Doctor of Ministry Program
(Cordova Campus)

Description of the Doctor of Ministry Program (DMin)

The doctor of ministry degree is an advanced professional degree designed to enable students to practice ministry at a high level of competency. The program builds on the general theological preparation of the master of divinity, master of missiology or master of Christian education degrees and moves toward a concentration which combines theory and significant experience. The professional character of the degree is designed to prepare students to be effective in the practice of ministry rather than preparing for research and teaching vocations. There are three functional majors in the program: practical theology, missiology and Christian education. The practical theology major has three functional tracks: pastoral ministry, biblical counseling, and expository preaching. The missiology major includes two functional tracks, international missions, and North American missions.

The program of study integrates the classical disciplines of biblical, historical, theological, social, and linguistic studies with those significant tasks of one involved in the practice of ministry. It assists those whose responsibilities range broadly in pastoral, missionary, or administrative ministries by enhancing both competency and excellence in the practice of ministry.

Educational Objectives of the Doctor of Ministry Program

The doctor of ministry program is expected to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To enable participants to develop a theology of ministry which is responsive to both the leadership of God and the needs of the church, or ministry in which they serve;
2. To satisfy the demand for continuing education in ministry;
3. To renew the personal life of faith and servanthood of the participant;
4. To stimulate continued growth in biblical and theological foundations;
5. To develop skills that facilitate intellectual inquiry, creativity, and critical thinking;
6. To enable participants to communicate the truth of God's Word effectively with greater competency in the total practice of ministry;
7. To enable those serving in mission ministries to gain competence in the practice of mission ministries; and
8. To enable the participant to acquire a sensitivity for the needs of society, thus preparing the participant for excellence in ministry leadership in a complex and changing world.

Modified Cohort System of Study

A cohort system of study operates on the principle that groups of people who share a common goal or experience are better able to learn and to finish a course of study within a defined period. Building on that principle, the system of study employed by the DMin program at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary consists of a modified cohort system designed to take three years to finish, with a five-year maximum.

The modified cohort system will operate as follows. Prior to entry into the Program, every student must take Graduate Research & Writing (offered in January and June). Upon satisfactory completion of the course and all the prerequisites required for admission, the student will receive an acceptance letter and will begin seminar work in September of the same year. From that point on, the student will follow the prescribed curriculum according to one of three tracks, practical theology: pastoral ministry/biblical counseling/expository preaching, missions: North American/international, or Christian education.

Cohort System Advantages

By utilizing the modified cohort system various advantages accrue:

- Ensures interaction with teachers from various fields of study.
- Allows for interaction between students in various fields of study (core courses involve students from all three tracks).
- Serves to provide built in incentives for members to finish together.
- Promotes camaraderie and fellowship within the specialty cohort groups while still allowing for interaction with students in other tracks.
- Increased numbers in the seminars provides for a wider variety of inputs from the students, enhancing the learning environment.
- Both on-campus and online offerings for the international missions track provides flexibility and convenience for overseas students.

Admission Requirements and Procedure for the Doctor of Ministry Program

Undergraduate Degree Requirements

Applicants must have a bachelor of arts degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university. Any exception must be approved by the Doctor of Ministry Committee.
Seminary Degree Requirements

Applicants must have completed the master of divinity degree or its equivalent from an accredited institution. Other two-year master’s programs may be considered, but the applicant must complete the master of divinity required courses of the Seminary to enter the program. In such cases, the Seminary does not grant the master of divinity degree but establishes its equivalency. An applicant must have maintained an average of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 in his master of divinity or equivalent work.

Field Experience Requirements

Applicants must have two years of ministry experience. Any exception must be approved by the Doctor of Ministry Committee.

International Students

The DMin program does not fulfill the residential requirement of an F-1 Visa. Applicants from international seminaries offering the master of divinity or its equivalent may be admitted to the doctor of ministry program on the same basis as students from national seminaries, provided they score a minimum of six hundred on the paper-based TOEFL examination or one hundred on the internet-based TOEFL. Refer to Admission Procedure for International Students in this catalog.

The Procedure for Admission to the Doctor of Ministry Program

An applicant must complete all procedures and requirements for approval by the Seminary's Doctor of Ministry Committee. Applicants will receive notice of approval from the dean of the DMin program. The application must be complete and approved by May 1 to enter the program in the fall.

Applicants must perform satisfactorily on the Miller Analogies Test to demonstrate competency to function at the graduate level. The Miller Analogies Test can be taken at any of the regional testing centers. Evaluation of test results is consistent with the practice of similar educational institutions and is in conformity to performance scales published in the Miller Analogies Test Manual and corroborating research reports. The MABTS code number, 1750, must be used to report Miller Analogies Test Scores.

Essay

An applicant must submit a ten-page essay which includes the following components:

1. Three pages of autobiography;
2. One page giving a brief personality sketch;
3. Two pages describing the applicant's vocational experience and ministry intentions; and
4. Four pages relating to the applicant's personal view of Christian ministry.
The essay is to be written in accordance with *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed., by Kate Turabian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

**Conditional Admission**

An applicant may be admitted on a conditional basis for the first year of study in the doctoral program at the discretion of the Doctor of Ministry Committee. The dean of the DMin program will notify the applicant of the reasons for any conditional status, specify any requirements that must be fulfilled, and state any limitations to be imposed upon the projected seminar load. Students admitted conditionally are evaluated at the conclusion of the first year of study, and the Doctor of Ministry Committee governs the student's continuance in the program. Exceptions to the published admission requirements for the doctor of ministry program must be approved by the faculty.

**Time Limit for Approved Applicants**

Applicants for the doctor of ministry program who do not enroll in a seminar within one year from the date of approval must submit a new application to the program.

**Completion Requirements for the Doctor of Ministry Program**

**Completion Time and Continuous Enrollment**

The degree requires thirty-two semester hours of doctoral-level work above the master of divinity or its equivalent. The student must complete a two hour Graduate Research & Writing seminar, 6 four-semester hour seminars, plus the major project (six-semester hours of credit). The program is designed to be completed in three years with a five year maximum. Continuous enrollment is required.

Student will take three seminars (twelve-semester hours) during a twelve month period. A load of twelve semester hours per year is considered full-time status for loan verification or for Department of Veterans Affairs purposes.

**Doctor of Ministry Courses**

Each seminar in the doctor of ministry program has the following three components:

1. Preseminar reading of a minimum of two thousand pages from a seminar bibliography provided to the student at the time of preregistration;
2. A one-week intensive seminar; and
3. A postsession project which applies the theory of the reading and seminar sessions in the student's ministry setting.

**The Major Project**

In addition to the completion of 24 semester hours of seminar work, students must complete a major project. The major project is a supervised ministry project, which
may be done in a local church or ministry setting, or it may be a research project. Details are provided in the *Doctor of Ministry Handbook*.

The student will be advanced to candidacy status after the satisfactory completion of the comprehensive examinations, all academic course work, the approval of the prospectus for the major project, and the completion of any practical missions deficiencies. Students initiate the process of advancement by submitting the prospectus for the major project to the DMin office. The dean of the DMin program will give a formal notice of advancement to candidacy when all requirements have been satisfied and the Doctor of Ministry Committee has given approval.

**Comprehensive and Oral Examinations**

After the satisfactory completion of all seminars, the student will participate in written examinations. They will cover each of the seminars taken (reading, intensive session, post-seminar written paper). Details are provided in the *Doctor of Ministry Handbook*.

In addition, after the submission and completion of the ministry project or research project, the student must present and orally defend the project. The student should discuss the inception, justification, development, implementation, evaluation, and impact of their project. This professional and creative presentation is considered a major component in the overall grade of the project.

**Overview of the Doctor of Ministry Curriculum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Research &amp; Writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional Major (six seminars)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Project</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graduate Research & Writing**

A prospective doctor of ministry student must complete this course before beginning seminars in order to demonstrate proficiency in research and writing. Graduate Research & Writing will be taken in January or June prior to fall enrollment. Equivalent work from another recognized institution may be accepted in fulfillment of this requirement at the discretion of the Doctor of Ministry Committee.

*Graduate Research & Writing must be satisfactorily completed before other seminars are taken. Any exception must be approved by the dean of the program.*

**Cost of the Program**

Tuition and fees for the doctor of ministry program are covered in the Fees and Expenses section of the catalog and in the *Doctor of Ministry Handbook*.