

# **Reformed Theological Seminary**



## **Doctor of Ministry Project Guidelines**

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## The Doctor of Ministry Project

### ❖ What is a D.Min. Project?

The final written Project in the D.Min. program is the culmination of the student's academic work in the degree program. The Project involves a disciplined plan of independent research that results in a written piece that demonstrates student expertise in an area of practical theology. All of the reading, writing and course work in the program is intended to help prepare the student for this final component.

The D.Min. Project is similar to a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation in a number of ways, but, it is also distinct from a traditional academic paper in religion. The similarities would relate to the kinds of research – biblical, theological, historical, etc., – and the difference would be the scope of research. While a Ph.D. dissertation, for example, is an exhaustive study on a given topic, a professional doctoral project is expected to be “thorough” but not exhaustive. Another unique factor is the focus of a D.Min. project which must ultimately be “practical” and not merely theoretical. A D.Min. Project purposefully asks the “so what?” question and offers specific suggestions on how the project research relates to the practice of ministry.

### ❖ Expectations for a D.Min. Project

The D.Min. Project is more than just a hoop to jump through in order to get the degree. The goal of the project is to enhance the skills of the student in a specialized area of ministry. Through concentrated research and reflection on one area of ministry practice, the student becomes an “expert” in this field. Through the project's intense research process and the labor of writing a student gains increased ability as a competent researcher and written communicator.

The D.Min. Project should demonstrate a competent level of theoretical knowledge in the field studied and a thorough knowledge of ministry practice in this area. The finished project should demonstrate the clear integration of theory and practice. While the written project should be acceptable to the academic community, it is primarily addressed to the church. The outcome of a D.Min. Project will be a program or project for implementation in ministry. This practical outcome may be innovative or it may be an upgrading of existing ministry.

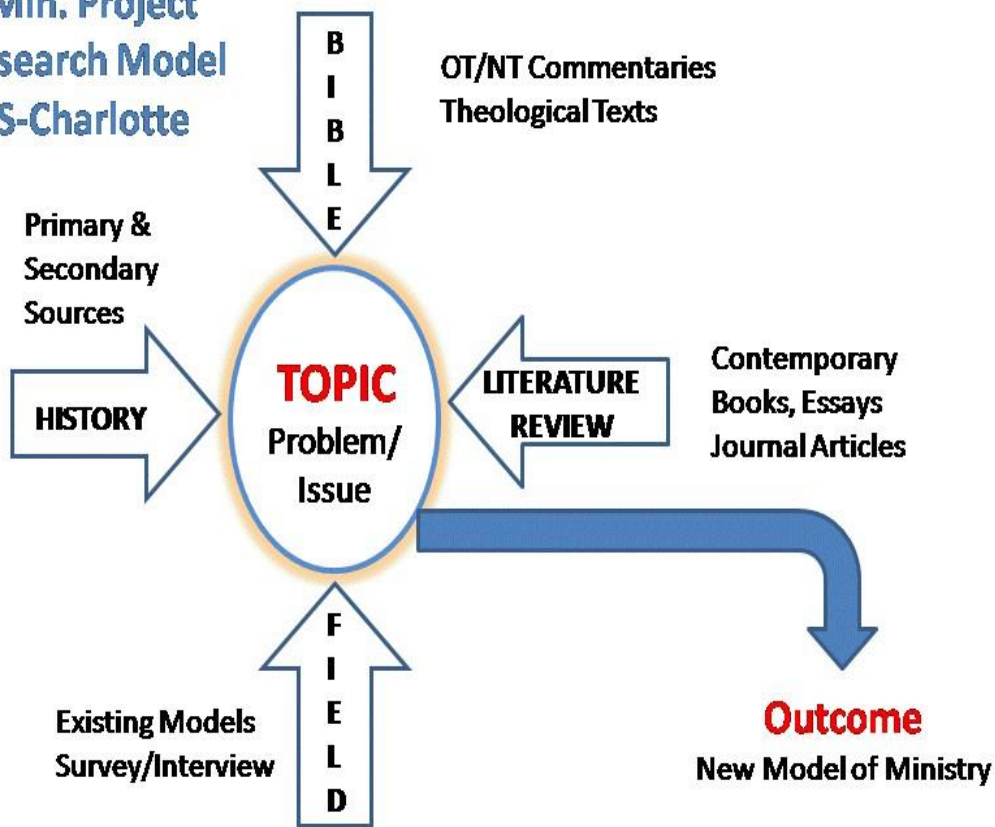
The Association of Theological Schools (ATS), the accrediting agency for D.Min. Programs, stipulates these requirements for a D.Min. Project:

*The program shall include the design and completion of a written doctoral-level project that addresses both the nature and practice of ministry. This final summative project*

*should be of sufficient quality that it contributes to the practice of ministry as judged by professional standards and has potential for application in other contexts of ministry or presentation in professional forums. The project should demonstrate the candidate's ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, organize an effective research model, use appropriate resources, and evaluate the results, and should reflect the candidate's depth of theological insight in relation to ministry.*

In order to meet these required standards, students utilize appropriate D.Min. Project research methodologies (see chart below) which provide acceptable parameters. When a topic is selected students are asked to carry out research in a number of categories in order to design a "new model" of ministry which is the final outcome of the project.

### D.Min. Project Research Model RTS-Charlotte



### ❖ **Selecting a Topic**

There are several ways to approach selection of a project topic. One may begin by reflecting on a problem, need or challenge in one's ministry setting. What area of ministry needs urgent attention in my congregation or ministry context? Or, the initial idea may be more personal: Is there an area of ministry practice where I urgently need more expertise? A student may approach the topic from personal interest, considering a topic in which one is extremely interested in learning more. Whatever approach one takes, a key issue is asking oneself: Will this topic sustain my interest throughout the process? Having a compelling motivation to study a given topic is often a key factor in the discipline to finish a project! Discussing your interests with the Librarian, the D.Min. Director, and classroom professors may help surface some potential topics. The Librarian in particular can help determine if enough resources exist to support the particular topic you might choose. Do not overlook these aids in the selection of your topic. In particular, discussions with professors might establish a relationship with someone who could become your Project Advisor.

### ❖ **Preliminary Research**

After one has determined a general area of interest, the next question is whether or not the topic is researchable. Are necessary resource materials to research this topic readily accessible to you? One may not be able to answer this question until significant library research has begun. Looking through the library catalog and ATLA journal database are good places to start. Once again, ask the Librarian for help in developing your working bibliography. You will need to search both book and periodical (journal) resources.

In addition to exploring what materials are out there, one must begin thinking through how to focus the topic. Your area of interest must be focused in order to set reasonable parameters of the study. For example, if one were interested in worship, the question then becomes: what aspect of worship will my project concentrate upon? What will help clarify this question is consideration of the practical outcome one envisions as a result of the research. Beginning with the end in mind, the student can then back up and consider what research components will be necessary for this anticipated outcome.

### ❖ **Research Components**

The final piece to consider in deciding whether or not a particular topic will fit the purposes of a D.Min. Project is consideration of the major components required. There are multiple areas of research that are necessary for each project. In order to have a viable topic, the student must be convinced that there are adequate research materials for all the required fields that relate to the topic. Projects do not all research the same areas, however, the following are typical fields of research for an acceptable project:

1. *Biblical/Theological Research* – each project must have at least one chapter devoted to consideration of what Sacred Scripture has to say about your topic or related subject area. Are there adequate Bible commentaries, theological texts, essays, articles that address my topic?

2. *Historical Research* – each project must address the issue of what the Christian Tradition (church history) has to say about the chosen topic. This chapter may concentrate on a particular theme, era or personality that sheds insight on the area of interest. Are there both primary and secondary historical sources to which you have access?
3. *Contemporary Literature Review* – each project must review current literature (last 10-20 years) that relates to the topic. This does not have to be exhaustive; however, you must have access to materials from the major contemporary authors writing on this subject.
4. *Field Research* – some projects may include this component when it contributes to the goals of a particular project. Field research may involve two kinds of research:
  - a. *Examination of Existing Models* – reviewing contemporary models of ministry may provide ideas for the student’s own projected ministry outcome. For example, if the study is hoping to develop a leadership training manual for deacons, the student may need to examine current deacon training materials to evaluate them for where they are weak and strong.
  - b. *Surveys/Questionnaires/Interviews* – some projects may include this kind of research when trying to gain information from individuals or groups of people. This may be a matter of gaining insight, or evaluating materials. Sometimes materials may have a test run as part of the project; in this instance, students may do a pre-test/post-test survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the materials being “tested.”

When determining the viability of a particular topic it is advisable that the student consult with the D.Min. Director, classroom professors, and the Librarian for assistance in identifying and accessing adequate resources. When a student has determined through preliminary research that there is a viable topic, then it is time to begin writing the Project Proposal.

The goal in the writing of the proposal is to convince the D.Min. Committee that you have given significant thought to researching your topic. For each component of the research, you will argue for why you have proposed a specific focus for that area. For example, in the historical section, you must justify why you want to research a specific era, person or theme and not others. In each section make an argument for why these materials will provide what you need to carry out the project.

# The Project Proposal

## ❖ Purpose

The beginning of the written project process is to produce a quality “project proposal.” The Project Proposal is a blueprint of the research plan for the entire project. It is a formal document presented to the faculty D.Min. Committee for evaluation and approval. The proposal outlines the anticipated research model that the student will utilize to study the chosen topic and report on findings. The proposal is intended to provide a roadmap for the student’s research and writing for the duration of the project process. Once the proposal is approved by the D.Min. Committee, an Advisor is appointed and the writing may begin.

## ❖ Elements of a Project Proposal

### 1. *A Concise Title*

While a final title for the completed project may modify the proposed title, it is important to think carefully about the initial proposed title. The title communicates to the D.Min. Committee the focus of your research and desired outcome.

### 2. *Statement of the Topic (Problem, Need, Research Interest)*

This element is important for defining carefully the parameters of your study. Specificity will delimit the focus and provide reasonable boundaries for the research. When the problem statement is clear, the student will be less inclined to stray from the project’s stated purpose and follow “rabbit trails” that while interesting do not contribute significantly to the topic.

### 3. *Research Questions*

Specific research questions assist the student to make selections of resources that directly contribute to the topic. When a research subject is too general, the D.Min. committee has only a vague idea of what the student hopes to discover through researching a particular field. A separate list of research questions should be included for each area of inquiry – biblical, historical, current literature, etc. What are you seeking to find out in each component of the research?

### 4. *Research Strategy*

This element of the proposal is intended to offer a view of the whole project. Here, the student will need to demonstrate how each research component contributes to the whole. There should be a coherent research plan that is logical with all parts connecting to one another. Here the student is justifying components of the research strategy and arguing for their necessity to successfully complete this project.

### 5. *Proposed Outcome of the Study (New Model of Ministry)*

At this point, the student delineates his ideas about where the research will likely lead. A projected outcome will include a specific application to the practice of ministry. This element should include as much detail as possible in this early stage of research. Clarity here will have an impact on all parts of the

research which will flow into this part of the project. The practical outcome may be a set of outlines, a study guide, training manual, series of sermons, etc.

#### 6. *Chapter Summaries*

For each chapter, a short summary paragraph describing the basic content of that chapter is required for a Project Proposal. Again, specificity is key. Give some details here, for example, in the biblical chapter, list the particular texts that will be examined. The literature review chapter should mention the key authors and ideas to be surveyed, etc.

#### 7. *Surveys, Questionnaires, Interview Questions*

If the proposed research strategy includes the use of questionnaires or the interviewing of “experts,” etc., a copy of the questionnaire(s) or interview questions must be attached to the Project Proposal. The Librarian can guide you to resources which help in designing effective questionnaires/surveys.

#### 8. *Timeline*

The timeline should be inclusive of every part of the project process from approval of the project proposal to the oral exam. The proposed timeline should include a realistic timeframe for research/writing of each chapter. The full written draft of the whole D.Min. Project must be submitted to the D.Min. Office by January 30 in order to be eligible for May graduation of that year.

#### 9. *Bibliography*

It is expected that the preliminary bibliography in the proposal will list a minimum of 75 sources. These sources should include books, essays and journal articles (in roughly equal proportion). For the purposes of the Project Proposal the bibliography should be organized by categories of research – biblical, historical, contemporary literature, etc. This allows the D.Min. committee to see what the student has identified for each research component. Once your proposal is approved, you will need to collapse the sections into one unified bibliography for the actual project.

### ❖ **Doctoral Project and Research Methodologies course**

After students have completed 7 courses in the DMin program, they are required to take *The Doctoral Project and Research Methodologies* (03DM8990) course which is offered online each January and July. This course will walk students through the process of crafting an acceptable research plan resulting in a first draft DMin Project Proposal at the conclusion of the course. The course is six months long providing significant time for locating resources, reading and writing related to the Project topic. The DMin Director will be the primary instructor in the first half of the course, and then students will work with another faculty advisor for the second half depending on the Project topic. The outcome of the course will be a draft Project Proposal. The faculty advisor will give written feedback on the draft Proposal, which must be revised in light of the advisor’s feedback. *Students may then submit this revised Project Proposal to the DMin Committee on their home campus. The DMin Committee will offer additional feedback, and further revisions may be required.*



### ❖ DMin Committee Criteria for Evaluating a Proposal

1. Clearly written
2. Evidence of solid preliminary research
3. Adequate bibliography for each research component
4. Research strategy is coherent
5. Proposed outcome is significant (New Model)
6. Chapter outlines have sufficient detail
7. Timeline is reasonable

### ❖ Process of Approval

1. Student submits revised Project Proposal to the DMin Committee (CLT or ORL)
2. The DMin Director will communicate DMin Committee feedback to the student
3. Student will further revise the Project Proposal per directives from the DMin Committee
4. DMin Committee will officially approve the Project Proposal when satisfied
5. DMin Director will appoint an official Faculty Advisor for writing the DMin Project
6. Students are registered and billed for first 3 hours of the DMin Project (6 hours total for Project)

## Research and Writing

### ❖ General Notes About Research

The key to good research is access to excellent resources. Familiarize yourself with the RTS library and catalog when you are on campus; ask for assistance if you need it. Learn how to use the ATLA index which allows you to digitally search for essays and journal articles. While you are doing project research, investigate libraries in your geographic area. If there is a Bible college, seminary or university near your residence, chances are they may have a number of the sources you are looking for. You may be surprised what the public library has to offer too; take advantage of their inter-library loan services to borrow books as needed. Your RTS Librarian will help you to acquire the resources you need. It is not acceptable to only use sources already in your personal library to build an initial bibliography – RTS provides more than ample tools for research.

When you begin collecting material, keep meticulous notes on the bibliographic data which you'll need later for documenting your sources. If you don't correctly record information for footnotes and bibliography the first time, it can be very time consuming to repeat the process later. The librarian will inspect the final written project for corrections, so do it right the first time! Several tools are available online which can help you track and organize your bibliographic data. **The most recent edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Turabian, et. al.) is the required style guide.**

As a doctoral student you have academic freedom to interpret and apply your research according to your theological convictions. While it is not mandatory that you come to conclusions consistent with Reformed theology, it is expected that you will interact with the Reformed tradition as a part of your research. You are free to disagree with Reformed perspectives but not caricature it. You will need to give evidence of being conversant with the tradition and interacting with it.

## ❖ Research Chapters

Most chapters in a D.Min. Project are in the 20-30 page range at a minimum. If a chapter gets too long, it is suggested that the writer consider breaking it down into two chapters. While it is typical for projects to have one chapter devoted to each research component (biblical, historical, literature review, etc.), it is possible to have more than one chapter in a given field if it is essential to the project; for example, a project could have an OT and a NT chapter if it is appropriate. There is no minimum nor maximum number of chapters in a D.Min. Project; typical projects have 5-7 chapters.

### INTRODUCTION

Introductions may be significantly different according to the purposes of individual projects. There are a variety of ways that an introduction may be written. In some projects, the introduction is a few pages at the beginning of chapter one. Other authors prefer to have a separate introduction due to the amount of background material which must be reported as the context for the whole study. The introduction is the place for the writer to share the story of his personal interest in the topic and why it is deemed to be important. Introductions are also a good place to describe the research process for the reader. Typically, the introduction is written last, after one has completed the research and writing of the whole project. The length of the introduction is at the discretion of the writer.

### BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL CHAPTER

After an introduction, one of the initial chapters in a D.Min. Project is a study of Sacred Scripture. In this section, students explore the biblical/theological foundations that undergird the approach to the topic. Students should be conversant with the multiple disciplines related to biblical studies – hermeneutics, exegesis, biblical theology, redemptive history, systematic theology and be able to utilize them in the research process. In addition to Bible commentaries, texts on biblical and/or systematic theology may be useful in writing this chapter. It is expected that a student is able to do graduate (M.Div.-level) exegetical work, including the use of biblical languages where appropriate.

This research component is more than merely collecting a series of proof texts from the Old and New Testaments. Students are asked to concentrate on fewer passages but to dig deeper into specific texts which directly relate to or have inferences for the project topic. As one identifies significant pericopes for study, remember that while the Scripture may not explicitly address your topic, there may be broad categories of biblical material that are applicable to your project. These broader implications should be applied with care utilizing the biblical disciplines listed above.

Exegetical papers are a specialized genre of Christian scholarship. As you read journal articles, essays, commentaries, etc., that discuss your selected biblical texts, note the style of writing and documentation which is distinctive of this category of research.

#### HISTORICAL CHAPTER

The D.Min. Project requires that students ask the question: What has the Christian tradition said about these things? There are a number of ways to approach answering this question. There may be a particular era in church history that uniquely dealt with an issue that relates to your topic. Perhaps there is an historical individual who has made a significant contribution to the discussion surrounding your topic. Or, there may be utility to tracing a theme down through the history of the church in order to grasp the big picture. Any of these approaches may be legitimate; the key is sticking to the parameters you have set in the approved proposal and not getting sidetracked.

A few illustrations may help: If one is studying small groups, work on John Wesley and the Methodist Societies would be a good focus. If one is interested in prayer, Zinzendorf and the Moravians could be a possibility; on preaching, examining the ministry of Spurgeon; on worship, discussing Calvin's views would be instructive. Sometimes it may be useful to compare and contrast two historic individuals' writings on a particular topic. One could also choose to concentrate on a specific historic theologian and his writings on a particular doctrine. Whatever one chooses, it will be important to explain your choices in the written project. The seminary faculty is available to help you think through the options and find resources.

It is important that the history chapter contain both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources will provide background material as well as summaries of data. Primary sources (actual writings from each period) will make you dig deeper and become a practicing historian who deciphers an ancient text, seeking to interpret and apply it to contemporary contexts. Journal articles are often a good source for identifying resources; let other scholars help you identify key primary texts to consider.

Reading good history greatly aids one in writing good history. Note how historians use and quote sources; carefully observe documentation. Keep good records of your research; inaccurate citation and footnotes are a nuisance when one has to redo them. Wherever possible, use hard copy texts for citation of historical sources not online sources or electronic collections.

#### CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE REVIEW CHAPTER

As you read broadly in the area of your topic, you will soon discover that there are a handful of key players in current discussions. These key persons are where you should concentrate the research. The expectation is that you can rehearse the standard account of thinking in this field within the chapter. Journal articles will assist you in identifying these major contributors to the body of knowledge.

It is important to remember that a literature review is not an annotated bibliography nor a book review. You should not sequentially rehearse the data in one book or journal article and then move to the next book. The expectation is that you will synthesize the materials from multiple books/journals around particular themes and then write the review based on these themes. In this way you make the material

yours rather than simply rehearsing the contents of one book after another. Journal articles in the field may help you come up with a good outline for the chapter. It is not plagiarism to borrow structure but to steal words (see Turabian 7.9-7.10)<sup>1</sup> Observe how other writers review literature for some hints on how to write a good review.

When writing the literature review, it is appropriate to reserve your comments on the material to footnotes and/or a summary section at the end of the chapter. Your purpose in the chapter is to report what experts are saying about your topic. Your perspective as an experienced ministry professional is important and your evaluation of the surveyed material is necessary; however, to write well in an academic paper, one should be careful to “share one’s opinion” sparingly except in appropriate portions of the paper.

#### ANALYSIS OF MINISTRY MODELS (Separate Chapter)

When a student chooses to incorporate a study of existing models of ministry, it will be important to structure the analysis carefully. For example, if one plans to review several models for small groups, the writer will need to create a consistent pattern of analysis so the review is even-handed and coherent. Select several sub-topics – small group leaders, group dynamics, timeframe, materials, etc. and evaluate each small group model using these same categories. It may be necessary to digress from this pattern at some points, but, consistency makes for smooth writing and reading. In this section, it is expected that the writer will interject more of his personal perspective as he is evaluating these models for the purposes of contributing to his own “new model” of ministry.

In order to compare and contrast existing models it may be necessary to quote from significant portions of material in the written body of the project. In this instance, it will be important for the student to get permission from the authors to quote their materials in the D.Min. Project; this is especially true for any copyrighted materials. One option for lengthy materials may be to put this data in an appendix to which the author could refer in the text. This is a judgment call that the writer must make. The key is to ensure clear communication through good writing; always, keep the reader in mind.

#### REPORTING ON SURVEYS, QUESTIONNAIRES, INTERVIEWS (Separate Chapter)

If the student is utilizing non-library field research in the project, the clear reporting of the collected data is the crucial issue. Consistency of recording, collecting and reporting on questionnaires is required so that fair inferences may be drawn from the results.

The student may want to seek assistance from someone in the congregation that has expertise in this area of research. Examine questionnaires by others to glean ideas for both structure and questions. Observe how others report the data. Be reserved in reporting results from questionnaires. Unless one is an expert in statistical analysis, be tentative in reporting results, pointing to what “may be indicated” in the study.

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<sup>1</sup>Turabian, Kate L., et.al. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2013).

Some helpful books for designing and conducting valid surveys are:

- ***The Survey Handbook*** (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) by Arlene Fink
- ***Studying Congregations*** edited by Nancy Ammerman et.al.

It may be appropriate to schedule follow-up interviews after collecting completed surveys. Personal interview often turns up more information since surveys may not always be asking the right questions. Interviewing “experts” should be based upon a consistent set of questions that are presented to each person interviewed. This is especially important for writing up the results of the interviews. Note in Turabian, 17.6.3, how one is to document interviews in footnotes and bibliography.

#### NEW MODEL OF MINISTRY CHAPTER

The outcomes chapter marks the culmination of the D.Min. project as a whole. Each research chapter has been structured to contribute to this practical section of the project. Here the student answers the “so what” question, applying the research to the contemporary practice of ministry. This “hands on” section must show clear connections to the writer’s own ministry context or be applicable to the larger church.

Creativity is encouraged in this chapter; students may use charts, graphs, outlines, power point slides, pictures, electronic media, etc. For example, the “new model” of ministry might be a set of sermon outlines, church school lessons, a training manual, weekend retreat schedule, handbook, etc. Appendices that relate to this chapter may also be appropriate.

The presentation of material in this chapter may take a variety of forms, but, there must also be a written narrative section which explains the materials presented. The reader should be clearly guided through the practical section so that these ministry materials could potentially be used by others and transferable to other contexts.

#### CONCLUSION

This part of the written project may be a separate chapter or the last section of the final chapter. Here the student should summarize the work of the project and underscore the final outcomes of the totality of the research. A good conclusion will also suggest future areas of research that relate to the topic. What important issues were raised in the study that the writer was not able to pursue due to the parameters of the study? Are there lingering questions you have about the subject which you were not able to adequately explore? A good researcher acknowledges that the last word on the topic has not yet been written!

## ❖ General Notes about Writing

As an academic research project, it is most appropriate to write in the third person. An exception to this general rule is the use of first person in the introduction, conclusion and sometimes in explanatory footnotes – in these instances the writer is bringing his personal perspective to bear on the subject and not reporting research data.

Do not use online sources unless they are the only way to access certain content material. In an academic work, citation should be from credible published sources one can find in a library. Even though historical texts, for example, are available in electronic versions or online, students should locate “hard copies” of these materials in standard editions for purposes of direct quotations in a D.Min. Project. In the rare instance that an online source is utilized, footnotes and bibliographic entries must be created according to the standards found in Turabian, 17.1.10, 17.2.7, 17.5.8 and 17.7 (See also the appendix on formatting citations)

Use quotations sparingly and rarely recite long passages. A proper quotation is used only for a poignant statement from an author that is crucial to the discussion. It is always preferable to summarize an author’s arguments and then use a footnote at the end of the section to indicate the source. Plagiarism is serious business; a footnote at the end of a paragraph covers a multitude of sins! Quotes should never be used to rehearse facts that are common knowledge in a field.

At the end of each chapter, it is helpful to have a brief summary section which rehearses the primary conclusions of the research. In addition, a few comments about the ways this chapter will contribute to the “new model” can be useful. The last paragraph of a chapter should contain a transition which bridges the current chapter into the next chapter. This segue paragraph helps tie the whole project together for the reader.

Before one turns in a full draft of the project, it is recommended that the student hire or recruit someone with writing expertise to review the whole project (an English teacher for example). This person may review the written work for grammar, vocabulary and style. Another set of eyes looking for typographical errors is also required. Faculty advisors expect a “clean” copy of the project draft. A solid project gives attention to presentation as well as content. Consult Turabian and the appendix on formatting as you research so that you get the formatting correct from the beginning; sloppy or inconsistent work will be returned for revision.

## ❖ Working with your Advisor

1. As soon as you are appointed an Advisor, contact him via phone or e-mail to receive any special instructions or to discuss any issues you may have
2. Submit a hardcopy of chapters (one at a time) to Advisor unless otherwise instructed
3. When you receive feedback from the Advisor, do not send the revised chapter (per Advisor’s corrections) back to the Advisor. Incorporate these revisions into the full draft that will be submitted when you have received feedback on every chapter. If the Advisor desires to see a revised chapter before the full draft he may request this.

4. When the student has revised each chapter per directions from the Advisor, these should be collated into a full draft along with title page, contents, bibliography, etc. This full draft must be submitted by the last day of **January** in order to be eligible for graduation in May.
5. Two hardcopies (in three-ring binders) of the full draft should be submitted to the D.Min. office. These shall be distributed to Faculty Advisor and Faculty Reader (appointed by D.Min. Director). An electronic copy in PDF format must also be submitted to the librarian by e-mail; you are responsible for converting your document into that format, so get help locally if you are unsure about how to do so.

#### ❖ **Working with your Librarian**

The Librarian and other library staff are here to help you with the research and citation process for your project. The sooner you begin to interact with them, the easier your project process will go. RTS has a wealth of library resources available to you as you work on your project.

#### ❖ **The Oral Exam**

The Oral Exam is the formal evaluation of the D.Min. Project. Although the student has received Advisor comments on specific chapters along the way, the Oral Exam will be a more comprehensive look at the whole project, including additional feedback from the Faculty Reader. The Project Committee (Advisor and Reader) may ask the student to incorporate additional revisions (major or minor) into the final copy of the Project before it is officially approved.

1. The student, Advisor/Reader will negotiate a suitable time for the Oral Exam on campus by the last day of **February**.
2. Students are asked to bring of personal copy of the project to the Oral Exam.
3. The student will be asked to make a very brief presentation on the project to the Advisor/Reader.
  3. The Advisor/Reader will go through the whole Project with the student to ask clarifying questions, consider implications and encourage further discussion on the topic.
4. At the conclusion of the oral exam, the Advisor/Reader will vote to a) sustain the oral exam, b) sustain the exam with required minor revisions or c) delay sustaining the exam until major revision is completed and reviewed.

#### ❖ **Criteria for Evaluating the Written Project**

1. Thoroughness of research
2. Clear communication
3. Integration of theory and practice
4. Application to the Practice of Ministry
5. Good grammar, spelling, and use of vocabulary
6. Footnotes and Bibliography in correct style
7. Heading and sub-headings appropriate and in proper format

## ❖ D.Min. Project Timeline

This timeline is provided as a general guide. Not all elements may need to occur in the exact order listed – some will be taking place at the same time or may overlap other elements. But the general flow should follow what you see listed. When in doubt, contact your project advisor or the D.Min. director.

1. Completion of the *Doctoral Project and Research Methodologies* course
2. Written proposal (submitted to D.Min. Director/D.Min. Committee)
  - Proposal submitted per guidelines
  - Revisions and resubmission / further research
  - Approval of proposal / advisor appointed (pay first half of project fee)
3. Further research (in consultation with advisor) / merge sections of bibliography into one section
4. Writing
  - Make periodic contact with advisor and librarian for advice
  - Advisor approves draft of the whole
5. Final approval
  - Draft sent to D.Min. Director (2 hard copies) & librarian (electronic copy) by the last day of **January** prior to projected graduation date
  - Oral defense on campus (per guidelines) by last day of **February**
  - Make revisions per requirements of Advisor/Reader
  - When oral defense is sustained (pay second half of project fee)
6. End process
  - Final copy submitted electronically to Librarian with all corrections made for one last check
  - Once Librarian gives approval, print final paper copies per guidelines and turn in for binding by the last day of **March** before projected graduation
  - Fill out RIM & TREN forms, send both and also a final electronic copy to the Librarian in PDF format by the last day of **March**