

Doctor of Ministry

The Doctor of Ministry program is designed to enable participants to attain excellence in the practice of ministry. The program provides persons actively engaged in professional ministry the opportunity to develop further the attitudes, skills, and knowledge essential to their ministry. The D.Min. program stresses the relationship between the practice of ministry and Biblical, historical and theological knowledge. The level of class work in the D.Min. program assumes that the applicant has the general knowledge acquired in a M.Div. program. The D.Min. program is not intended to prepare persons for graduate teaching. Applicants for admission should have the M.Div. degree or equivalent, as well as three years of ministerial experience subsequent to the first theological degree.

The degree should be completed within six years of matriculation. A student who experiences extenuating circumstances which prevent him/her from finishing in six years may petition the Advance Degrees Program committee to allow one or two additional years for completion. A continuance fee may be required.

Details of the current year's courses and lecturers may be found online at theology.sewanee.edu/academics/advanced-degree-program.

Graduation from the School of Theology follows the successful completion of all requirements for the specified program of study and the approval of the degree by the Senate of the University upon nomination by the faculty of the School of Theology.

A Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) student who has successfully completed all prescribed work and who has a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.00 is eligible for the award of the degree of Doctor of Ministry. Work toward the D.Min. degree is to be concluded within six consecutive years from the date of matriculation, unless the Advanced Degrees Program committee has allowed a seventh or eighth year.

Requirements for the Degree

Students admitted to the program must complete a minimum of thirty semester hours with a grade point average of 3.00 or higher. Six of the hours must be achieved in the form of a project, which will be defended orally.

The student, working with the director of the Advanced Degrees Program, will develop a program of study designed to accomplish his/her educational objectives. It is imperative that the program has integrity and coherence and not be simply the accumulation of credit hours.

Courses are designed to develop professional skills and to relate Biblical, historical, and theological materials to the practice of ministry.

Project

The student will be required to complete a substantial project for six credit hours. The project should have a professional focus and opportunities for reflection on professional development for the integration of academic learning experiences and one's own professional situation and for moving forward in one's understanding and practice of ministry. Some possible methodological approaches are:

- Action/reflection model—a presentation of the results growing out of some direct engagement within a context of ministry.
- Program model—a description of a program (educational, liturgical, homiletical, pastoral, etc.) designed by the student for his/her work, with assessment of results.
- Thesis or essay—a study of some topic related to the integration of one's academic work and professional focus.

The ministry project should demonstrate the candidate's ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, organize an effective research model, use appropriate resources, and evaluate the results. The project should reflect the candidate's depth of theological insight in relation to ministry.

Project and Candidacy

After the completion of twelve credit hours, the student will submit a written request for candidacy and the project proposal. In preparation for the project proposal and candidacy request, the student will discuss the general subject of the project with the program director. The director will work with the student to choose a supervisor for the project prior to the preparation of the proposal. The supervisor will be a member of the teaching faculty of the School of Theology, and will serve as first reader. Guidelines are provided for writing the project proposal and the project itself.

To be granted candidacy the student must have at least a 3.00 average in his/her degree work already completed, must have his/her project proposal approved, and must show progress made toward meeting his/her goal as stated in the application. The student will develop the project proposal with the guidance of his/her chosen supervisor, and following the supervisor's approval will present the proposal to the Advanced Degrees Programs committee. The Advanced Degrees Programs committee will review each student's candidacy request and project proposal and either approve them, ask the student to address concerns and resubmit, or reject candidacy.

Upon approval of a project, the committee will select, or approve the student's request of, the second reader. The committee will consider the project's subject and the potential reader's expertise, workload, and availability when selecting readers. The director will ask the faculty member(s) if they are willing to serve and notify the student upon agreement (The first reader is the advisor for the project.) Readers are normally faculty of the University. On occasion, an outside person with particular expertise in the project's subject may be contracted as a second reader. The student is responsible for obtaining this person's verbal agreement, and the director will follow up with the program guidelines and formal contract offer. The University requires a signed contract prior to beginning the work.

The normal paradigm is two classes each of four summers and registration for thesis hours after the fourth summer. A student may choose to finish sooner by registering for the thesis hours in January after the fourth summer in order to graduate in May of that year.

An oral defense covering the area of the project and major specialization is also required. This may be accomplished in person, by conference call, or Skype, as circumstances may demand.

Two final, library copies of the project (together with any supporting materials) are submitted to the assistant to the director of the Advanced Degrees Program for binding; final submission must take place by April 1 for graduation the following May. Formatting requirements are available from the assistant.

Concentrations

Doctor of Ministry in Preaching (D.Min.)

The D.Min. in preaching concentration is offered in response to a growing need for post-M.Div. study, instruction, and critical practice in preaching. No more than eight students will be accepted into the D.Min. in preaching track each year in order to assure adequate support for their course study and thesis project. While fulfilling requirements for the D.Min., students in the D.Min. in preaching track will be required to:

- complete a minimum of four ADP/Sewanee courses in homiletics; a course with a strong preaching component may be substituted with permission of the program director
- submit video or audio files of preached sermons throughout the year to the program director, and their cohort group, for discussion and critique
- write a thesis or complete a thesis project in homiletics. The process to be followed is identical to that of the general track D.Min.

A minimum of two courses in Biblical studies is recommended.

Doctor of Ministry in Liturgy (D.Min.)

The D.Min. in liturgy concentration builds on Sewanee's unique strengths in liturgical studies and is offered in response to a growing need for post-M.Div. study, instruction, and critical practice in liturgy. No more than ten students will be accepted into the D.Min. in liturgy track each year in order to assure adequate support for their course of study and thesis/project. While fulfilling requirements for the D.Min., students on this track will be required to:

- complete five ADP/Sewanee courses in liturgy, plus a sixth course in liturgy or a related field (eligible courses are designated in their course description; in certain cases, a relevant course in another discipline, without the designation, may be substituted with permission of the director of the Advanced Degrees Program).
- write a thesis or complete a thesis/project in liturgy. The process to be followed is identical to that of the general track D.Min.