

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 program stresses the relationship between the practice of ministry and Biblical, historical, and theological knowledge. The level of class work in the Doctor of Ministry program assumes that the applicant has the general knowledge acquired in a Master of Divinity program. The Doctor of Ministry program is not intended to prepare persons for college or university teaching. Applicants for admission should have the Master of Divinity degree or its 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. Students who experience extenuating circumstances that prevent them 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 summer courses and lecturers may be found at the Doctor of Ministry page (<https://theology.sewanee.edu/doctor-of-ministry/academics/this-summer-courses/>).

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 student who has successfully completed all prescribed work and has a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.67 is eligible to be awarded a Doctor of Ministry degree. Work toward the degree is to be concluded within six consecutive years from the date of matriculation, unless the Advanced Degrees Committee has allowed a seventh or eighth year. For the purposes of the summer term, two courses count as full-time enrollment. Courses offered in the online modality are not available for audit.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. The student demonstrates evidence of critical thinking and advanced theological integration in theological disciplines appropriate to ministry.
2. The student's final project enhances ministry skills or the practice of ministry, and has enhanced their own personal and spiritual maturity.

Requirements for the Degree

Students admitted to the program must complete a minimum of thirty semester hours with a grade point average of 2.67 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 their 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.

Additionally, a student must satisfy all financial obligations to the University. The University will neither confer a degree nor provide transcripts to any student or former student who has unsatisfied financial obligations to the University.

Project

The student will be required to complete a substantial project for six credit hours. The project should have a ministerial focus and provide 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 their 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 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 2.67 grade point average in their degree work already completed, must have their project proposal approved, and must show progress made toward meeting their goal as stated in the application. The student will develop the project proposal with the guidance of their chosen supervisor, and following the supervisor's approval will present the proposal to the Advanced Degrees Committee. The 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. A student may not register for project hours until the project proposal has been approved.

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. 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, but no formal agreement may be extended except by the Director.

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 video conference as circumstances may demand.

A final, library copy of the project (together with any supporting materials) is submitted to the Coordinator for Academic Affairs for binding; final submission must take place by April 1 for graduation the following May. Formatting requirements are available from the Coordinator.

Concentrations

Preaching

The Preaching concentration is offered in response to a growing need for post-Master of Divinity study, instruction, and critical practice in preaching. No more than eight students will be accepted into the Preaching concentration each year in order to assure adequate support for their courses of study and theses/projects. While fulfilling requirements for the Doctor of Ministry degree, students in the Preaching concentration will be required to:

- Complete a minimum of four Homiletics (HOML) courses in Sewanee's Advanced Degree Program; a course with a strong preaching component may be substituted with permission of the Director.
- Write a thesis or complete a project in homiletics. The process to be followed is identical to that of the Doctor of Ministry (General Track).

A minimum of two courses in Biblical Studies (BIBL) is recommended.

Liturgy

The Liturgy concentration builds on Sewanee's unique strengths in liturgical studies and is offered in response to a growing need for post-Master of Divinity study, instruction, and critical practice in liturgy. No more than ten students will be accepted into the Liturgy concentration each year in order to assure adequate support for their courses of study and theses/projects. While fulfilling requirements for the Doctor of Ministry degree, students in the Liturgy concentration will be required to:

- Complete a minimum of five Liturgics and Church Music (LTCM) courses in Sewanee's Advanced Degree Program, 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 project in liturgy. The process to be followed is identical to that of the Doctor of Ministry (General Track).