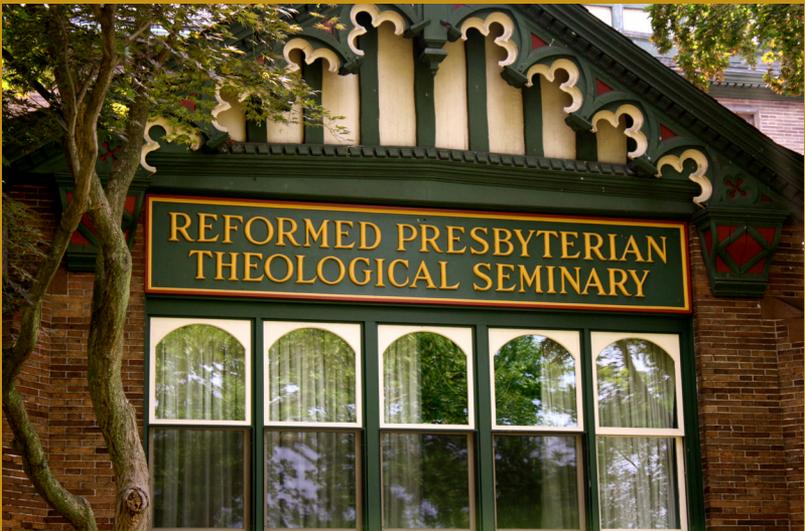


REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

Strengthening Ministry in the Kingdom of God



PROGRAM HANDBOOK  
2018



## PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Doctor of Ministry program, *Strengthening Ministry in the Kingdom of God*, is a professional degree designed to strengthen ministry in the Kingdom of God by providing advanced training for pastors and others who minister to God's people, especially in the field of Biblical counseling. It is a program of study and research intended for ministry renewal, reinvigoration in Biblical and theological studies, integration of theological convictions with societal issues, and enhancement of the skills needed for effective Biblical ministry. It integrates advanced academic research in the various fields of theological study with the practice of ministry.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

The *Strengthening Ministry in the Kingdom of God* program is for those who minister to the people of God and have earned a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent. This equivalency must include study in the theological disciplines, such as an MTS degree, plus additional coursework, which when combined would equal or exceed 72 graduate semester hours or 108 graduate quarter hours, usually encompassing three years of post-graduate study. For those requesting admission based upon MDiv equivalency, all transcripts will be reviewed by the Registrar and the Director of the DMin Program (Director) to determine if the applicant has the knowledge, competence, and skills that would normally be provided as part of an MDiv degree.

Normally, applicants should also have at least three years of ministry experience after earning the MDiv degree or its equivalent. A limited number of students may be enrolled without the requisite experience upon the approval of the Director, who has responsibility to assess the applicant's other ministry experience which has

prepared the student for advanced, professional studies.

These are the only requirements for the ***Strengthening Counseling Ministry*** concentration. For an individual to be admitted to the ***Strengthening Pastoral Ministry*** concentration, the applicant must be an ordained minister in addition to the above requirements.\*

The deadline for application is December 1, with a January 1 acceptance deadline. There is a \$35 application fee, with an additional late application fee of \$100 for applications received between December 1 and January 1. No applications will be considered after January 1 for a February 1-14 enrollment in the same year.

## CHOICE OF TWO PROGRAM CONCENTRATIONS

***Strengthening Pastoral Ministry***\* is designed for ordained pastors who perform the full range of pastoral duties. If your pastoral ministry needs to be revived; if you long to pursue a set of issues and problems affecting the life of the church; if you desire advanced study in matters related to the doctrine, worship, and the overall life and ministry of the church, then this concentration is for you.

***Strengthening Counseling Ministry*** is designed for pastors and others in the church whose ministry has a significant focus on counseling. If in your ministry you face the challenge of counseling people with broken lives and broken relationships; if you desire to more adequately understand and apply the Word of the Lord to the needs of people; if you desire advanced study in Biblical counseling rooted in a thorough knowledge of Scripture and the faith of the Church, then this concentration is for you.

\* Because of the Biblical convictions of the sponsoring denomination of the Seminary regarding the qualifications of those who serve the church as ordained pastors, this concentration is restricted to men.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION

The Doctor of Ministry program includes the completion of eight required courses and the submission and approval of a doctoral project combining academic study with practical application to ministry. Both concentrations share five required courses in common. These courses cover the range of theological study. The ***Strengthening Pastoral Ministry*** concentration has three additional courses oriented toward the pastoral work of preaching and leading the worship of the people of God. The ***Strengthening Counseling Ministry*** concentration has three additional courses focused on counseling ministry in the church.

The Doctor of Ministry program is designed for pastors and other church workers who are engaged in full-time ministry. It is, by its design, a part-time program to be completed while engaged in the ministry, with all coursework and the submission of the project designed to be completed within six years, beginning with the first on-campus course taken. The eight DMin classes are each five days. Two classes are offered each August and require the student to be in residence for those two weeks. The classes are offered in a fixed rotation, so once students begin the program, they are expected to complete the eight classes over the next four Augusts. Because each class is offered only once every four years, students are encouraged not to miss a course if at all possible.

The one exception to the above paragraph is that students beginning in the counseling concentration in a year when DM06 is not offered will take this course by special arrangement, since it is a prerequisite for all other counseling courses.

A typical schedule would be as follows:

## Doctor of Ministry Program

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Year 1 Begins	August (1st two full weeks of the month)	Attend two (2) classes
Year 2 Begins	August (1st two full weeks of the month)	Attend two (2) classes
Year 3 Begins	August (1st two full weeks of the month)	Attend two (2) classes
Year 4 Begins	August (1st two full weeks of the month)	Attend two (2) classes
Year 5 Begins	August and Ongoing	Work on Project
Year 6 Begins	August and Ongoing	Work on Project
End of Year 6	August 1	Final date to submit project (Graduation is the following May)

After the project has been approved by the Director, it may be started at any time after the completion of the fifth course; however, the project may not be submitted prior to the completion of all coursework. Students must submit a first draft of the project by August 1 in order to graduate in May of the following year. Project submissions later than August 1 must have special approval from the Director.

The classes require significant pre-classroom work to prepare for the five-day intensive classes and significant post-classroom work to complete the assignments. Students should expect to expend four hours a week for the six months before the class and four hours a week for the six months after the class to adequately do the work.

### COURSEWORK GRADING CRITERIA FOR RETENTION AND COMPLETION

For students in the Doctor of Ministry program to continue in the program, they must meet the following requirements.

A student must complete the entire coursework with at least an overall average grade of B (3.0) before the student can submit the doctoral project for degree completion. Courses for which a grade of at least a C (2.0) has been attained will count for credit, as long as the final overall grade average is at least a B (3.0). For example, a specific course grade of C (2.0) and a specific course grade of A (4.0) would result in an overall grade of B (3.0).

If a student, upon completion of a course, receives a grade of less than a C (2.0), the student must appeal to the Faculty for permission to revise and resubmit the required coursework for the purpose of improving the grade. If permission is granted, the student shall have three months from the time of the Faculty approval to make such a resubmission. Failure to revise and resubmit the work or failure to attain at least a C (2.0) will result in the student needing to retake the course. Only one course in the DMin program may be retaken, and that only once.

If a student, after the completion of two courses, is not maintaining at least an overall average of a B (3.0), the student shall be placed on academic probation. If, after the completion of two additional courses, the student's overall grade average has not risen to a B (3.0), the student shall be dismissed from the program.

Students have 6 months of pre-course work and 6 months of post-course work (due by February 15). Work not submitted by February 15 is docked one letter grade. Sixty days later, on April 15, if the work is still not submitted, students incur a \$200 late fee. After August 1, the course is recorded as an "F." If the student wishes to continue in the program, with the consent of the professor and the Director, the student must re-register for the course, pay for the tuition, and submit the required work within six months. Only one course in the DMin Program may be retaken, and that only once.

No credit for a specific course will be granted unless the student has attained at least a C (3.0) grade for that specific course. The standards for student evaluation for each class shall be at the discretion of the professor who teaches that class.

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

August 6-10, 2018 August 13-17, 2018	DM03 Christ's Mediatorial Kingship DM08 Biblical Worship (Pastoral only) DM09 What is Man? (Counseling only)
August 5-9, 2019 August 12-16, 2019	DM04 The Old Testament in the New DM07 Issues in Theology (Pastoral only) DM10 Medical and Legal Issues in Biblical Counseling (Counseling only)
August 3-7, 2020 August 10-14, 2020	DM02 The Renewal of Preaching (Pastoral only) DM05 Leadership Communication
August, 2020 Non-resident course	DM11 Counseling Practicum (Counseling only)
August 2-6, 2021 August 9-13, 2021	DM01 Christ in the Gospels DM06 Counseling the Flock*
NB: the courses are listed in numeric order; they are not necessarily listed in the order they will be offered in a given year.	

## DM06 COUNSELING PREREQUISITE

Counseling the Flock (DM06) is a prerequisite for all other counseling courses. Students beginning the program in the counseling concentration in a year in which DM06 is not offered in August have two options, taking into consideration their personal schedules and their background in Biblical counseling. They may take DM06 as a distance learning course in addition to preparing for two upcoming courses in August, or they may choose to take DM06 as a distance

learning course in the first year and wait until the following August to begin additional courses.

## RESIDENCY

As the program is designed to foster full involvement for students who live a considerable distance away from the Seminary, students need to reside in the Pittsburgh area only during the weeks of intensive classes each August.

## COURSES & PROFESSORS

The classes required for the Doctor of Ministry degree cover the range of ministry skills, including Biblical interpretation, doctrinal studies, counseling, and worship. Instructors for this program include full-time and adjunct professors selected because of their particular expertise.

There are five required courses common to both the *Strengthening Pastoral Ministry* and *Strengthening Counseling Ministry* concentrations:

### **DM01 Christ in the Gospels: Rediscovering Jesus through Narrative and Literary Analysis**

In this course, students will refresh their skills at interpretation of the New Testament, discover newer techniques and methods for New Testament studies, and attain new proficiencies in handling both the interpretation of the Gospels and its application to the life of the members of the Church.

- *Dr. Jack Kinneer*

**DM03 Christ's Mediatorial Kingship: Proclaiming Christian Faith in a World of Ideological Diversity**

In this course, students will encounter, study, and analyze the current alternatives to Christian faith in the areas of societal and political life, and be asked to formulate understandings of the pressing societal and political issues in terms of the commitment of the Christian faith to the resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Christ, as the fundamental presupposition of Christian involvement in the concerns of societal and political order.

- *Dr. Richard Gamble*

**DM04 The Old Testament in the New: Advancing the Reformed Conviction of the Unity and Coherence of Scripture**

In this course, students will refresh their skills at interpretation of the Old Testament, discover newer techniques and methods for Old Testament studies, and attain new proficiencies in handling the interpretation of the Old Testament, its relation to the New Testament, and its application to the life of the members of the Church.

- *Dr. C. J. Williams*

**DM05 Leadership Communication: Learning to Effectively Communicate in Diverse Cultural Settings**

This course seeks to answer this question, "What guides and informs communicative practices within the pastoral roles of service and leadership?" The faithful conduct of pastoral ministry depends on sound communication principles and practices. Twenty-first century pastors work within a world saturated with electronic technology, yet lacking in communication knowledge and skill. Nevertheless, church members expect pastoral leadership and care, anticipating that a pastor should be omni-competent in every form of com-

municative practice. This course explores principles that inform basic communicative practices across the spectrum of pastoral ministry — from within the pastor’s own marriage and household; to the conduct of various kinds of church meetings; to teaching and preaching; to engaging electronic communication in personal and mass media forms.

**DM06 Counseling the Flock: Insights for Guiding the Sheep from the Biblically-Based Study of Counseling**

In this course, students will sharpen their skills of listening, analyzing, and guiding members through the variety of problems commonly encountered by pastors seeking to counsel, advise, and aid the members of the church to live their faith with integrity and consistency.

- *Dr. George Scipione*

Three additional courses are required for the *Strengthening Pastoral Ministry* concentration:

**DM02 The Renewal of Preaching: Values, Insights, and Techniques for Preaching**

In this course, students have the opportunity to review and evaluate the quality, competency, and effectiveness of their pulpit oratory, learn advanced techniques for rhetorical construction, and study effective methods of sermon construction.

- *Dr. Barry York*

**DM07 Issues in Theology: Reformed Orthodoxy and Current Trends and Directions in Theological Studies**

In this course, students will survey and analyze current trends and directions in theological studies, their impact on

Reformed confessional integrity, on the beliefs and practices of the members of the Church, and on the future directions of theological development.

- *Dr. Richard Gamble*

**DM08 Biblical Worship: Recovering the Depth, Beauty, and Comprehensiveness of Worship Regulated by the Word of God**

In this course, students will study the history and practice of worship in the Reformed and Presbyterian churches, learn methods and perspectives for integrating contemporary concerns with historical patterns and practices, and deepen their theological reflection on the act of public worship.

- *Dr. C. J. Williams*

Three additional courses are required for the ***Strengthening Counseling Ministry*** concentration:

**DM09 What is Man?**

In this course, students will examine the exegetical data related to man, his problems, and how the counseling/discipleship process addresses these issues. A systematic theology of discipleship will be developed as the framework from which a robust discipleship ministry can and must develop.

Prerequisite: DM06.

- *Dr. George Scipione*

**DM10 Medical and Legal Issues in Biblical Counseling**

In this course, students will be exposed to the many physiological issues that can impact the counseling/discipleship process. Direction for dealing with these issues within a pastoral context will be mapped out. Also, the same will be

done for the legal issues that face the pastor/counselor. Special attention will be given to proper protection from and preparation for possible prosecution in the court systems, both criminal and civil. Special emphasis will be given to principles of peacemaking in a litigious society. Prerequisite: DM06.

- *Dr. Jim Halla and Dr. Kevin Backus*

### **DM11 Counseling Practicum**

In this course, students will be mentored through the counseling process. Although certification by a national body is not a requirement for the course, students will be prepared for such certification. When students are already certified at the time they enter the program, this course will prepare them to be certified at the next highest level, as a supervising Fellow or as a publisher/contributor in the Biblical Counseling Movement. Prerequisite: DM06.

- *Dr. George Scipione (Non-resident course)*

Students, with the approval of the Director, may substitute an independent study (DM12) for one course to accommodate their circumstances.

## **DOCTORAL PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

The capstone of the Doctor of Ministry program is the final project. Since the DMin is a professional degree designed to strengthen ministry in a practical way, the final project often focuses on a subject or problem arising out of the student's own ministerial or counseling experience. Like the DMin program itself, the final project will follow one of two tracks: ***Strengthening Pastoral Ministry*** or ***Strengthening Counseling Ministry***. The realm of possible topics is

endless, and each project will be unique, but the common denominator of all DMin projects is the goal to enhance and strengthen the pastoral or counseling ministry of each student, and be a benefit to others engaged in the same realm of ministry. The ultimate goal of each project is to glorify God through strengthening our ministry to His people.

Each project includes a theoretical component and a practical component. The theoretical component defines and explores the chosen topic, demonstrating academic research and writing skills at the doctoral level. Biblical and theological fields of study, including exegesis of Biblical texts, historical research, and review of relevant secondary-source academic literature that includes contemporary research on the topic, will ordinarily be part of this component of the project.

The practical component applies the conclusions to ministry in a well-defined way. This portion of the project may include interviews, counseling case studies, surveys, and reviews of cultural trends or related matters that have a bearing on the research topic. It may include the production of materials for the spiritual growth and education of the congregation, or the development of programs or policies relating to pastoral work, the worship or government of the church, or other forms of ministry.

Depending on the topic, the theoretical and practical components will not always be equally weighted, but each must be present.

The DMin project is completed through four stages: Proposal, Research and Writing, Evaluation and Revision, and finally, the Oral Exam.

## PROPOSAL

Students should be active in thinking about possible project topics throughout their time in the program, as coursework brings to light different avenues for research. Informal discussion with professors and the Director is very helpful at this stage. However, the earliest point at which a student may submit a formal proposal is after five courses have been completed. Once a student has settled on a topic, the student may submit a project proposal to the Director which includes the following components:

- A clear description of the problem or topic that the project will address.
- An explanation of the need for this study and what positive contribution it will make.
- The research methodology that will be used.
- Avenues of practical implementation of the project.
- A tentative outline.
- A timeline for progress and completion.
- Twenty preliminary resources with which the student's research will begin.

The project proposal should be clear and concise, not exceeding ten pages. Once the proposal is received by the Director, he will interact with the student on the topic and suggest modifications to the proposal, if necessary. The Director may serve as the advisor of the project, or assign another Faculty member to be the advisor, especially if he has particular expertise that relates to the research topic. Once the Director approves the proposal, the student may begin the research and writing stage.

## RESEARCH AND WRITING

Students are encouraged to interact mainly with their advisor or other Faculty members as the need for guidance may arise, during the research and writing stage. Students are also encouraged to submit samples of their project to their advisor for informal feedback, although there is no requirement to do so.

On August 15, one year after all eight courses have been completed, the student will be automatically registered and billed for DM99, which is the formal project writing stage of the DMin program. Students should plan to complete their projects in less than two years after being registered for DM99. In order to allow time for evaluation and revision, the deadline to submit the completed project is August 1, if the student wishes to graduate in May of the following calendar year. A student with extenuating circumstances may petition the Director for a one-year extension. If the extension is granted, the student will be notified in writing and will incur a \$500 fee for the one-year extension. In no circumstances will extensions be granted beyond ten years after beginning the program.

The project will be submitted in the written form required by the “Standards for Papers” section included in the *RPTS Student Handbook*, which can be found in your Moodle account. Students should consult the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian’s *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* and use “Chicago Style” citation (footnotes and bibliography). Student projects must be professionally copyedited before submission on August 1. The project is to be a minimum of 150 pages, double-spaced. Two print copies should be submitted to the Director, as well as an electronic copy via email in PDF format.

## EVALUATION AND REVISION

Once the project has been submitted, the advisor will provide an initial evaluation by October 1. He may judge the project to be acceptable as submitted, but ordinarily, a student may expect to go through at least one round of revisions. Once initial revisions have been made, the project will be assigned to a Faculty reader. Both the advisor and reader will complete a comprehensive review by December 31, and the student will have opportunity to make further revisions, if necessary. When both the advisor and the reader judge the project to be acceptable, an oral exam will be scheduled.

However, the advisor and reader may judge a project to be unacceptable. In such a case, the student will be dismissed from the program unless that student, upon notification of the judgment of the Faculty readers, requests a one-year extension to rewrite and resubmit the project. There will be a \$500 fee for the extension and resubmission. A resubmitted project judged by the Faculty readers to be unacceptable will result in the student being dismissed from the program.

## ORAL EXAM

The oral exam is the formal step of evaluation of the DMin project. A student whose project is judged acceptable will be expected to schedule an on-campus time before February 28 for the oral exam. In some circumstances, this exam may take place through an electronic medium. The oral exam will be a more comprehensive look at the whole project by the advisor and reader, and could result in additional revisions to the project before official approval.

The student will be asked to make a brief presentation of the project

before the advisor, reader, and any other Faculty or students desiring to be present. The advisor and reader will ask clarifying questions, make further corrections, and encourage discussion. Following the oral exam, the student will be dismissed and the readers will vote to sustain the project, sustain with minor revisions, or delay sustaining until major revisions have been made. In order to graduate in May, any revisions must be completed and approved by April 15. Upon final project approval, the candidate will have successfully completed the program and be eligible to receive the degree of Doctor of Ministry.

Upon final approval, the revised and completed project, accompanied by a 350-word abstract and the approval sheet signed by the Director and second reader, must be sent to the Administrative Assistant in PDF format by April 15. The completed and approved project will be catalogued by the Library of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary into the OCLC database and will be made available through the Theological Research Exchange Network (TREN) for the benefit of future pastors and scholars. A final, double-sided hardcopy must also be submitted for binding and inclusion in the RPTS Library.

After a sigh of relief and graduation, the final and ongoing stage of your project now begins: the prayerful and diligent application of it to the people of God, for their good and His glory.

## PROJECT STANDARDS

The standards for projects shall be as follows:

- The project shall be presented in the form and of the minimum page length as specified in the *Doctor of Ministry Program Handbook*.

- The project shall be written in understandable and customary English prose with the use of customary citation formula and notation formula (footnotes, endnotes, bibliography) as specified in the *RPTS Student Handbook*.
- The project shall demonstrate a competent understanding of the original source material that is the basis for the project, either original language Biblical texts or original source theological texts.
- The project shall demonstrate competency in the subject matter of the project.
- The project shall demonstrate appropriate theological reflection of the issues raised in the project.
- The project shall demonstrate a broad familiarity with the secondary literature of the subject matter of the project.
- The project shall be argued with competency, cogency, and without dependence on logical fallacies.
- The project shall present applicable material for the practice of pastoral ministry.

## TUITION COSTS

The current tuition cost is \$1200 per course, due the first day of class. The project fee is equal to twice the cost of the course tuition at the time the students are registered for their projects. Students will be registered and billed for their project on August 15 one year after the final class attended. Payment will be due at that time.

## ADDITIONAL FEES

There is a \$35 application fee, with an additional late application fee of \$100 for applications received between December 1 and January 1. Once accepted into the program, the student will pay a \$100 non-refundable deposit which is credited to the student's account

upon matriculation. There are no other additional fees beyond the tuition costs, except for the following:

The project is ordinarily to be submitted within six years of beginning the program. A student with extenuating circumstances who is unable to submit the project within the required timeframe, may petition for a one-year extension by sending an email to the Director with details describing the reasons for the request. If, after consideration, permission is granted for an extension, the student will be notified in writing and will incur a \$500 fee for the one-year extension. In no circumstances will extensions be granted beyond ten years after beginning the program.

Students will also be responsible for a graduation fee which will cover their hood, diploma, and invitations. Additional regalia fees will vary based upon student selections. Check with the RPTS office for fee amounts and regalia pricing.

Graduates of the DMin program may audit additional DMin courses for \$99 per course. As a service to the church, qualified applicants who desire educational enrichment without pursuing a DMin degree may audit courses at half the regular tuition cost. Such individuals must still apply and be accepted into the program as an auditor.

## REGISTRATION AND COURSE INFORMATION

Course registration is open each year from February 1-14 through our student web portal (<https://rpts.empower-xl.com/fusebox.cfm>). Course syllabi and other materials will be available through Moodle (<https://moodle.rpts.edu/>) on February 15 for each course in which a student is registered.



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**RPTS**  
STUDY UNDER PASTORS