

Course Related Ministry Projects

The successful completion of a series of course-related ministry projects is an important component of the D.Min. program. Each project is to include application of concepts presented in the course content. The projects are individually designed programs related to the student's ministry, carried out in the student's own setting.

The project concept is based on the expectation that a competent professional seeks to expand understanding and skill through professional practice. Such growth requires the designing of segments of ministry activity with specific aims in mind. In the D.Min. program these projects test creativity and skill, and the ability to conceptualize and articulate the integration of theology and practice as well.

The project is the primary basis for the determination of the grade for the course from which it is derived.

Nature of a Project

A project is any set of activities that the student undertakes arising out of:

1. personal interest and perceived needs of the ministry setting.
2. the focus of the course from which it is derived.
3. it can be many things—an organized program of study and reflection; new programs initiated in the church, institution or community; revision of existing programs; design and creation of new institutional forms or procedures—the possibilities are limited only by the parameters of the related course.
4. movement toward final thesis project.

A project consists of three steps:

1. proposal
2. execution of the project
3. report: the report is a log of the time spent in the various phases and activities of the writer.

Proposal

Students are to **prepare a one-page description of the proposed research project** for approval by the instructor on the final day of the intensive:

The **proposal** for a research project begins with reflection by the student concerning:

- student's own personal growth needs
- needs of the ministry setting
- the need for theological reflection and integration
- focus of the course
- contribution to the final thesis project

The project proposal is to be a concise one-page document stating:

- A. **Objectives:** What are the specific outcomes expected for participants and for you?
- B. **Resources:** What is needed to complete the project (bibliography, materials, people, money, etc.)?
- C. **Methodology:** What will you do? Who will be involved and how?

On-Site Evaluator

The purpose of the on-site evaluator is to ensure feedback from someone who knows the ministry setting and will experience and observe the implementation of the project. This increases the probability that the project will be vitally and realistically related to the needs of the ministry setting.

Unless specifically stated, an on-site evaluator is required for all course projects. The student is to recommend an on-site evaluator who can assist in the attainment of objectives for the particular project. This person should not be a relative or close friend.

The on-site evaluator must be a participant in the student's ministry context. He or she must know that context well and have an understanding of the persons to whom the project will be directed. The on-site evaluator must also have sufficient background and experience to make valid judgments regarding the project. Genuine concern for the growth of the student and the people related to the project is essential. The relationship between on-site evaluator and the student must be one that fosters mutual candor, constructive criticism and support.

The whole experience is intended to be a means of enrichment and growth for the student, the on-site evaluator and the congregation or community.

On-Site Evaluator Responsibilities

- To become familiar with the student's thinking about the relationship of the D.Min. program to the needs and aspirations of the congregation or community.
- To review the preliminary design of the project proposal.
- To reach agreement with the student concerning the terms of the **On-Site Evaluator Contract**.
- To help plan for meaningful evaluation of the project experience by congregational participants.
- To be one of the project participants if appropriate.
- To give feedback to the student at various stages during execution of the project.
- To read the project report.
- To write an evaluation of the project following the **Project Evaluation Guidelines** (available on the D.Min. website) and share this with the student for submission with the project report.

Project Procedures

After approval of the project proposal, the project is to be implemented. Consultation with the project on-site evaluator should be carried out according to the terms of the *Project On-Site Evaluator Contract*. Although the project proposal constitutes a basic blueprint for the project, it is recognized that the nature of ministry is fluid. Thus, minor modification and restructuring may take place during the execution stage.

- The report is a narrative account of the planning and execution of the project. Particular attention is to be paid to evaluation, with critical reflection on the degree of goal achievement and the reasons for it.
- Included should be references to what was learned from the project and how these findings are important to further professional development.
- **A typical course project is 40-60 pages in length and must take approximately 120 hours of work to prepare.** The project report may include as appendices any supporting documents used in the project if they are helpful to a reader's understanding of what was done.

Project Requirements

Project reports are to be:

- typewritten, **double-spaced**, following the writing style and form guidelines of Turabian (see Section 7 of this manual). If Turabian is not used correctly, the instructor can return it to you for correction or give you a lower grade.
- submitted directly to the instructor in the mode requested (e-mail or paper copy).
- submitted within **6 months** following completion of the intensive (i.e. **January 15** for summer intensives; **July 1** for winter intensives).

When the background work of the project is completed, a project report is to be written following the ***Project Report Outline*** contained in this manual.

PROJECT REPORT OUTLINE

(To be followed in writing and compiling project reports)

I. Project Cover Sheet (See Title Page Sample)**II. Project Abstract**

A summary of no more than 250 words describing the situation addressed by the project, the project design and its results.

III. Table of Contents

It consists of a listing of sections and sub-sections and the page number on which each begins.

IV. The Project Proposal

In its entirety as submitted to the instructor including the ***Project On-Site Evaluator Contract***. It is not necessary to re-number the project proposal, simply insert it into the report. Numbering of pages is to begin with the project report narrative.

V. Project Report Narrative

Discussion of the project as it was actually carried out; activities, results, etc. This can be broken down into sub-sections as needed. A report of time spent by the student in planning, implementing, evaluating and reporting the project should be included.

VI. Project Evaluation

- A. Discussion of the results of the project as measured against the goals/objectives stated in the project proposal.
- B. Identification of modifications from the project proposal and reasons for these.
- C. Completed ***Project Evaluation Guidelines*** sheet and evaluation by on-site evaluator.

VII. Learnings and Conclusions

- A. Discussion of learning achieved by project participants and by you (new insights, etc.).
- B. Reflection on Biblical/theological issues.
- C. Future ministry possibilities suggested by the project.

VIII. Appendices

Additional or supplementary materials relating to or used in the project that clarify or support the project report narrative.

Project Deadlines

All course projects are to be completed and submitted to the course instructor by the date requested by the instructor (no more than **6 months** after completing the course intensive). The suggested deadlines are **January 15** for summer intensives; **July 1** for winter intensives.

If a student does not turn in his or her project prior to the deadline, the student will receive a failing grade for the course. Incompletes for extreme circumstances (i.e. illness requiring hospitalization, death in the family, relocation during timeframe of the project) can be requested in writing to the D.Min. office for approval by both the instructor and D.Min. director.

All late projects must be turned in by the incomplete deadline (if granted by the D.Min. office) in order for the student to continue in the D.Min. program. Students who submit late projects will be assessed a **\$50 late fee** (See Project Extensions below).

Project Submission

When the project report is completed, it should be forwarded to the instructor for evaluation with the appropriate title page. The D.Min. website, <http://dmin.bethel.edu>, has other forms available under *Student Forms*.

The instructor will fill out a **Project Report Grade Sheet** and submit it to the program coordinator for a final grade.

- **One copy** (electronic or paper copy) of the project, with a title page submitted to the instructor by the deadline.
- **On-Site Evaluation** – The project on-site evaluator is to submit a written evaluation of the project that responds to the questions on the Project Evaluation Guidelines.
 - This evaluation should be shared with the student and submitted with the project report.
 - It should be accompanied by a copy of the Project Evaluation Guidelines.
- **Project Report Grade Sheet** will be completed by the instructor and submitted to the D.Min. office to facilitate proper transcript reporting.

Project Extensions

Project extensions will generally **NOT** be granted. Those that are will be granted for extreme cases such as illness requiring hospitalization, death in the immediate family, or relocation during the time of the project. Project extensions **must be submitted in writing** (i.e. e-mail) to the instructor and program coordinator for approval; approval is only granted when both the instructor and D.Min. director approve the extension request. The program coordinator will send confirmation of extension approval. This extension will be for no more than an additional six months after original six month deadline for the project. Projects not turned in by the deadline are charged a **\$50 late fee**. Course projects that are submitted after the maximum one year deadline will be given a failing grade.

Report Waiver

- Students can waive ONE project in the course of the program.
- The waived course project can be taken from an elective or concentration course, but not from a required (core) course (i.e. GS801 and GS803). For cohort students, the Professor of Record should be consulted regarding which courses may receive a project report waiver.
- A project waiver **must be requested in writing** (i.e. e-mail) and directed to the program coordinator **before attending the intensive for that course**.
- The final grade will be given by the instructor following the course intensive, based on participation during the intensive and completion of pre-intensive assignments.