

**MID-AMERICA** BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# 2025–2026 DOCTORAL PROGRAMS



# 2025–2026 **DOCTORAL PROGRAMS**



**Dr. Matthew R. Akers**

*Associate Dean of the Seminary*  
[makers@mabts.edu](mailto:makers@mabts.edu)

**Dr. Linda Mitchell**

*Director of Academic Services*  
[academicservicesdir@mabts.edu](mailto:academicservicesdir@mabts.edu)

**Doctoral Programs Committee**

2025–2026 Academic School Year

Dr. Matthew Akers, Associate Dean

Dr. John Babler

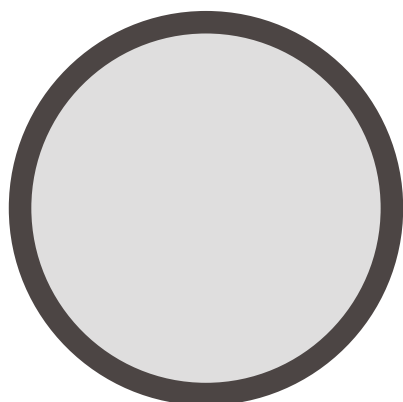
Dr. John Charping

Dr. Wayne Cornett

Dr. Mikey Mewborn

Dr. Michael Spradlin

Dr. Brad Thompson



**MID-AMERICA**  
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

2095 Appling Road  
Cordova, Tennessee 38016  
901-751-8453

**MABTS.EDU**

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION, ACCREDITATION, OUR PURPOSE .....4

PRACTICAL MISSIONS REQUIREMENTS.....6

**DOCTOR OF MINISTRY..... 7**

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM, EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES.....8

STUDENT STATUS, STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY, SYSTEM OF STUDY .....8

CURRICULUM: SEMINARS, MAJOR MINISTRY, PROJECT, COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS .....10

FEES .....17

HOLDS, CHANGE OF MINISTRY .....17

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY ..... 18**

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM, EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES.....19

TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED ..... 20

REGISTRATION .....21

TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETION, FIELDS OF STUDY, STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY.....21

CHANGES IN MINOR OR MAJOR FIELDS, ASSIGNMENT OF ADVISOR ..... 22

COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS: LANGUAGES, COLLOQUIUM, PRACTICAL MINISTRY,  
SUPERVISED INSTRUCTION, SEMINARS, COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS ..... 22

CANDIDACY STATUS, INTENT TO GRADUATE ..... 26

ORAL DEFENSE, PROQUEST, GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT..... 29

TUITION AND FEES ..... 30

ACCEPTANCE SIGNATURE PAGE .....31

# DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to assist the doctoral student throughout his/her program of study. It contains information necessary to the administration of the program. All doctoral students are strongly encouraged to read each section of the handbook carefully.

## ACCREDITATION

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees. Mid-America also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website ([sacscoc.org](http://sacscoc.org)).

## OUR PURPOSE

The primary purpose of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary is to provide graduate theological training for effective service in church-related and missions vocations.

Mid-America attempts to guide students into a thorough understanding of the Bible and its relevance for today, preparing those who have been called by God to preach and teach the Word of God. Further preparation is offered through instruction in preaching, counseling, administration, and cross-cultural ministry. In addition, all graduate and doctoral students are required to participate in the Practical Missions program of the school and are encouraged to be involved in churches during their seminary days.

## HONOR CODE

Each Student Agrees:

- I understand and will support and follow the Honor Code.
- I will not personally use unauthorized materials, and I will not participate with others in cheating.
- I will not facilitate cheating, and if I become aware of violations of academic or moral integrity, I understand that I have a responsibility to the Seminary community and will at least say something to the student involved or discuss the situation with a professor or the appropriate dean.

Academic work is evaluated on the assumption and the expectation that the work presented is the student's own unless designated otherwise. Anything less is unacceptable and is considered academically dishonest. Collaboration, plagiarism, and cheating—all defined below—are considered forms of academic dishonesty, and students guilty of such are subject to disciplinary action.

- **Collaboration:** Submission of a paper that is paraphrased from, or identical to, another student's paper. A "paper" is defined as "any materials submitted by a student for credit in a course."
- **Plagiarism:** Submission of a paper in which substantial portions are paraphrased without documentation or are identical to published or unpublished material.
- **Cheating:** The improper use of books, notes, another student's tests, or other aids during an examination. It is the responsibility of the student to get approval for the use of such aids prior to the time of the examination, and without such approval, they will be considered improper. An "examination" is defined as "any testing situation in which the score will be used for credit in a course."

Failure on a student's part to live up to this Honor Code becomes the concern of the appropriate dean and faculty advisor. (It is assumed, however, that any matter of concern in this area between members of the Seminary community will first be dealt with according to the principles of Matthew 18:15–22.) All disciplinary matters are subject to review before a Student Disciplinary Committee. This committee is composed of the dean of women or the dean of men, as chairperson, the faculty advisor of the student in question, the president of the Student Council, and one other faculty member.

Due process in dealing with disciplinary problems is primarily for protecting the reputation of a student against false or unsupported accusations. The purpose of disciplinary action is always redemptive, with every effort made to help the student involved to gain insight into his or her own needs and motivations as a potential minister in Christian service. Where there is evidence of personality and character weaknesses that would make it unwise for a student to continue in preparation for the ministry, the student is given counsel to help him or her see that fact.

A student disciplinary committee will handle all cases referred to it by the appropriate dean and will be the appellate body for decisions made by the dean that are appealed by the student. The committee will handle any case involving the possible dismissal of a student; dismissal may only take place by action of the faculty. The student will receive a written statement of charges against him or her. He or she may be accompanied by a personal representative, may bring witnesses on his or her own behalf, and may choose not to answer any of the questions directed to him or her.

If either the student disciplinary committee or the student deems the advice of a lawyer necessary, such a person may give any advice he or she believes pertinent; he or she may not enter into the proceedings and/or deliberations of a student disciplinary committee.

Should the situation warrant it, the student may be given a warning, disciplinary probation, a required leave of absence, or dismissal. Appeal of any action of the Student Disciplinary Committee may be made to the faculty in writing. Further appeal may be made after the faculty's decision to the president of the Seminary. Such an appeal must be in writing, and a personal interview will be granted with the appeal.

If the student feels that he or she has witnessed a violation of the honor code, or if he or she has violated the honor code, take the following steps:

1. The student completes, signs, and delivers the Student Grievance Form to the director of Student Life, who will then contact the appropriate person(s) to attempt to establish a resolution to the grievance.

2. If the situation remains unresolved, the matter will be addressed by the Academics office, who will attempt to establish a resolution to the grievance. The student may request that a student council representative or another faculty member attend the meeting as well.
3. The Academics office will make a final decision concerning the grievance.

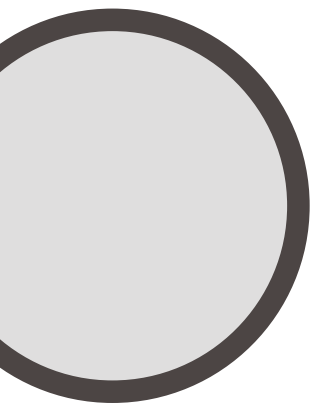
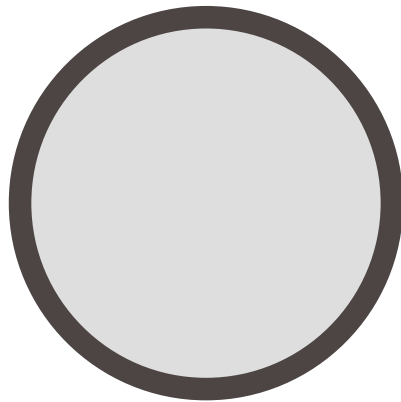
## **PRACTICAL MISSIONS REQUIREMENTS**

All students are required to remain current in their Practical Missions requirements. No academic credit is given for seminar work during any semester the student fails to complete this requirement. Residential students must receive permission from Student Life to watch Chapel online. Online students must watch Chapel online; there are no exemptions for Chapel. Regardless of permission to be an online participant in Chapel, the student must submit Practical Missions reports to the Practical Missions office through the form provided at the end of each semester.

Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Ministry students are classified as full-time students during all phases of the PhD/DMIN program. Students must complete two hours of practical missions per week and witness to an average of at least one person per week during each semester. They must attend Chapel either online or residentially. No more than six absences are allowed during the semester. Students who live a distance from the seminary will be expected to watch the Report Hour podcast available on the MABTS website; students must attend or view at least 24 report hours in a semester.

Students working on dissertations do not have to be on campus and do not have to petition the Doctoral Committee for permission to be absent from report times. Practical Mission assignments must still be reported to the Student Life office. Failure to remain current will result in action from the PhD Committee and possible dismissal from the program.

# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY



# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

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 degree and moves toward a concentration that 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.

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. Six Doctor of Ministry specializations are offered: Biblical Counseling, Christian Education, Church Revitalization, Expository Preaching, Missions, and Pastoral Ministry.

## EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. To enable participants to develop a theology of ministry that is responsive to the leadership of God and the needs of the church or ministry in which he serves;
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 on 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 participants for excellence in ministry leadership in a complex and changing world.

## STUDENT STATUS

All admission requirements to Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary and to the Doctor of Ministry program must be met prior to enrollment in any course in the Doctor of Ministry program. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the Associate Dean of Doctoral Programs and the Doctoral Programs Committee.

A credit student is one who has been accepted into the program by the Doctoral Programs Committee or is currently enrolled in a Doctor of Ministry program at another institution and is seeking to fulfill degree requirements. The charge is \$1,647.50 per semester. The student must go through the admissions office and complete the registration process.



## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

To demonstrate competence in self-supervision, the Doctor of Ministry student shall be solely responsible for meeting deadlines and completing assignments. The student must maintain continuous enrollment throughout the program and is responsible for registration each semester.

The student is also solely responsible for selecting, proposing, conducting, and reporting on the major ministry project. In this process, the candidate may seek counsel from any source, but he or she **MUST** work with his or her advisor chapterby- chapter throughout the process before submitting the final project to the committee for consideration.

## **SYSTEM OF STUDY**

The system of study employed by the Doctor of Ministry Program at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary is designed to take three years to finish.

The system will operate as follows: Upon satisfactory completion of all the prerequisites required for admission, students will receive notification of their acceptance and will normally begin seminar work in the next available semester. From that point on, students will follow the prescribed curriculum according to one of the six Doctor of Ministry specializations: biblical counseling, Christian education, church revitalization, expository preaching, missions, or pastoral ministry.

# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY CURRICULUM



## DOCTOR OF MINISTRY SEMINARS

All seminars are four credit hours.

### DOCTORAL CORE (12 HOURS)

The following doctoral core seminars are required for all concentrations except Biblical Counseling (an additional counseling course is offered instead of Leadership Development): Doctoral Research and Writing, Relationships/Spiritual Formation, and Leadership Development.

### DOCTORAL CONCENTRATION (12 HOURS)

The student will take 3 seminars (12 hours) in his or her chosen concentration. The following concentrations are available for study: Biblical Counseling, Christian Education, Church Revitalization, Expository Preaching, Missions, and Pastoral Ministry. The required courses for each concentration are listed in the MABTSCatalog.

## SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS

Each seminar has the following three components:

- A reading assignment must be completed prior to the end of the seminar. A minimum of 2,000 pages must be read and can be used for the seminar paper research. The professor has the discretion with flexibility when the reading is done. Every student must submit reading reports; these reading reports are required. At the discretion of the instructor, a pre-session assignment may be required. This information will be contained in the seminar syllabus.
- A weekly, two-hour class meeting that lasts for a 16-week semester. The day and time may vary per class. Each seminar carries four semester hours of credit.
- A written paper is required in which the student makes an application of the reading or intensive session material to his ministry setting. The paper will follow *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition*, and the seminary form and style guide, which is based on Turabian's Ninth Edition. The length of the paper will be determined by the professor, but an average body of 25 to 40 double-spaced pages of material is expected. No grade will be given until this paper has been received and approved.

All work for any seminar must be completed before the student can attend another session. This includes the reading reports and the Practical Missions requirements. Any exception must be approved by the Associate Dean of Doctoral Programs.

Only coursework with a grade of B or above (3.0 on a scale of 4.0) will satisfy the requirements for this degree. If a student receives a B- in the course, the student need not retake the seminar but may be assigned remedial work by the professor that will, upon successful completion, bring the student's grade to a go (B).

If the student does not complete the work necessary by the appointed time or the extended deadlines, a grade of F will be assigned to his permanent record. No credit hours will be granted for that seminar. The student will be placed on academic probation. If two F's appear on a student's transcript for this or any other reason, the student will be terminated from the program.

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

After the satisfactory completion of all seminars, students will participate in written comprehensive examinations. They will cover each of the seminars taken. Examinations will be scheduled with the Doctoral programs office at a mutually convenient time during the year the student finishes his or her final seminar. Students must pass at least three of these examinations on the first attempt. In cases of failure, students may retake a maximum of three of the examinations. If a second attempt is failed, the student must retake the seminar.

## **ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY**

The student will be advanced to candidacy status after the satisfactory completion of the comprehensive exams, all academic course work, the approval of the prospectus for the Major Project, and the completion of any Practical Missions deficiencies.

The student must initiate the process of advancement by submitting the prospectus for the major ministry project through the Doctoral Programs Office. The student will advance to candidacy after approval of the prospectus, if all requirements have been satisfied.

## **MAJOR MINISTRY PROJECT (6 HOURS)**

In addition to the completion of 24 semester hours of doctoral-level seminars, each student must complete a project in the form of a paper studying either a ministry or a research topic. This project counts as six semester hours of credit. The timespan for the project is normally four to twelve months.

## **THE FORM OF THE PROJECT**

- The project must completely conform to the latest Turabian style guide and the MABTS supplement to the style guide.
- The project should display competence in communication, including correct grammar, spelling, form, clear organization, and understandable sentences.
- The student should use the third person singular in writing the project.
- The project should be between 100 and 150 pages in length, excluding the appendixes and sources consulted.
- The order of the page arrangement for the project is: blank page, title page, blank page, table of contents, list of tables (if any), text, appendix, sources consulted (bibliography), and blank page. The blank pages are to be added after the project is in .pdf format.

- A project is acceptable if it contains 150 or fewer errors in form, style, grammar, and spelling. If errors number more than 150, advisors may return projects to students for correction. Students may then resubmit their project after correcting these errors. If advisors find more than 100 new errors or uncorrected errors in the second edition, the student cannot resubmit until the next graduation date.

## **OPTION A: MINISTRY REPORT**

### **Developing the Prospectus**

The idea for the project takes shape in the context of consultation with the assigned advisor and other faculty members.

Step 1. The project idea develops from self-examination, analysis of ministry needs, and consultation with the student's advisor.

Step 2. An eight- to ten-page rough draft of the prospectus is then presented for evaluation by the advisor. This prospectus should include the following:

- A rationale for the project, which identifies specific ministry needs to which the project relates, as well as the Doctor of Ministry coursework on which the project is based;
- A description of the ministry site in which the project will take place (Le. geographical location, cultural setting, church or ministry setting, the student's position or role, etc.);
- A design for the project, including the strategy and time schedule for implementation (ordinarily from three months to one year in length);
- An explicit strategy for congregational involvement in the project; and
- Criteria for evaluation of the project after its completion.

Step 3. After input from the advisor, the student refines the prospectus and submits it to the Doctoral Office for submission to the Doctoral Committee for approval. The student should consult the advisor for guidance and clarification during the entire process.

The student should submit one copy of the prospectus (with synopsis, bibliography, and table of contents) to the Doctoral Programs Office by August 15th (for May Graduation) or April 1st (for December graduation). The Committee will (a) approve the prospectus, (b) suggest changes, or (c) reject it and call for another prospectus. The student may be invited to meet with the committee to defend or discuss the prospectus. Written approval by the committee should follow within thirty (30) days.

### **The Content of the Prospectus**

**Introduction and subject.** The prospectus should begin with a brief introduction to the project and should include the following information: how the student became interested in the idea; the academic and ministry background that prepared the student for the project; and a synopsis of the project, including any definitions of terms.

**The rationale for the project.** The prospectus must describe the specific need(s) within the area of ministry with which the student will deal. The need should be significant, one which requires a creative approach in ministry. The causes and reasons for the need should be explained. What is the need to be met? What causes the need to exist? What is the problem?

**Ministry focus.** The prospectus should describe the setting, the needs, and the specific ministry situation that determines the nature of the project. Examples would be church growth; training of the laity for ministry; church renewal; evangelism; discipleship; youth outreach; pastoral care; marriage and family enrichment, etc.

**Objectives.** The prospectus should determine objectives based on the results expected at the conclusion of the project. The objectives should be defined in terms of the work that must be done to meet the need or resolve the problem. Include objectives regarding the development of personal skills in ministry. Objectives must be specific, measurable, and feasible. A prospectus that does not state specific, measurable, and feasible objectives will lead to a project that cannot be evaluated.

**A creative plan of ministry.** Describe the methods that will be employed to achieve objectives. Include a step-by-step chronological procedure and samples of surveys, report forms, tests and measurements, and other materials that will be used in the project. Describe the resources that are available for the performance of the project, such as special consultants, agencies, facilities, financial resources, institutions, and the like. Indicate expected obstacles or difficulties and how you propose to deal with them. What plan of ministry can achieve the objectives? What resources are available and how will they be used?

**Evaluation.** The prospectus must discuss the means by which the student will critically evaluate the extent to which he has achieved his objectives. Include samples of tests, measurements, survey forms, or questionnaires the student intends to use. How is the achievement of the objectives to be evaluated?

**Sources.** The prospectus should list the books and resources the student plans to use. The final project report must contain a minimum of 100 resources (books, journal articles, interviews, unpublished materials, etc.). The prospectus should contain at least 75 resources.

### **The Form of the Prospectus**

The prospectus should demonstrate the student's competence to communicate clearly, concisely, and in acceptable form. The style guides are *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition* and the seminary's form and style supplement. The prospectus should be no more than eight to ten pages long, excluding appendices and sources consulted. The order of the page arrangement is:

- First page: title page (the number does not appear on this page; see supplement)
- Second page: table of contents (see supplement)
- Third page: text (the first page of the text should be headed by Introduction with the page number at the top right corner).

### **Performance and Report of the Ministry Project**

The Ministry Project may be started only after committee approval for the prospectus has been received. When this occurs, the student is advanced to candidacy status. The usual time for the entire project is four months to one year. The final written report of the Ministry Project must be submitted according to the dates listed on the Submission Dates Calendar available on Canvas in the Doctoral Tool Kit.

When the performance of the project is completed, the written report of the project will be submitted to the Doctoral Programs Committee. Both the performance and the report must demonstrate a high level of professional competence.

### **The Content of the Project Report**

The report should be written in close consultation with the faculty advisor. His approval is necessary before the typing of the final draft of the report is begun. Prior to the first submission date, the faculty advisor will work with the student on a chapter-by-chapter basis. The report should contain:

- An introduction
  - A resume of the project idea as developed in the prospectus
  - A report of any preparation for the performance of the project which was made after writing the prospectus but before the beginning of the performance;
- A perceptive and competent reporting of the project performance in chronological sequence;
- A critical evaluation of the performance in relation to the objectives set forth in the prospectus. This should include:
  - Theological reflection i.e., a restatement of the theological themes which form the project in light of new insight which has come through critical reflection on the practice of ministry; and
  - Discussion of the extent to which the objectives were reached and of the project as experienced in ministry.
- A bibliography of sources consulted (a minimum of one hundred resources are required, and the report must interact with at least one-third of this number in footnotes); The report should be written in such a way that the nature of the project may be understood without reading the prospectus.

The report should be written in such a way that the nature of the project may be understood without reading the prospectus.

### **OPTION B: RESEARCH PROJECT**

Doctor of Ministry students who wish to write a research project as the final project for their program of study may elect this option by submitting a research project prospectus to the Doctoral Programs Committee.

#### **Characteristics of the Research Project**

- It is expected that the research project will make a contribution to the literature in the field of practical theology, ministry, or applied missiology, rather than focusing on a strategy and objectives for ministry in a more specific ministry setting.
- The Major Research Project shall be an original product of research and writing to fulfill the requirement of the Doctor of Ministry degree. It is directed by a faculty advisor who is assigned by the Doctoral Programs Committee .
- Three components are required in a research project: biblical/theological study, a survey of related literature, and research of other churches.
- **The advisor will provide evaluation and criticism on a work-in-progress basis. The student is responsible for following the direction of the advisor in the process. This means that the student will provide the advisor with chapter-by-chapter updates.**
- The research project is written in a style and content appropriate to an audience of ministry professionals while maintaining doctoral-level scholarship through the use of extensive research in relevant literature, field sources, and critical thinking. The research project shall be produced in strict adherence to the Seminary's form and style standards.

- As an exercise in advanced study in ministry, the research project will require significant research and an adequate bibliography beyond those books read for the Doctor of Ministry seminars .
- The typical length of a research project is 125-150 pages. The student should secure permission from the Doctoral Programs Committee if the project exceeds 200 pages.

### **Research Project Process**

- The project idea develops from self-examination, analysis of ministry needs, and consultation with the faculty advisor. The student should consult the faculty advisor for guidance and clarification during the entire process.
- The student then submits one copy of the prospectus (with synopsis, bibliography, and table of contents), to the office of the Doctor of Ministry program for processing by September 15th (for May graduation) or April 1st (for December graduation). Written approval by the Committee should follow within thirty (30) days .
- The Committee will (a) approve the prospectus, (b) suggest changes, or (c) reject it and call for another prospectus. The student may be invited to meet with the committee to defend or discuss his prospectus.

### **The Content of the Prospectus**

**Title Page and Table of Contents.** A prospectus has a title page and a table of contents.

**Rationale.** Begin with the rationale for the project. This should explain how the student became interested in the idea, the academic and ministry background that prepared the student for the project, and a synopsis of the research project including a definition of terms.

**Synopsis.** The synopsis should show the background for the study, a brief survey of other contributions to the subject, the statement of the problem, the issue, a description of the research, or program development. The method of research to be used should be explained. The question of what additional information will be added to the field of inquiry should be answered.

**Outline.** A detailed tentative outline must be presented. This outline should be prepared in close cooperation with the advisor. The tentative outline is an essential part of the prospectus.

**Bibliography.** Finally, a working bibliography must reveal sources already consulted. This will not be all the sources eventually used. It is tentative and subject to change.

Upon approval of the prospectus by the Doctoral Programs Committee, the student shall continue working closely with the faculty advisor throughout the process. Prior to the first submission date, the faculty advisor has the option to work with the student on a chapter-by-chapter basis. The student shall submit the research project to the faculty advisor on or before the date stipulated by the Doctor of Ministry program submission process guidelines. The faculty advisor will determine whether the research project meets academic standards. If the work is deemed adequate, he will return a corrected copy to the student.

The student will make corrections and resubmit the research project to the Doctoral Programs Committee, who will forward it to the external reader. The reader will assess the research project as to its content, form, and style. At any point, the work may be returned to the student for revisions or corrections, or the reader may recommend that the research project is not acceptable.

If the readers and the associate dean of the seminary all concur that the research project is acceptable in content, it will be returned to the student for final corrections and revisions.

After the report has been approved, the student will submit the project to the Academic Coordinator's Office. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the pages of the report are in proper order.

## **ORAL DEFENSE**

Upon completion of the Major Project, the student will participate in an oral examination. The oral examination will evaluate the following:

- The adequacy of the project as an undertaking contributing to Christian ministry;
- The degree of self-understanding and professional identity achieved by the student through the project; and
- The student's potential for professional competence in the practice of ministry.

The student discusses the inception, justification, development, implementation, evaluation, and impact of his project. This professional and creative presentation is considered a major component in the overall grade of the project. After passing, the student will submit the finished Project, with all final corrections and in the proper page order, to ProQuest.

If the student fails to perform satisfactorily either in the presentation or defense of the major project, with the consent of the Doctoral Programs Committee, he may have a second opportunity to submit an acceptable presentation or defense. In such a case the student may expect a delay in graduation.

Failure on the part of the student to follow the dates listed on the Submission Process Calendar could result in the postponement of the graduation until the next graduation service. The student must maintain continuous enrollment during his tenure in the program. If the project requires an extension beyond the fifth year, permission from the Doctoral Programs Committee will be required.

## **PUBLISHING THE PROJECT (USING PROQUEST)**

The report is the property of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. No report may be reproduced or substantially quoted except with specific permission from the faculty.

ETD Administrator (Pro Quest) is a site for students to submit their ETD (electronic thesis or dissertation) for publishing. Go to <https://www.etdadmin.com/main/home?siteId=1153>.

Double-check that the site has the Mid-America Logo in the upper right-hand corner. Select the "Sign In" box in the upper right-hand corner. Create an account. You will submit your dissertation (it should be in pdf format to do so). The step-by-step process instructions will be given to you at your oral examination; you can also contact the Doctoral Office for further guidance.

## **COMPLETION TIME**

The Doctor of Ministry degree is designed to be completed in three years, but students may choose to take longer to complete the program. Continuous enrollment is required.

## **GRADUATION**

Degrees are conferred in May at the regular graduation ceremonies of the seminary. Students who complete their degree in December will walk in the May Graduation ceremony.



# EXPENSES

The total tuition for the Doctor of Ministry degree is \$9,885.00. The total will increase if the student prolongs his course of study beyond three years. All payments will be accepted through NelNet or directly through Sonis.

Until graduation, continuous enrollment is required. The annual amount due for the current catalog \$3,295.00. For complete details regarding payments, please see the academic catalog or contact the Business Office.

Notes: The student is subject to Student Fees (\$250) each semester.

# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY FEES

Application fee	\$50	Non-refundable fee that includes filing and processing of transcripts and admissions materials
Student fee	\$250	Per semester; all students
External reader fee (payable to school)	\$250	
Graduation fee	\$150	Includes the rental of the academic gown, hood, and cap

# HOLDS

When deadlines for papers or projects are not met by a student, a hold is put on the student's academic file. The hold may affect the student's grade unless there are extenuating reasons for not finishing the work. The hold prevents the student from attending another session until the hold is removed (the late paper or project is submitted and the Practical Missions requirements are met). It is at the discretion of the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs and the professor of record to determine if there are extenuating reasons for the delay in meeting the deadline. A student who receives a hold has up to twelve months from the intensive session to complete the work. A student who needs an extension beyond the twelve months must submit a petition in writing to the Associate Dean of Doctoral Programs for distribution to the Doctoral Programs Committee for approval.

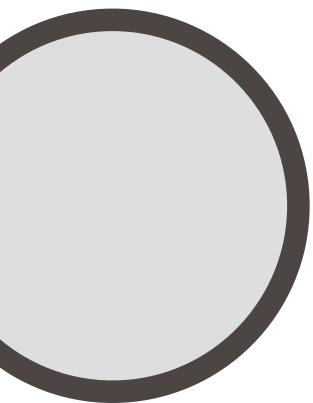
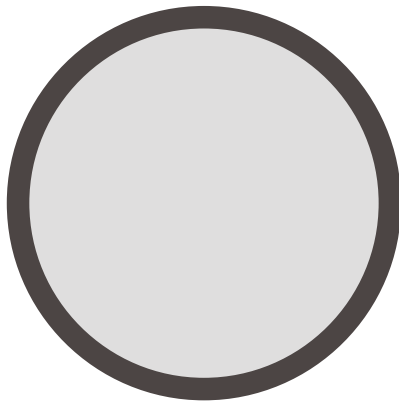
# POLICY CONCERNING A CHANGE OF MINISTRY POSITION

Since the Doctor of Ministry program is considered a professional degree, the involvement of a student in his particular ministry is considered essential. In the event a student should leave a current ministry position while enrolled in the program, the student could remain enrolled for a period of one year while pursuing another ministry position. If the student is not able to return to a ministry position within the one-year period, the student will be allowed to withdraw from the program without penalty.

# CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

In order to maintain continuous enrollment, any student seeking to sit out a semester must apply through the doctoral office for Interrupted Status. If approved, the student must register for Interrupted Status through Sonis for a \$100 fee.

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY



**MID-AMERICA**  
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) is designed to equip the student for creative scholarship, independent research, and effective teaching and preaching. The Doctor of Philosophy program involves a minimum of two years of study beyond the master of divinity degree or its equivalent. Students entering the program should be aware that three or more years are frequently needed for completion of the degree requirements, depending upon individual circumstances.

The Doctor of Philosophy program consists of eight doctoral seminars, an examination covering each seminar as it is completed, comprehensive written examinations, directed reading and research, teaching under faculty supervision, the writing of a dissertation, and an oral examination covering the dissertation and related fields. The program is specifically oriented toward preparing the student for teaching in university and seminary institutions, for providing specialized pastoral leadership in the church, and for assuming administrative responsibility in the denomination.

## EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD) seeks to guide students to develop in advanced disciplines: creative scholarship (to develop the capacity for critical evaluation and quality in research that produces creative scholarship and contributes to the field of theological knowledge and literature); independent research and writing (to develop competence in principles of independent research and to achieve a proficiency in the techniques of scholarly writing); graduate-level teaching (to guide students in advanced studies in a specialized field and to help them develop skills which qualify them for teaching at the graduate level in a college, university, or theological seminary); specialized leadership (to prepare students for the assumption of specialized pastoral leadership in the church, in missions, and/or in administrative leadership in the denomination.)

# TOTAL HOURS REQUIRED

Breakdown of Doctoral Hours for the Doctor of Philosophy Program



**TOTAL**

**60**  
HOURS

\*In lieu of a second minor, students may choose to take two seminars as electives of their major or minor fields. In lieu of two minors, students may choose (by committee approval) a second major.

\*\*These requirements are not traditional seminars.

## REGISTRATION

Students are responsible for registering for classes each semester. This responsibility includes the department reading, research languages, supervised instruction, and the dissertation. When the student is ready to complete the department reading, research languages, supervised instruction, or the dissertation, the student must register for that corresponding semester and contact the respective person (usually the advisor).

### DEPARTMENT READING (SEE ALSO PAGE 25)

The student is responsible for obtaining the department reading list and requirements either from the advising professor or from the Doctoral Office.

### SUPERVISED INSTRUCTION (SEE ALSO PAGES 24–25)

After a minimum of four doctoral seminars and completion of the Graduate Research & Writing course and the Graduate Teaching course (22 hours), each student is required to teach in his or her major field under the direct supervision of his or her advisor and assist in the development of a course syllabus, a teaching plan, and the assignment of course grades. The student is responsible for contacting the advisor and for having the rubrics (see form on Canvas in the Doctoral Tool Kit) for the advisor to sign. The student is also responsible for providing the Doctoral Office with the signed rubrics; the advisor will submit the grade in Sonis.

## TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETION

Students are expected to complete the entire Doctor of Philosophy program in seven years. **Candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree is forfeited if the student fails to graduate within seven years after his or her initial registration for his or her first doctoral seminar.**

## INTERRUPTED STATUS

Students (including those on the mission field) may request to take a leave with the approval of the doctoral program committee, but must register each semester and pay the Interrupted Status fee of \$100. Failure to register for any semester is automatically considered as withdrawal from the program.

## FIELDS OF STUDY

Graduate seminars are offered in Church History, Missions, New Testament (including Greek), Old Testament (including Hebrew and/or Semitic languages), Practical Theology, Theology, Education, and Biblical Counseling. The Doctor of Philosophy degree may be granted in any of those eight major fields.

Note: In order to be accepted into the major fields of New Testament (including Greek) or Old Testament (including Hebrew), the student must have 9 graduate level hours of the respective language (Greek or Hebrew) above the typical 6 hours minimum requirement for the PhD program.

In addition to the major field of study, the Doctor of Philosophy student normally will complete seminars in two minor fields other than that of the major. In order to request a second major, the student must contact the Doctoral Office in order for the Doctoral Committee to consider with a vote. The major and minor fields are also indicated on the Doctor of Philosophy application.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

In order to demonstrate competence in self-supervision, the Doctor of Philosophy student shall be solely responsible for meeting deadlines and completing assignments. The student must maintain continuous enrollment throughout the program and is responsible for registration each semester. The student is also solely responsible for selecting, proposing, conducting, and reporting on the dissertation. In this process, the candidate may seek counsel from any source.

## CHANGES IN MAJOR OR MINOR FIELDS

Any change in the major or minor fields must have departmental approval before submitting a request to the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs for evaluation by the committee. A change in the major field may require that the student take the entrance exam and/or write an entrance paper in the desired field. This decision rests with the department. A list of topics for the exam and paper is available in the doctoral office.

## ASSIGNMENT OF AN ADVISOR

Upon approval for admission to the PhD program by the Doctoral Committee, the Associate Dean of Doctoral Programs will assign an advisor from the student's major department to the student. The advisor assists the student in planning a comprehensive and coherent program of study by approving all seminars taken by the student.

The major professor must approve the student's dissertation topic before it is submitted by the department chair to the Doctoral Programs Committee. Once the topic is approved, the advisor supervises the student's work in the writing of the dissertation. The student should initiate a meeting with the major professor at least once each semester during the time the student is taking seminars to maintain a current working relationship with regard to every phase of the academic program.

## COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

### CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT

The candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree must be registered for each semester of the regular academic year during the period of time taken to earn this degree. Continuous enrollment includes both the semesters spent in seminar study and the time spent in the writing of the dissertation, whether or not the student is on campus. Failure to register for any semester is automatically considered a withdrawal from the program.

The student is responsible for registering each semester. The student must be registered each semester during an approved extension of time. This includes any semester that the student cannot enroll in seminars due to failure to complete requirements. **Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Doctoral Committee.** The payment of tuition each semester is a part of registration. The student must be in good standing with all Seminary offices in order to complete enrollment each semester.

With the approval of the Doctoral Programs Committee, one session may be spent in study at another institution. No credit toward this degree is given for work done in other schools unless the student has first been approved for the Doctor of Philosophy program at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary. Any exceptions must be approved by the

Doctoral Programs Committee. This request must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean of the Seminary for evaluation by the committee.

## **CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

Candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy degree must have a working knowledge of two languages (in addition to the normal requirements of Greek and Hebrew) or research methods suited to their academic interests.

## **LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR PHD**

### **MAJOR:**

#### **Church History, Missions Practical Theology, Old Testament, New Testament, Theology**

1. Choose one: French (DR9004), Latin (DR9000), German (DR9002)
2. Logic (DR9981)

#### **Biblical Counseling**

1. Research Methodology (DR9921)
2. Logic (DR9981)

#### **Education**

1. Choose one: French (DR9004), Latin (DR9000), German (DR9002)
2. Research Methodology (DR9921)

The language requirement may be met within five years prior to admission to the Doctor of Philosophy program and **must be met prior to the dissertation stage in the program**. Language examinations are administered by the Doctoral Programs Committee as scheduled during the academic year. If the candidate fails to make an acceptable score on the language examination, at the option of the Doctoral Programs Committee, he or she may be permitted one additional opportunity to qualify. Both language examinations must be successfully completed prior to the beginning of the dissertation phase of doctoral study.

## **DOCTORAL COLLOQUIUM REQUIREMENTS**

Doctoral students must participate in all doctoral colloquia each year for a minimum of two years of colloquia. Students will also be required to participate in the colloquia during such time as they are involved in Doctor of Philosophy seminars if the period of time exceeds two years. Students may be allowed to participate in the annual colloquium during the time in which they are involved in the preparation of their dissertation.

The yearly Forum of Contemporary Theological Issues will fulfill the colloquium requirements each year. Students are permitted to view a recording of the forum.

The student is responsible for notifying the doctoral office of colloquium attendance. This is done through an online form sent at the time of the colloquium that includes the date, time, and speaker. In the event that the student cannot attend a colloquium, the student may obtain departmental permission to view or listen to a recording of the colloquium and submit a response using the form sent by the Doctoral Office. Recordings are available online or are sent by the Doctoral Office.

## **PRACTICAL MINISTRY EXPERIENCE**

To qualify for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, the candidate must submit evidence of a minimum of two years of pastoral ministry, significant church-staff service, missionary service, or significant denominational service. The practical experience may be fulfilled before or during the student's involvement in the doctoral program. The final evaluation of the completed practical experience is made by the Doctoral Programs Committee.

Each new student is provided with a form to list all practical experience submitted to the doctoral committee. The student will be notified in writing of the committee's decision. Returning students may obtain this form from the Doctoral Programs Office. The student is responsible to obtain committee approval for practical experience. Further clarification may be requested by the committee before any decision is made concerning the practical experience.

## **SUPERVISED INSTRUCTION**

After a minimum of four doctoral seminars and completion of the Graduate Research & Writing course and the Graduate Teaching course (22 hours), each student is required to teach in his or her major field under the direct supervision of his or her advisor. For more information see the MABTS Catalog. At the discretion of the Doctoral Programs Committee, other arrangements may be made to fulfill this requirement, especially for students whose second language is English. The following regulations serve as guidelines for students teaching under the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy program:

- In order to fulfill the teaching requirement, the student must have completed the Graduate Research & Writing course (3 credit hours), the Graduate Teaching course (3 credit hours), and four seminars (16 credit hours).
- To teach in any field, the student must have completed at least two seminars in that field. Any exception must be approved by the Doctoral Committee.
- A minimum of three days of classroom teaching under the supervision of a professor is required. Special permission is needed for teaching online classes.
- The student is responsible for staying in contact with the chair of his or her major department to be sure that his or her required teaching responsibilities are carried out during the duration of his or her program.
- The teaching assignment is made through the Academics Office upon the recommendation of the chair of the major department. Although students have the opportunity to express their preferences concerning the course to be taught, the final selection of the subject is made by the chair of the respective department in accordance with overall instructional needs within the department's curriculum offerings. A departmental supervisor (either the student's advisor or another supervisor appointed by the department chair) will be appointed by the chair of the department for each student teacher in the program.
- The supervisor will arrange for at least one day of classroom observation to evaluate the student's performance. The observation is to be conducted by the supervisor or by someone appointed by the supervisor.
- The student will have at least three conferences with his or her supervisor in connection with the class being taught: (1) a preliminary conference about the syllabus prior to the beginning of the course, (2) one evaluation conference during the process of teaching the course, and (3) a summary evaluation conference after the course is completed.



- During the final evaluation conference, the supervisor will review any comments about the student teacher made on the class evaluation forms, will discuss the teaching experience with the student, and will complete a summary supervisor's evaluation report. The student will submit to the department chair a copy of the classroom evaluations and a copy of his or her own evaluation. Copies of these evaluations are also to be filed in the doctoral office.

## DOCTORAL SEMINARS

Any faculty member in the theology area is qualified to offer Doctor of Philosophy seminars. They must, however, be recommended by the appropriate academic department and approved by the Doctoral Programs Committee.

Eight graduate semester seminars are required in the Doctor of Philosophy program. Each seminar is taught according to the modified residency format. Four of the seminars are to be in a given field of discipline and constitute the major field. The other four seminars are to be in two fields other than that of the major and shall constitute the two minor fields.

Students also have the option of taking five seminars in their major field, two seminars in one minor field, and an elective (may be in the minor field). A maximum of two seminars per semester may be carried at anyone time.

The student must take a major field seminar during the first year in the program. If the student is unable to follow this schedule for any reason, the student should make the advisor, major department, and the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs aware of the circumstances.

**Note: Logos Bible software is highly recommended for PhD work.**

## SUPERVISED DEPARTMENTAL READING DR 9945

Each department offers a directed study that consists of intensive reading to provide students with comprehensive exposure to the literature in their major area of study. At the discretion of the department, this work may be done during the summer. The doctoral office has a form that must be signed by the professor and returned to the doctoral office to receive credit for DR 9945. **The student is responsible for submitting the form to the professor and to the doctoral office.**

## ACCEPTABLE GRADE

No grade below B is counted toward a doctoral degree. A student who makes a grade of C or below must take an additional seminar to remove the deficiency. Grades are issued to doctoral students upon completion of seminars at the end of each semester, in accordance with the general policy concerning the issuance of grades. A Doctor of Philosophy student who makes a lower grade than a B in a seminar must be put on probation, then dropped from the program if a subsequent grade lower than a B is achieved.

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Following the completion of seminars, doctoral students will take comprehensive written examinations at a mutually agreed upon date either in person or with a proctor.

The student will take the following examinations:

- One major field exam (4 hours)
- Four major seminar exams (2 hours, each)
- Four minor seminar exams (2 hours, each)

A student must pass at least five of these examinations on the first attempt.

In cases of failure, the student may retake a maximum of four of the examinations during the week that the faculty are on campus for preparation week in August. If the student fails the second attempt, he or she must retake the seminar; but no additional time in the program is allowed.

Exams are given at mutually convenient times with the student and Doctoral office either in person or online with an approved proctor.

## CANDIDACY STATUS

At the completion of seminar work, students will be expected to qualify for candidacy status. Candidacy status means that students may officially work on their dissertations. A student may be declared a candidate for the degree upon completion of the following:

- Successful completion of the comprehensive examinations;
- Completion of the colloquia requirements;
- Good standing in Practical Missions;
- Exemplary conduct;
- Dissertation subject approved by the Doctoral Programs Committee; and
- Major department recommendation.

For students who plan to graduate within two years of enrollment in the Doctor of Philosophy program, with the approval of the major professor and the major department, approval for a dissertation topic may be sought from the Doctoral Programs Committee before all of the seminar work is completed. Students are advised to work closely with their major professor in writing the prospectus and dissertation.

## INTENT TO GRADUATE

The candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree must apply to the Doctoral Programs Committee for graduation no later than April 1 (for December graduation) or no later than September 1 (for May graduation). Application for graduation must be submitted through the doctoral office. The request is in the form of a letter from the student to the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs and the committee stating a desire to graduate and the date of graduation, and the student must fill out the graduation application form on the Registrar's webpage.

In the event the student does not graduate at the anticipated time, he or she must resubmit a request for graduation for the future graduation date.

## DISSERTATION

Each candidate must write a dissertation in their major field of study in accordance with directions specified by the Doctoral Programs Committee. The dissertation must demonstrate the student's ability to do independent research and must make a solid contribution to the literature of the field in which it is written.

The dissertation should consist of 150–200 pages in the main body. Variations from these numbers must receive prior approval from the Doctoral Programs Committee. This request must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs for approval by the Committee.

The dissertation must be prepared in strict conformity to the form and style set forth in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition*, by Kate L. Turabian (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018). Students who have already had their prospectus approved may continue to use the 9th edition. The Doctoral Programs Committee provides a Supplement which supersedes the manual by Turabian where the latter is not precise and which provides sample pages illustrating requirements for academic writing. Other required resources include (1) *Grammar of Present Day English*, by R. W. Pence and Donald W. Emery (New York: Macmillan Publishers, 1963) and (2) The Merriam-Webster's Eleventh New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2003).

## TOPIC OF THE DISSERTATION

The topic of the dissertation must be approved by the Doctoral Programs Committee with the prior recommendation of the student's advisor and his major department. If a student has a double major, he or she must include both majors in the dissertation. The topic must be submitted in writing to the department. The department will submit the topic with its recommendation to the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs for evaluation by the Doctoral Committee. The dean will notify the student in writing of the Committee's decision.

## PROSPECTUS GUIDELINES

A prospectus of the dissertation must be submitted to the doctoral office for distribution to the major department for its approval no later than April 1 (for students anticipating graduation in December) or no later than September 15 (for students anticipating graduation in May).

The prospectus includes the title of the proposed dissertation, the outline by which the research is to be organized, the thesis to be investigated, the methodology to be employed, and a bibliography. Education majors should include the title of the proposed dissertation, the outline by which the research is to be organized, and chapters one through three (chapter one- research concern/questions, chapter two- literature review, chapter three- methodological design) and a reference list.

The prospectus should include:

1. Title page (examples may be found in the *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition*)
2. The outline of the dissertation by chapter titles and subheadings. Second-level headings should be included in the outline. A more extensive outline is acceptable. After the Doctoral Programs Committee has approved the student's prospectus, any subsequent changes in the outline must be approved by the Doctoral Programs Committee.
3. The body of the prospectus should include the thesis to be investigated and the methodology to be employed. The information contained in the body of the prospectus is included in the first chapter of the dissertation, though the prospectus may be slightly more abbreviated. See examples in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition*.
4. The bibliography or reference list for the prospectus should contain at least ninety percent of the dissertation bibliography. At least 100 resources is the standard for a prospectus.

The outline and the bibliography should correspond to the same standards of style and form as the dissertation. The prospectus and dissertation are prepared according to the Turabian edition taught in the student's Doctoral Research & Writing class, with the accompanying Doctoral Programs Committee MABTS Supplement. When describing the dissertation chapters in the prospectus, write in the future tense. For example: Chapter 2 will examine ... , etc. When writing the dissertation, write in the historic present tense.

The prospectus is logged in the doctoral office and then forwarded to the student's major department chair. The department has two weeks to schedule a meeting with the student and to evaluate the prospectus. The department chair then notifies the doctoral office in writing concerning its decision regarding the prospectus.

During the two weeks that the student's major department is assigned to evaluate the prospectus, the department chair will schedule a time for the student to offer an oral defense of his prospectus to the department faculty.

At this meeting, a dissertation orientation session will be conducted to acquaint the student with the requirements and procedures for the writing of the dissertation. The student will be provided with a schedule of submission dates, and the student will be given general instruction in the dissertation process.

## **DISSERTATION SUBMISSION PROCESS**

The dissertation must contain the following parts in sequence: blank page; abstract (not to exceed two pages); title page; blank page; approval sheet; table of contents; introductory chapter; the body or text of the paper consisting of two or more chapters; concluding or summary chapter; bibliography; and blank page. The parts mentioned in sections A.2.1.7-A.2.1.11 of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition* may be included (all after the table of contents and before the introductory chapter); and appendix or appendixes (between the concluding chapter and the bibliography).

**The student is encouraged to work carefully with the advisor and major department at each stage in the preparation of the dissertation. This means the a the advisor must approve and correct the dissertation chpater by chapter throughout the writing process.**

Both a hard copy and an electronic copy of the dissertation must be presented to the Doctor of Philosophy office to orward to the student's advisor no later than July 15 for December graduation or January 4 for May graduation. The student must submit the dissertation through the doctoral office for distribution to the advisor. The advisor will read and evaluate the dissertation with regard to content and form prior to forwarding it with his approval to the doctoral office for routing to the major department.

Should the advisor find that the dissertation is not acceptable with regard to content or form, it is the advisor's prerogative to return it to the student without submission to the department. The student may resubmit his or her dissertation to the advisor. If it is still unacceptable, the student will be notified that they cannot resubmit until the next graduation date.

After the advisor approves the dissertation with regard to content and form, he will submit the dissertation along with his written recommendation to the doctoral office. The dissertation and advisor's recommendation are forwarded to the major department. Suggested corrections and/or changes may be made during the four weeks after submission to the department.

The major department submits its written approval with a clean copy of the dissertation to the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs on or before September 1 or February 1, respectively. **Students who submit a dissertation to their major department are allowed no more than two opportunities for the dissertation to be approved.** The dissertation is submitted through the doctoral office for proper distribution and must include an abstract.

Upon receipt of the dissertation from the major department, the Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs assigns an external reader to evaluate the dissertation. The Associate Dean of the Doctoral Programs will analyze the evaluation forms from the major department and the external reader and attach a summary evaluation statement to the dissertation to be returned to the student by October 15 or March 15, respectively. It is the prerogative of the Doctoral Programs Committee to assign additional readers if the situation warrants it. In each case, there will be a minimum of three primary readers, including the external reader. If the dissertation is acceptable, it will be returned to the student for final corrections.

If the Doctoral Programs Committee determines that the dissertation is not acceptable, the document is then returned to the student with no more than one additional opportunity for them to resubmit their dissertation.

If the dissertation is rejected as unsatisfactory for any cause, the Doctoral Programs Committee may, at its discretion, authorize the candidate to revise, correct, and resubmit the document after a period of at least three months but not later than one year from the time of extension. No dissertation may be submitted twice for the same prospective graduation date.

The student must request in writing permission to file for copyright privileges and/or to publish his dissertation. Each department is at liberty to establish specific guidelines for dissertations submitted in that department. At final submission, the copy of the dissertation must include an abstract and blank pages inserted in proper order.

## ORAL DEFENSE

A one-hour oral examination is conducted during the last academic term prior to one in which the student expects to graduate. The oral examination covers the dissertation and relevant areas of cognate academic disciplines which are necessary for a full evaluation of the research. The oral examination over the dissertation is directed by the major professor who supervised the research, other faculty members who comprise the major department, and the external reader. The defense should be completed by May 1 or December 1 for graduation.

## SUBMITTING A DISSERTATION FOR PUBLICATION (PROQUEST)

ProQuest is a database that publishes dissertations for both DMin and PhD students. ProQuest has its publishing fees. Each student must purchase 2 library copies to be sent to the Ora Byram Allison Library. Instructions for submission will be provided at the oral exam.

**Note:** After the oral exam is a perfect time to submit your dissertation. If the student will meet with the Coordinator of the Doctoral Programs, the student will receive help in ordering the items for the dissertation and in submitting the dissertation to ProQuest.

# GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT PROGRAM

PhD students may serve as a graduate teaching assistant to a MABTS professor. Participation by professors and PhD students is strictly voluntary. At present, there is no remuneration for students who choose to serve in this capacity. A GTA's duties would include assisting the professor by teaching in his or her absence, course planning, and helping with grading. This program will benefit both students and professors. Students will gain valuable teaching experience that may help them when seeking a teaching position at a college or seminary. Professors will benefit from having a dependable person to teach for them during their absences and to assist in grading and other duties.

## TUITION AND FEES

### TUITION

Each student in the Doctor of Philosophy program must pay a flat-rate tuition of \$3,295.00 per semester, payable in advance at the beginning of each semester (August and January). Tuition must be paid each semester while the student is actively involved in the Doctor of Philosophy program. Failure to register for any semester during the regular school year will be considered as withdrawal from the Doctor of Philosophy program.

### FEES

#### ***Language Course Fees—\$300.00***

This fee applies to the classical and modern language requirements. See specific language page in Canvas' Doctoral Toolkit for information about Coursera course fees, which are not paid through MABTS.

#### ***Late Registration Fees and Returned Check Fees***

An additional fee of \$100.00 is charged for any student who registers after the close of the regular registration time. A returned check fee of \$30.00 is charged for any check which is returned to the Seminary Business Office. Excessive returned checks by any student may result in a cash-only policy for that student at the discretion of the vice president for Finance and Operations.

#### ***Institutional Review Board (IRB) Fee***

Students seeking a doctorate in Education will pay a fee of \$100.00 to complete Institutional Review Board (IRB) training before submitting a prospectus. This training is done online through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CTI).

#### ***Dissertation Fees***

In the semester that the dissertation is submitted, the student will pay a \$250.00 external reader fee and a \$500 style reader fee. Students will also pay for two library copies of the dissertation, plus any additional copies desired. ETD Administrator is a site for students to submit their ETD (electronic thesis or dissertation) for publishing. The step-by-step process instructions will be given to the student at his or her oral examination; the student may also contact the Doctoral Office for further guidance.

## **ACCEPTANCE SIGNATURE PAGE**

I hereby acknowledge receiving a copy of the doctoral handbook. I understand that I am responsible for familiarizing myself with the information contained in this handbook.

I further understand that I am solely responsible for meeting deadlines and completing assignments. I am also solely responsible for selecting, proposing, conducting, and reporting on the dissertation or major ministry project.

This doctoral handbook supersedes and replaces any previous doctoral handbooks. I have read the 2025–2026 Doctoral Handbook and agree to abide by all policies and information contained therein.

Please email the doctoral office to acknowledge that you have read the handbook in its entirety.



**MID-AMERICA**  
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**MABTS.EDU**