

SASKATOON THEOLOGICAL UNION

Doctor of Ministry Degree

with a focus on

Rural Ministry and Community Development

**Manual
of
Policies and Procedures
2011**



Accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS)
in the United States and Canada

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WELCOME!

. . . to the Doctor of Ministry Program at the Saskatoon Theological Union! We celebrate your interest in life-long learning in a collaborative mode.

The Doctor of Ministry program is designed as a professional degree. It is intended to sharpen your skills and build ministry capacity in your site while allowing you to learn in context. It is offered in a distance-education, cohort-based format for those who desire to complete a graduate degree without having to relocate, and to do so with a group of committed colleagues.

This handbook is provided to inform you of program policies and procedures, to answer important questions concerning the program, and to guide you towards completion of your work. Please keep it at hand for ready reference. In addition to the materials in this handbook, the faculty and staff of the seminaries of the Saskatoon Theological Union are available to provide personal guidance and respond to your questions. Please do not hesitate to call or write as you have need. Thank you for being part of this endeavor. May God powerfully bless you and your people as you grow together in this process.

The Rev. Dr. Gordon Jensen
DMin Committee Chairperson
Saskatoon Theological Union

The Rev. Dr. Don Schweitzer
Graduate Studies Council Chair
Saskatoon Theological Union

PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAM

Purpose

This program provides ministry professionals with interdisciplinary tools to help congregations and other faith-based organizations engage their communities more effectively, bringing their gifts into stronger partnership with community groups and institutions. The program is cohort-based, distance-format, and deeply engaged with students' ministry context. Although town and country-focused, the tools it offers have transcontextual application and interest.

Expected Outcomes

Students who complete this program will have the following skills and abilities:

- An ability to analyze community and congregational cultures and provide leadership in building ecumenical and social partnerships to strengthen and develop those cultures.
- An ability to reflect theologically on the role of small and rural churches in the community-building mission of God;
- An expanded set of biblical, theological, spiritual and pastoral resources for ecumenical ministry in rural or marginalized settings.

OVERSIGHT OF THE DMIN PROGRAM

The Schools

The DMin program is a creation of the three member schools of the Saskatoon Theological Union: The College of Emmanuel and St. Chad, Lutheran Theological Seminary, and St. Andrew's College. These seminaries have worked together to offer graduate theological education for over 40 years. While the programs are jointly administered, students enroll in the school of their choice, which also grants the degrees.

The DMin Committee of the Graduate Studies Council of the STU

General oversight of all graduate programs is vested in the Graduate Studies Council (GSC) which consists of all faculty members in the Saskatoon Theological Union. Hands-on oversight of the DMin program specifically is carried out by the DMin Committee, which is appointed by the Graduate Studies Council of the STU.

In cases where a student has a conflict with a professor that they are not able to resolve directly with the professor, the Chair of the DMin Committee will help to mediate a resolution, in consultation with the student's Program Advisor.

Program Advisers

Each student will be assigned a Program Adviser who will supervise all aspects of a student's program and advise the student as he or she moves through the first phases of the program. The Program Adviser is appointed by the DMin Committee after consultation with the student. The appointment does not have to be made at the time of admission, but should be made before the second course is taken. The Program Adviser might be chosen with a view to that person becoming the Project Adviser, but this is not necessary.

The responsibilities of the Program Advisor are to:

- be available for consultation regarding the student's program, and decisions regarding course choices or deviations from the regular program.
- advise the DMin committee when the student is ready to proceed to the choosing of a Project Advisor.

Project Advisor

By the end of the first year of their program the student, having made some determination of the desired project area, consults with and identifies a faculty member prepared to serve as Project Advisor. This may be the student's Program Advisor but not necessarily so.

The student informs the Program advisor of his or her intent to request a Project Advisor. When the Program Advisor has determined that the student is ready to proceed to the preparation of a project proposal, the Program Advisor asks the DMin Committee that a Project Advisor be appointed. The DMin Committee then appoints the Project Advisor.

It is the responsibility of the Project Advisor:

- To supervise the student in carrying out and writing up the project with their ministry team. This will include:
 - overseeing the student's relationship with their ministry site
 - ensuring conformity to the approved project proposal
 - ensuring conformity to the writing standards for the project's final report. Those standards should be identified in the proposal, normally using one of the accepted style manuals (eg. Chicago, Turabian, etc).
 - determining that the project's central goals meaningful for the ministry site and make a substantial contribution to the field of inquiry.
 - To inform the Director when the student is prepared for the oral presentation of their project report.
- To ensure after the presentation of the project report that any corrections required by the examiners are made prior to its deposit in the library.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The schools of the Saskatoon Theological Union do not discriminate on the basis of race, religious denomination, gender, age, class, sexual orientation or national/ethnic origin in the administration of any of the policies of the DMin program, including admissions, educational programs, and financial aid. Reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the handicaps of students who meet the admission requirements.

The STU schools do not tolerate sexual or other forms of harassment. DMin students are responsible to know and abide by the particular harassment policies and procedures of the college or seminary in which they are registered.

ADMISSION TO THE DMIN PROGRAM

Admission Requirements

Students must possess an MDiv or MTS degree, or their equivalents as defined by their school of registration.

A minimum Grade Point Average of 75 per cent (or its equivalent) in the above degrees is required.

Students will normally have the equivalent of three years of active ministry subsequent to the completion of their MDiv/MTS degree (or equivalents) and will be located in a ministry site suitable for carrying out a collaborative ministry project.

Foreign equivalences

Since methods of recording grades and conferring degrees differ from country to country, foreign students wishing to enter the DMin program must write to the Registrar of the STU school in which they want to enroll, submitting details of their academic careers. This report should include transcripts of academic work and copies of any degrees or diplomas held, together with some information about the institutions granting the degrees. Applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate English fluency as determined by a TOEFL IBT score (including the speaking component) of 88 with no component less than 20. Test scores should be forwarded directly to the Registrar of the appropriate college.

Qualifying work

If there is a question about whether candidates have the prerequisites needed for the program, candidates may be required to complete qualifying work prior to formal admittance, at the discretion of the DMin Committee.

Application Procedures

Applications for admission can be made to any of the three schools in the Saskatoon Theological Union. Application forms may be obtained from any of the Registrars.

Applications are received by the Registrar and then forwarded to the Chair of the DMin Committee.

After reviewing the application, the Chair of the DMin Committee forwards it, with any pertinent comment(s) to the DMin Committee with recommendation(s). The Committee rules on the application and communicates its decision to the school of registration, with a copy of the recommendation sent to the GSC chair. The school where the applicant applied will then notify the applicant of its own decision and (if the decision is positive) enrolls the applicant in the program.

Applications for the DMin must be received by their school of registration at least three months in advance of the formation of a new cohort. Normally new cohorts begin in June.

DMIN PROGRAM DESIGN

The DMin with a concentration in Rural Ministry and Community Development is primarily targeted towards ministers of all denominations in Western Canada in a town or country setting who are interested in a rigorous program of interdisciplinary theological study aimed at helping them to lead their ministry sites in a more effective engagement with their communities.

The DMin program has three chief components:

- (1) colloquia,
- (2) courses of instruction, and
- (3) a project in ministry planned, carried out and written up as a final report in collaboration with a team in the ministry site and presented to an evaluation committee.

Colloquia

The colloquia are opportunities for cohort-building and sharing of learning among cohort members, and counts as 4 credit hours towards the DMin degree.

Colloquium 1 is a ten hour, in-residence orientation to the DMin program. To avoid additional travel it may be held in conjunction with the initial DMin Foundations in Rural Ministry and Community Development course. Students are introduced to the STU faculty, to each other and to the program. The intent is to build cohort cohesion and to begin work on students' DMin learning plans.

Colloquium 2 will be held in distance format using a video-conferencing website. For this colloquium students will need access to a high-speed internet connection and a computer with webcam and earphones. The colloquium will focus on topics of the cohort's choosing under the direction of a professor. They will involve some preparatory reading and email sharing of ideas, together with about 4 hours of on-line discussion.

Colloquium 3, the final colloquium, is dedicated to sharing project ideas and firming up project proposals.

Coursework

20 credit hours of coursework are required. For the DMin program with a concentration on Rural Ministry and Community Development the following courses are mandatory:

- Foundations for Rural Ministry & Community Development (3 cr)
- Assessment Tools for Rural Community Analysis (3 cr)
- Biblical, Theological and Historical Sources (3 cr)
- Qualitative Research Methods in Rural Settings (2 cr)
- Capstone Course (3 cr)

In addition, each student will choose two electives from among courses offered at the DMin level and appropriate to his or her learning plan. With approval by the student's Program Director, the student may transfer in as electives up to six credit hours from appropriate graduate courses in other accredited institutions.

The courses will be 5-day intensives, taught by STU and qualified outside faculty from the University of Saskatchewan and other schools. The Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry – “CiRCLe M” may also provide recommendations for qualified faculty. The courses will normally be taught on the campuses of the STU though transfer courses, and one of the STU courses may be offered at another location that would be suitable for learning and cohort access.

Each course has three components:

- 1) ***Pre-class preparation.*** This may involve substantial reading and other assignments chosen by the professor. Syllabi will be made available to students via the postal service and/or email approximately ninety (90) days prior to the week on campus so the student will have sufficient time to order the required textbooks and complete all reading and/or assignments.
- 2) ***Class time.*** This will be a five (5)-day interactive teaching module on campus or on a site chosen by the DMin Committee. One module per program may be taught through video conferencing.
- 3) ***Post-class work.*** This will involve an integrative ministry and/or writing project which draws from assigned readings, classroom presentations and interaction, as well as additional research. Post-class assignments are due ninety (90) days from the arrival of the syllabus, or sixty (60) days from the final day of the class component, whichever is later.

Project in Ministry

The Project, Final Report and Public Presentation of the Final Report count as 6 credit hours toward the DMin degree. Prior to requesting admission, and throughout the first half of the DMin program, students work with their ministry sites (including community members) to identify an area in which a collaborative community-building project might be carried out. This project will be led by a ministry team, chaired by the DMin student, who is responsible for the initial recruitment and training of the team. Instruction in how to form a ministry team is given in Colloquium 1. However, prior to that, as part of their admission documents, *the student must give written evidence that the ministry site has given permission for, and is invested in, the DMin program.* See “Application for Admission to Saskatoon Theological Union Graduate Studies Programs.”

By the end of the fourth course students will have worked with their ministry team to select a community-building issue to research and act on. A proposal for the project will be written up by the student in collaboration with the ministry team. See “Preparing a Proposal for a DMin Project and Final Report.”

In its final form, the project involves systematic research and action around a significant issue in the community in which one's ministry is located. It will be written up in the form of a final report, using input from, and language that is accessible to, the ministry team that coordinated the project. In the final report the student and ministry team will seek to integrate the theory, theology and experience of ministry as a community-building practice as it is revealed in their project.

Duration of the Program

The duration of the program may 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. The responsibility for identifying all requirements and for meeting them within the appointed time frames rests with the student.

The program shall normally be completed in three years. If a student has not completed the program after three years, he or she may make a written request to the DMin Committee for an extension of one year. A maximum of two one-year extensions will be granted in a student's program. The purpose of this 'five year window' maximum is to help keep the cohort together, to ensure that obtained knowledge is reasonably current at the time the degree is conferred and to assure progress in the program. The start of the program is considered to be the date of the first course/colloquium taken by the admitted student. If the student does not take a course/colloquium (normally Colloquium 1) within one year of their acceptance into the program, they may be asked to resubmit or refresh application materials.

Active Status

Students will be charged a program fee each year that they are involved in active, credit-bearing work to a maximum of three years. This fee covers the cost of the program advisor, Project Advisor and Chair of the DMin Committee, including administrative time. In years when no work is being done for credit, or when the three years of program fees have been paid, the student will be charged a continuation fee. Students are responsible to inform their registrar when credit-bearing work is being pursued (even if it is for transfer credit at another institution) so that fees can be properly assessed. If a student's status changes partway through a year, fees may be adjusted accordingly. See school of registration current calendar under "DMin Fees."

Timeline

The following chart outlines the normal course of events and responsibilities over a model 3-year DMin program, assuming that the student has already been fully admitted. Years begin and end in May or June.

| | YEAR ONE | YEAR TWO | YEAR THREE |
|-------------------|--|---|---|
| JUNE | - <i>Colloquium 1</i> (at STU) 1 credit -Foundations Course - choose program advisor | - Course in Qualitative Research Methods (2 credits). | Project proposals approved |
| SUMMER | - Finish course assignments, including learning plan - Build ministry team in site | - <i>Colloquium 2</i> (1 credit) - In site ministry team begins to develop initial plans for project. - contact potential funders re: funding possibilities for project. | Project begins |
| OCT or NOV | Required Course (3 credits) | - Elective Course (or summer; 3 credits) - request submitted for Project Advisor. | - Project concludes, final report writing begins - Capstone Course (3 credits) |
| JAN | Required Course (3 credits) | - <i>Colloquium 3</i> (re: project proposals-at STU) 2 credits - Prepare and submit Project Proposal to DMin Committee with Project Advisor's approval - Project Advisor appointed. | - Completion and submission of first draft of final report to Project Advisor. |
| MAR/APR | Finish Jan course assignments | | - Project Advisor approves final draft of final report for defence. - presentation of final report |
| MAY | | - Elective Course (3 credits) | CONVOCATION |

For exact dates refer to the yearly academic calendar of the school of registration.

Project Proposal and Final Report

The Project Proposal should be submitted according to the instructions in “Preparing a Proposal for a DMin Project and Final Report” and the “DMin Proposal Form”

The Final report itself must be printed in a letter-quality style. It is to be submitted in the following format:

15,000-25,000 words (70-100 pages plus Bibliography) including a title page and 200-word abstract. The final report should conform to one of the standard style guides in its recent edition (eg. K. L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; W. G. Campbell and S. V. Ballou, *Form and Style*; *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*). Whichever of these authorities is chosen, the student shall ensure that the rules are applied consistently throughout the final report.

Presentation of the Final Project Report

When the Project Adviser has determined that the report is ready, he or she will inform the Chair of the DMin Committee, who will arrange for an oral presentation of the project after first determining that all other requirements have been met. The Chair of the DMin Committee shall normally preside at the presentation.

The evaluation committee shall consist of the Project Adviser and at least two other faculty members. At least one of these must be from the STU. The other person will be from outside the STU with an earned doctorate. This external evaluator may be from a non-theological discipline, as long as this discipline is relevant to the project being evaluated.

At the end of the presentation, the evaluation committee shall make a decision concerning the acceptability of the final report and presentation, and assign one of the following:

- Acceptable with distinction. This grade reflects a project report and presentation of exceptional quality that makes a very significant contribution to the practice of ministry.
- Acceptable
- Not Acceptable without Major Revisions and a subsequent presentation
- Not Acceptable

If the evaluation committee decides that the final report and/or presentation is not acceptable, the candidate may request the DMin Committee to approve the resubmission of an appropriately revised report and/or a second presentation. In considering such a request, the DMin Committee shall take into account the reasons for the candidate's failure in the initial report and/or presentation, any remedial work undertaken by the candidate, and the opinion of the Project Adviser. A subsequent report or revised presentation may not be submitted sooner than four months and not later than twelve months after the first presentation. In case of conflict with the absolute time limits for the completion of the program, the limits can be extended to accommodate a revised report and/or a second presentation. A candidate who is unsuccessful a second time shall be judged to have failed the program.

Project Report Revisions and Binding

If the evaluation committee assigns a passing grade to the project report and presentation, it shall be the responsibility of the Chair of the DMin Committee to present this recommendation to the Graduate Studies Council for ratification, and to inform the Registrar of the school in which the student is enrolled that all requirements have been met.

If the evaluation committee stipulates any corrections or alterations of the Project Report, it shall be the responsibility of the Project Adviser to certify to the Chair of the DMin Committee before the recommendation goes forward to the Graduate Studies Council, that such corrections or alterations have been made.

The student must finally submit to the school of registration a professionally bound copy of the project report in its approved form, including the abstract and bearing the signatures of each of the members of the evaluation committee. A receipt from the bindery indicating that two bound copies have been ordered will be sufficient for graduation.

Grades and Appeals

The minimum passing grade for a course is 70 per cent. Classes for which a student has been assigned a grade lower than 70 per cent must be repeated or the student must offer a substitute.

A student who is not satisfied with a grade assigned in a course should speak with the professor and seek to find a satisfactory solution. If such a solution is not found, the student may submit a written statement giving the grounds of the appeal, together with the relevant papers, to the Chair of the DMin Committee. The Chair of the DMin Committee shall appoint a committee, in consultation with the faculty of the school in which the student is registered, to review the matter. The decision of the committee shall be final.

Other Policies and Procedures

Students are expected to abide by all policies governing the institutions in which they are registered (eg. fee payment schedules, academic dishonesty, etc).

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Libraries Of The Saskatoon Theological Union

There are four libraries in the Saskatoon Theological Libraries system: St. Andrew's College Library, the College of Emmanuel & St. Chad Library (located on the lower floor, LTS), the Otto Olson Memorial Library of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Horizon College & Seminary (located on 8th Street). Please register for your library card at the Library where you register as a student, but feel free to use it at any STU library.

STU Libraries share information, policies and collection management, but hours and practices may vary. Please be sure to check with the library you are using.

Reference Services:

The LTS Library provides full reference services. Whether you need help finding a book or more in-depth training or assistance, Library staff are here to help you. STU Libraries Orientation is held at the beginning of the academic year, and additional tours and training sessions can be arranged at any time.

STU Libraries Website:

You can find complete descriptions of services and policies as well as catalogue and database access and useful links on the STU Libraries website at <http://reindex.net/STU> .

For Borrowing procedures and policies see the colleges' student handbooks.

Online Databases:

Online databases are electronic indexes to journals. They enable you to locate and retrieve articles through the Internet. A database may be multidisciplinary, like Wilson FirstSearch, or focused on a particular subject, like Religion and Philosophy Collection. A database may contain full text articles and/or citations/abstracts. Saskatoon Theological Union Libraries subscribe to the following subject-specific online databases:

- Religion and Philosophy Collection (citation and full text)
- Religious and Theological Abstracts (abstract)

STU Libraries also subscribe to the following general academic databases:

- ArticleFirst
- ECO (Electronic Collections Online)
- ERIC
- Ebooks
- MEDLINE
- WilsonSelectPlus_Full Text
- WorldCat
- WorldCat Dissertations

Access to these databases is available with STU student login through the STU Libraries site. Please check with Library staff for more information. As an STU student you are entitled to borrowing privileges and to use some of the databases subscribed to by the University of Saskatchewan Library. Please check with Library staff for more information.

Interlibrary Loans:

If there is a book or article that you would like to read but you can't find in a Saskatoon library, you may be able to request it through U of S Library Interlibrary Loans or through the LTS Library. Please check with LTS Library staff for more information, and note that a fee may apply.

OTHER RESOURCES

There is a large collection of research institutes available at the University of Saskatchewan focused on resource extraction and the effect on rural communities, on public health and rural sociology.

The STU created the Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry (CiRCLe M) to provide support for rural ministry and community development among churches in Canada. It has also provided administrative support to help get the DMin program started. Students have access to the on-line and mail-out resource centre of CiRCLe M.

Augustana campus of the University of Alberta's community development program

Theology professors in the STU, U of S, Horizon, Briercrest, St Thomas More.