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8. Doctor of Ministry Final Project

Purpose

The final project is the capstone learning experience for the Doctor of Ministry program. The purpose of the final project is to verify that the student has achieved the intended learning outcomes of the program and is able to implement what has been learned in the context of the ministry in which he serves. Since the Doctor of Ministry in Expository Preaching is a professional degree, the final project is intended to be applicable, directly or indirectly, to the student's ministry of preaching.

Topic

The curriculum of the Doctor of Ministry in Expository Preaching is delivered through the seminary's three departments of education: the department of Christian Ministry and Communication, the department of Exegesis and Exposition, and the department of Systematic and Historical Theology. In keeping with these curricular divisions, the final project will be directed to a topic related to one of the following three categories of study:

A. Ministerial. Topics in this category will entail an experimental study in a select aspect of expository preaching. Projects within this category seek to address a challenge or problem associated with the ministry of preaching, propose practical solutions, and verify the feasibility of solutions through implementation through testing and practice in a ministerial setting. Experimental research is correlated with relevant literature, resulting in an analysis and recommendation for future ministerial practice.

B. Exegetical. Topics in this category engage in a targeted exegetical study. The study will demonstrate the student's ability to apply skills obtained in the program to research, evaluation, and application of a portion of the biblical text significant to the practice of expository preaching.

C. Historical/Theological. Topics in this category engage in a targeted historical or theological study, the result of which will commend to the reader conclusions which inform the practice of expository preaching.

Progress

Progress through the final project is measured as the student advances through 15 steps in 3 phases:

Phase 1—Candidacy
A student may apply for candidacy if all required coursework is completed, or if presently enrolled in the final required course. The Candidacy phase extends from

January 1—July 31 of the year prior to the year of anticipated graduation, and includes the following steps:

Step 1—Application for Candidacy, including declaration of intended area of writing. (Jan 1)

Step 2—Formation of Final Project Committee, Assignment of Advisor (Feb 1)

Step 3—Submission of Topic and Abstract (May 1)

Step 4—Approval of Topic and Abstract (Jun 1)

Step 5—Submission of Proposal (Jul 1)

Step 6—Approval of Proposal (Jul 31)

Step 7—Confirmed Satisfaction of Pre-requisites for Candidacy (Jul 31)

- Completion of all coursework

- 3.0 Cumulative GPA

- Resolution of unresolved disciplinary issues

- Fulfillment of outstanding financial obligations

Step 8—Admission to Candidacy

Details concerning requirements for the topic, abstract, and proposal may be located in the seminary's Guidelines for Writing.

Phase 2—Research and Composition
The Research and Composition phase extends from August 1—December 31 of the year prior to the year of anticipated graduation, and includes the following steps:

Step 9—Enrollment in Final Project 1; completion of Introduction, which is chapter 1. (3 credit hours; Aug 1)

Step 10—Completion of draft for chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the final project. (Dec 1)

Step 11—Approval of chapters 2, 3, 4 by Form Reviewer (Dec 15)

Phase 3—Drafting and Defense
The Drafting and Defense phase extends from January 1—August 1 of the year prior to the year of anticipated graduation, and includes the following steps:

Step 12—Enrollment in Final Project 2; submission of first draft (Jan 1)

Step 13—Submission of second draft (Feb 1)

Step 14—Submission of corrected Draft (approved by Form Reviewer); Final Project Defense (Mar 1)

Step 15—Submission of Final Draft (Apr 1)

Project Length
The project (excluding front and back matter) must be 125–50 pages in length.

Oversight

Upon application for candidacy, the DMin Committee will appoint a Final Project Committee. The Committee will consist of an Advisor and a Reader. The role of the Committee is to assess the progress and success of the final project. The role of the Advisor is to assume the primary role in providing the student guidance through the process of the final project. The role of the Reader is to interact with the content of the final project, communicate observations to the Advisor, and assist in the final assessment of the project. A third reader may be appointed at the discretion of the Academic Dean. Appointments to the Final Project Committee will be contingent on several factors, including the discipline within which the topic is situated, the availability of faculty, and the expressed preference of the student.

Recommended Structure

The structure of the final project should fit the thesis statement and the nature of the evidence that supports it. The first chapter of the final project should provide a justification for the study, and the final chapter should provide a final analysis and application. A typical structure, therefore, would contain the following elements:

Chapter 1—Justification of Study (Evidence of problem, challenge, or need; Plan of Study; Survey of Relevant Resources, Thesis Statement)

Chapter 2—1st Reason and Attending Evidence

Chapter 3—2nd Reason and Attending Evidence

Chapter 4—3rd Reason and Attending Evidence

Chapter 5—Conclusion and Application

Printing and Binding

The librarian will assist the student in securing the services of a printer and binder. The appropriate fee will cover the expense of printing and binding two copies; additional copies may be procured at the student's expense. The first copy will be archived in the seminary library; the second will to the student. The student will also submit an electronic copy to the seminary librarian in pdf format.