

AGTS Doctor of Ministry
PTH 906 D. Min. Project Design
October 14-18, 2002
Dr. Stephen Lim

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

A course designed to prepare the student for the presentation of an acceptable project prospectus to the D. Min. Committee. Components of a project and research methodologies are explored and applied.

This is a hands-on, how-to course on developing your project. The course is designed to assist the participants in:

1. Identifying the roles of the participant, the project coordinator, the project adviser; the biblical-theological adviser; the technical editor; the writing coach; the project reader, and the D. Min. Project Committee,
2. Understanding the required components of the project prospectus and final project,
3. Sharpening critical and analytical skills for completing the project phase,
4. Developing basic skills in writing clearly, coherently, and concisely,
5. Formulating a plan for project completion.

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROJECT STANDARDS

The current project standards as stipulated by the Association of Theological Schools are:

The program shall include the design and completion of a written doctoral-level project that addresses both the nature and the practice of ministry. The project should be of sufficient quality that it contributes to the practice of ministry as judged by professional standards and has the potential for application in other contexts of ministry.

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

Upon completion of the doctoral project, there shall be an oral presentation and evaluation. The completed written project, with any supplemental materials, should be accessioned in the institution's library.

COURSE FORMAT

This course includes faculty instruction and mentoring, library research, and peer review sessions.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Research

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. The Craft of Research. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Myers, William R. Research in Ministry: A Primer for the Doctor of Ministry Program. Chicago: Exploration Press, 1997.

Writing (Refer to these regularly during the writing process.)

Cheney, Theodore A. Rees. Getting the Words Right: How to Rewrite, Edit & Revise. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 1983.

Strunk, William and E. B. White. The Elements of Style, 4th ed. New York: Macmillan, 1999.

Williams, Joseph M. Style: Toward Clarity and Grace. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

OR

Zinssler, William. On Writing Well. New York: Harper Collins, 1990.

Format

Turabian, Kate. A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

“AGTS Doctor of Ministry Professional Project Guidelines” located on the AGTS D.Min. web page.

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

Research

Vhymeister, Nancy Jean. Quality Research Papers. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Pre-session: In preparation for the course please do four things:

1. Read thoroughly all of the textbooks.
2. Read thoroughly the “AGTS Doctor of Ministry Project Guidelines.”
3. Prepare a list of two to three potential Project advisers.
4. Prepare a **draft prospectus** of the project you envision. This should be 3-5 pages double-spaced, plus additional pages of bibliography. It must include the following elements in this order:
 - 1) **Title:** The title should be very specific and precise. It may contain ten to fifteen words in order to give a clear description of what will be done.
 - 2) **Problem:** This should be a clear description of the problem to be examined. It should relate to the Project in very specific terms. It should explore the need in the ministry setting, the skill/resource to be developed, and the knowledge that is to be found. It is important that the problem be described as such, and not as a conclusion the participant has already reached.
 - 3) **The Purpose:** This should be one concise, sharply focused sentence. The intent of this sentence is to provide guidance to the central goal of the Project, and should clearly state the ministry product.
 - 4) **Definition of Key Terms:** This should identify key terms pertinent to the Project. Define special terms so that readers know the participant's meaning.

- 5) **Scope:** This is the “fine print” of the contract. It shows the positive aspect—what the participant is going to do, and the negative aspect—what is not going to be done. It should spell out limiting factors that will operate in the Project. It is also important that the participant ask what is within his or her control. It is here that the participant should try to ensure that the Project’s intent is achievable and verifiable.
- 6) **Identification of Biblical-Theological Themes for Review:** This should identify several key biblical-theological themes and scriptures that will be studied in relation to the Project.
- 7) **Identification of Other Literature Themes for Review:** This should identify several of the key themes from the literature that will be studied in relation to the Project.
- 8) **Methodology:** This section should outline the major steps/phases of the Project:
 - The Research Phase,
 - The Planning Phase,
 - The Implementation Phase,
 - The Evaluation Phase,
 - The Writing Phase.

The major steps should be *spelled out in detail*, with specific indications of what will be done and how it will be achieved. AGTS realizes that a finely detailed plan may not be possible, but will not accept vague, general statements. This is your plan for the Project. Indicate how you will get data for self-evaluation, and how others will provide evaluation of your leadership. We strongly recommend that recognized survey instruments be used in Projects. These should be identified in the Prospectus. Whether your instrument is used as is, adapted, or created specifically for your project, it must be approved by the Project Committee.

- 9) **Timetable:** This should interface with your major steps and should include significant time for comprehensive research, planning, action, evaluation, and writing. It should be fairly specific in regard to month and date. Dates should be according to the calendar (i.e., evaluation—“December 1 to December 31” rather than “one month”).
- 10) **Contribution to Ministry:** What is important is that the Project not only be done well, but be significant for the participant’s ministry setting and potentially in other settings. It should not be done simply to obtain a degree. The participant should indicate the key contribution(s) from his or her point of view.
- 11) **Bibliography:** This section must demonstrate comprehensive research and involve multiple forms of research (i.e., books, journals, etc.) that represent the breadth of the field and varied opinions. It should be divided into category areas that are pertinent to the Project. The bibliography is normally four to eight pages (60-120 entries), and should be in correct form. It should begin on a new page so that it is separate from the rest of the Prospectus.