same margins apply to charts, graphs, tables, and maps.
2. Use a ½” indentation for paragraphing.
3. Double space the body of the manuscript.
  - a. Long quotations, footnotes, and other similar material should be single-spaced and indented ½ inch
4. The Title Page should follow the template included in the Appendices
5. The thesis should otherwise follow the standard style-manual: *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)—the 7<sup>th</sup> (2007) or newer edition.
  - a. Newer editions of Turabian contain a section composed of Booth et al.’s *The Craft of Research*.
  - b. For issues of style and rhetoric, see *The Elements of Style*, by Strunk and White (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000 edition or newer) or *The Elements of Style Illustrated*, by Strunk, White, and Kalman (2007).

A convenient online abridgement of Turabian is available at  
<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/citation-guide.html>

### **Citation of sources**

1. Students are expected to conform to one style of referencing sources and must use the chosen method consistently
  - a. **Notes and Bibliography Style**  
See Turabian, chapters 15, 16, and 17.

Note format:

1. Rebecca Smith, *Lifelong Education: Reflections of a Teacher* (Philadelphia, Bell Press, 2009), 54.

Bibliographic format:

Smith, Rebecca. *Lifelong Education: Reflections of a Teacher*. Philadelphia: Bell Press, 2009.

## 2. **Bibliography/reference list**

The bibliography or reference list at the end should include all (but only) books and articles that have been used by the writer in preparing the thesis. If the thesis is dependent on a major author, the bibliography may be divided into two sections, one for the primary (the major author's) works, the other for the secondary works. Most theses will not require this distinction in the bibliography. If there are any important works on the subject which were not available to the writer, they may be listed separately and the fact that they were not consulted should be mentioned.

Every item in the bibliography or reference list should contain the following information: (a) the full name of the author and/or editor; (b) the exact title of the work as it appears on its title page; (c) the name of the translator, if there is one; and, (d) publication information (books would include place, publisher, and date; journals would include journal title, volume, issue, year, and pages).

The order of these items will vary according to the choice between bibliography and reference list for citations.

Bibliographic citations for electronic media should include the same information as the print version, but also: name of site found on (or platform for ebooks), URL, and date accessed. It may look like these:

Paine, Thomas, *Rights of Man: Being an Answer to Mr. Burke's Attack on the French Revolution, Part 1*, ed. Moncure Daniel Conway (London: G.P. Putnam, 1894), Google Books, <http://books.google.com/books?id=GrYBAAAAYAAJ> (accessed November 16, 2009).

Paine, Thomas, *Common Sense, Rights of Man and Other Essential Writings of Thomas Paine* (New York: Signet Classics, 2007), Kindle edition

Petranovic, Danilo, "The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left." *First Things* 241, 53-54. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials* (accessed August 16, 2009).

## 3. **Font**

If possible, use Times New Roman, 12 pt throughout the thesis, and 10 pt for

footnotes. Similar, acceptable, serified fonts include Cambria, which is a commonly-available font for Windows computers.

4. **Pagination**

Pages should have the page number centered at the bottom of the page. The title page is not numbered, nor is the table of contents if it is a single page. If the table of contents is more than one page, number in small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, etc.)

5. Do not justify the right margin. Only the left margin should be justified.
6. We strongly recommend hiring a proofreader as well as utilizing the spell-check and grammar-check programs in your computer to ensure accuracy and consistency throughout the document.
7. **Boldface** and *italics* should be used rarely. Boldface may be used in headings only. Italics are to be used only for foreign words, book titles, and journal titles.
8. This is an objective piece of research. However, the use of the first person to refer to yourself is acceptable, if used sparingly and in consultation with your advisor.
9. All research subjects should be protected and their identities held in confidence. All names of research subjects should be changed, utilizing pseudonyms or, for example, “Mr. A” and “Ms. B.” For the full policy, please see the institutional policy on Research on Human Subjects.
10. The student is responsible for obtaining written permission to include any materials, artwork, maps, music, etc. from published or unpublished sources, including verbal material from interviews, questionnaires, surveys, sermons, etc. cited in the thesis. The advisor will help in deciding when permissions are necessary. The student is responsible for paying any permission fees that may be incurred.

As the author of the manuscript, you will be asked to certify that any previously copyrighted material used in your work, beyond acceptable fair use, is with the written permission of the copyright owner.

## **GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES**

Advanced degrees students, along with all other ULS students, are required to comply with the policies of ULS. A brief summary of the applicable policies is provided below along with information on where these policies can be viewed.

### **ULS EMAIL ACCOUNT, HENRY STUDENT DATABASE, AND CANVAS**

Upon matriculation into the DMin Program students will be given a username and password for their ULS email, the Henry student information portal, and course Canvas sites. These interfaces will be the primary method of communication between the seminary and the student, which will include notification of seminary policies, news, student registration information, course grades, and course modules. It is the student's responsibility to maintain these accounts.

(To route the ULS email account into an already existing email server, refer to [my.uls.edu/information-technology/emailuls/.](http://my.uls.edu/information-technology/emailuls/))

### **COMPUTING REQUIREMENTS**

All students are required to have certain computer competencies before entering any ULS program. ULS IT staff will provide basic training on how to navigate the learning management system, Canvas, during orientation, but cannot provide remedial computer training. Details of the ULS Technology policy can be found in the Student Handbook, found on [MyULS.edu](http://MyULS.edu)

Questions about these requirements can be addressed to [ITHelp@uls.edu](mailto:ITHelp@uls.edu)

### **REGISTRATION**

Students are required to consult with their Faculty Advisor prior to registering for classes. In order to register, a student must have their advisor's approval and PIN number to log into the Henry Online Student Information System. Note that PIN numbers change each semester.

Course schedules and registration materials are posted on the ULS Registrar's page at [my.uls.edu/registrar](http://my.uls.edu/registrar). Registration is done on-line via Henry according to registration deadlines shown in the academic calendar, also found on the registrar web page. While announcement of the opening of registration for any semester will be made by general email to students, it is the student's responsibility to check the seminary's website for registration materials if they see that the tentatively scheduled registration deadline is approaching.

### **Business Office Clearance**

(Please see the ULS Student Handbook 4.3.1) Available at [my.uls.edu/](http://my.uls.edu/)

### **Other Registration Issues**

Some courses cannot be registered online. These include independent studies (see Independent Study above), the Project in Ministry (use the form found on the [Graduate Studies Page](#)), cross-registrations, and courses at partner institutions. Instructions for registering for the latter types of courses are available at [my.uls.edu/registrar](http://my.uls.edu/registrar) or from the registrar's office.

Students whose registrations appear in Henry as pending should contact the registrar, who can advise the student as to whether registration may be possible and if there are any additional steps the student need take.

### **Drop/Add Period and Late Registration**

For information, refer to the ULS Student Handbook, available at [my.uls.edu](http://my.uls.edu).

### **Withdrawals and Refunds**

For information concerning withdrawal from courses, withdrawal from the seminary, and refunds for withdrawals, refer to the ULS Student Handbook, available at [my.uls.edu](http://my.uls.edu).

### **Incompletes and Extensions**

For information, refer to the ULS Student Handbook, available at [my.uls.edu](http://my.uls.edu).

**NOTE:** Other institutions will have their own policies on withdrawals and extensions. Students who take courses for transfer should adhere to the policies at each institution.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Students may petition for a leave of absence from study for health, personal, or professional reasons. Leave is normally for a full academic year and is renewable for a second year. A year of leave will not count toward the six-year time limit for the degree. Students requesting a leave must complete a Leave of Absence Request form, available from the Registrar's Office.

The student may resume studies upon the expiration of the requested Leave of Absence or earlier by registering for the next term. Students who wish to withdraw voluntarily from the Seminary should inform the Dean and the Registrar in writing. A student who fails to resume study upon expiration of the leave period will be removed from the roll. Deferment of federal student loan repayments is no longer in effect when a student is enrolled for less than 6 credits or goes on Leave of Absence. In such cases, the student's changed enrollment status will be reported immediately to the National Student Loan Data System, and loans will go into repayment. Contact the Director of Financial Aid or the particular student loan lender for specific information.

## **PROGRAM EXTENSIONS**

The maximum period within which the degree may be earned is 6 years from inception of study. The date of admission to the DMin degree program will start the 6-year clock for the program. Requests for extension of one's program beyond the 6-year limit must be submitted in writing to the Director of the Graduate School for approval by the Graduate Studies committee. Requests for program extensions must be requested annually and should normally include a statement of the student's plan for completion of the degree in the coming year. In no case can a program be extended beyond 10 years, owing to the expiration of course credits.

## **GRADES**

While a pass/fail option exists for students pursuing first theological degree, advanced degree students are required to earn letter grades in all courses.

Information about grading and grade appeals may be found in the ULS Student Handbook, available at [my.uls.edu](http://my.uls.edu).

## **GOOD STANDING**

For successful completion of the DMin degree students shall maintain a cumulative grade average of B (3.0) or above in all coursework.

## **OTHER INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES**

Students will be held accountable for all ULS Policies, which are included in the Student Handbook at [my.uls.edu](http://my.uls.edu). Policies include:

- Plagiarism
- Inclusive Language
- Hate Speech
- Rights, Responsibilities and Freedoms of Students
- Student Complaints and Grievance Procedures
- Safety and Security
- Non-Discrimination
- Harassment and Title IX
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Smoking
- General Computing and Network
- Electronic Mail
- Social Media
- Confidentiality of Records

## FINANCES

### TUITION

The fee schedule is published annually in the Academic Catalog.

**NOTE:** Costs for courses or other activities undertaken at other institutions for transfer credit or as part of an independent study are the responsibility of the student and are paid directly to those institutions.

### FINANCIAL AID

Due to the generosity of many benefactors and well-wishers of the seminary, along with an already substantial financial aid budget, the seminary is blessed to be able to offer financial support, in the form of scholarship awards to all non-international students who are enrolled in the DMin program. The scholarship will cover up the cost of two courses (6 credits) per semester.

#### **Eligibility**

Students must apply for financial aid each academic year in which they are enrolled. Application requires completion of both the (1) Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov); use ULS's federal school code G03291) and (2) ULS's Institutional Financial Aid Application (found at [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/financial-support](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/financial-support)). It is strongly suggested that the FAFSA and ULS Institutional Aid application be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

Students must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress to be eligible for financial aid. Satisfactory Academic Progress is evaluated by both qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (time towards degree completion) methods. A student is not making Satisfactory Academic Progress who falls below a 2.0 cumulative grade point average OR fails to complete successfully at least 67% of courses attempted (this includes withdrawals and failed courses).

New students must have been admitted to the seminary by June 30<sup>th</sup> for the Fall semester or November 30<sup>th</sup> for the Spring semester. Complete admission applications must be received by the ULS Admissions Office by June 15<sup>th</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup> respectively to ensure admission by the financial aid eligibility deadlines.

### OTHER SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

#### **Outside sources**

All students are expected to seek and utilize all available financial funding support from personal, familial, congregational, judicatory, synodical and/or private/external sources. Beyond these funds (not including student loans or funds that are designated for a specific purpose such as housing, books, living expenses, etc.), ULS will provide additional support up to full tuition for up to 6 credits/2 courses per semester in 2021-22.

Students may utilize a federal direct student loan to cover their additional tuition charges if they take more courses per semester.

**Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan:**

The Federal Direct Unsubsidized loan is available to professional and graduate students who are US citizens/permanent residents and are enrolled in a degree seeking program at least half-time (6 credits per semester). You do not have to demonstrate any financial need to be eligible.

The maximum annual amount that can be borrowed is \$20,500. Interest will begin to accrue on this loan once the loan proceeds are disbursed to the school and will continue accruing interest while the student is attending school. More details on obtaining this financing is available here: [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/financial-support](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/financial-support)

**Federal Direct Graduate Plus Loan:**

The Federal Direct Graduate Plus Loan is available to professional and graduate students who are US citizens/permanent residents and are enrolled in a degree seeking program at least half-time (6 credits per semester). Students do not have to demonstrate any financial need to be eligible.

The maximum annual amount a student may borrow is calculated by deducting any other financial aid the student is receiving (grants/scholarships, loans) from their ULS Cost of Attendance for the given academic year. Interest will begin to accrue on this loan once the loan proceeds are disbursed to the school and will continue accruing interest while the student is attending school. More information on this loan can be found here [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/financial-support](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/admissions/financial-support) Please note: Loans will not be approved for students with any adverse credit. The student may appeal and reapply with a creditworthy cosigner to be approved.

**Whom to Contact for Information:**

Students may contact Jayakiran Sebastian, Dean & VP of Student Services [jsebastian@uls.edu](mailto:jsebastian@uls.edu) 215-248-6392 if they have any questions and/or need assistance regarding their financial aid.

## FINANCIAL AID DURING WRITING STATUS

DMin students engaged in the writing of their Projects may elect to declare themselves as active students for purposes of deferring loans or obtaining loans, grants or scholarships while not enrolled in courses. Students may declare themselves as active part-time or full-time based on the following criteria:

- Students must have completed all their program-required courses.
- Students must have registered their Project with the Registrar.
- Students must be in academic good standing and may not be on financial hold.
- Students must submit a declaration form during each academic year of eligibility.
- Forms must be filed before the end of the Add/Drop period of the semester.

- Students may not have reached the maximum time limit on eligibility for part-time or full-time writing status. The maximum time for a DMin student to claim active writing status while preparing the Project is two full academic years, listed as half time.

The **Financial Aid Status During The Writing Phase Form** can be found at [unitedlutheranseminary.edu/academics/graduate-school](http://unitedlutheranseminary.edu/academics/graduate-school) One signed hard copy should be turned in to the Graduate Studies Office, who will notify the Financial Aid Office.

## APPENDIX A: PROJECT FORMAT NOTES IN BRIEF

**TYPICAL PROJECT LENGTH:** 100–125 pages

**FONT:**

Times New Roman or similar serif font

Font size: 12 pt for all text, except 10 pt for footnotes

**2 COPIES MUST BE PRINTED FOR LIBRARY, AS FOLLOWS:**

High-quality, white, acid free 8 ½ x 11 inch paper containing 25% or greater cotton content

Print only on one side of paper

**ASSEMBLE PROJECT IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER**

Abstract

Project

    Title page

    Table of Contents

    Chapters

    Bibliography

    Appendices (if any)

**ABSTRACT**

Not more than five hundred (500) words, single-spaced

Multiple pages should be numbered in Arabic numerals (1,2,3,,)

These pages are numbered separate from the project itself

**TITLE PAGE**

Not numbered

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Not numbered if a single page

If more than a single page, number in lower case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii...)

**APPENDICES**

If you have one or two short appendices, continue page numbering to the end

If the appendices are more than a few pages, number separately, starting with Appendix A

If you have more than three appendices, a Table of Appendices (similar to a table of contents) should appear before APPENDIX A

**GENERAL FORMAT**

Do not justify the right margin; only the left margin should be justified

Leave a 1 ½-inch margin at the left on each page and at least ¾ inch on the other three sides

Margins must remain consistent and also apply to charts, graphs, tables, and maps

Use ½ inch indentation (“tab”) at the start of a paragraph

Double-space the body of the manuscript

Single-space long quotations, footnotes, and special material. These elements should also be offset ½ inch from the left margin. The right margin is the same as the bulk of the text.

Boldface may be used in headings only

Italics are to be used only for foreign words, book titles and journal titles

Alternatively, book titles may be underlined without italics

To emphasize words or phrases within the text, underline the word or phrase

Do not use **boldface** for anything other than headings

DO NOT USE ALL CAPITALS

TITLE PAGE FORMAT—SEE NEXT PAGE

**APPENDIX B: SAMPLE TITLE PAGE**

\*Please note that measurements here are in addition to the existing page margins set for a Word document. The 1” indentation for the title should be in addition to the 1” indentation already established by Word. If you have any formatting questions, please email an electronic copy to advanced@uls.edu, and we will approve the measurements.

(TITLE HERE IN CAPS)

[7-9 *Single lines*]

A PROJECT SUBMITTED BY

[6 *Single lines*]

(Your Name)

TO THE FACULTY OF

UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

[4 *Single lines*]

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

[5 *Single lines*]

(date: use month and year only)

1”

3”

5”

2”

1.5”

