



**OLIVET UNIVERSITY**  
**ZINZENDORF SCHOOL OF DOCTORAL STUDIES**

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**D.MIN. PROJECT HANDBOOK**

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**2024 - 2025**

# Doctor of Ministry Project Handbook (2024-2025)



Olivet University  
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## D.Min. Project Handbook Overview

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### Introduction

The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.), accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE), is a prestigious education program, designed to advance the candidates engaged in Christian ministries to the highest level in his or her field. The Doctor of Ministry degree is considered the terminal degree in the area of ministry, hence the graduates of the Doctor of Ministry program must demonstrate competent knowledge and insights that meets the high expectation. While maintaining its academic expectations, the emphasis of the Doctor of Ministry is the “practice of ministry.” Upon admission to the Doctor of Ministry Program, a candidate’s final goal for the degree to be awarded, will be to design, implement, evaluate, and record an original ministry-related project of high doctoral standards.

The degree emphasizes mastery of advanced knowledge regarding the purpose and practice of ministry in a specific area or field of ministry. As a candidate undertakes Doctoral studies, he or she must carefully review past achievements, current interests, and future focus of passion in God’s Kingdom. As a candidate considers a doctoral project, the goal of the work is to increase one’s knowledge about the practice of ministry. Many have chosen to view the Doctor of Ministry degree as similar to an Ed.D.in education or J. D. in law. People attaining this degree may be viewed as individuals responsible at the highest levels for maintaining Christ-centered values and practices within the church and its missions worldwide.

The program sharpens the skills of those actively engaged in ministry. Plenary seminars and lectures are designed to allow ministers to continue their ministry throughout the duration of the program. Professors will teach the most current methods of ministry in various fields through seminars, classes, and dialog with students. The incorporation of technology is also emphasized by the faculty. The D.Min. Program requires the successful completion of 45 credits (using the quarter system), each credit requiring about thirty clock hours of work. This includes not only what the student does, but significant interaction with an instructor, mentor, or other supervisor.

This doctorate provides an opportunity for high academic achievement, and develops intellectual and practical capability of practicing ministers by Christian professionals. The Doctor of Ministry program at Olivet University seeks to satisfy the standards as defined by the Association of Theological Schools:

“...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 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. Upon completion of the doctoral project, there shall be an oral presentation and evaluation.

The completed written project, with any supplemental material, should be accessioned in the institution's library."<sup>[1]</sup>

The Doctor of Ministry at Olivet is an adult learning experience. Only people who have demonstrated previous academic excellence and ministry achievement should be interested in pursuit of advanced learning. An applicant should have an M.Div. degree and three years of ministry experience. Applicants will get out proportionately from the program- what they are willing to invest in time and effort. It is designed to be an active, independent learning experience with phased 'building block' milestones. Those who wish to be considered for admission to the program should fill out the online application form at <http://apply.myolivet.com>.

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<sup>[1]</sup>Bulletin 43, Part 1, The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, 1998. p.112-113.

## Program Goals

In the context of Olivet University's mission, completion of the D.Min program will enable students to:

- Enhance their theological and practical effectiveness in a chosen ministry field.
- Have contributed a meaningful research and a project to a chosen ministry field.
- Demonstrated the ability to interpret the context of their ministry through biblical/theological as well as historical/social inquiry.
- Become a model of Christ-like living in word and deed.

## Program Summary

There are four phases to the Doctor of Ministry program. In each phase, approximately 25% of the required 45 credits are to be earned.

### Phase 1: Core Courses Phase

#### Key Tasks

- Complete core courses (THEO800, MINS800, MINS803, MINS824, RSCH800)
- Write project background
- Attend the first year colloquium
- Select ministry track

An important assignment in Phase 1 is to write a project background. The project background should reflect the student's current ministry interests such as important historic, social, cultural, demographic influence. It can also reflect the view of Christian world and key issues at hand.

### Phase 2: Ministry Track Phase

#### Key Tasks

- Track module courses
- Form Doctoral Committee
- Attend the second year colloquium

The Ministry Track Modules are an integral part of completing Phase 2 of the D. Min. Program. As the student reads books, articles, journals, and other material related to his or her planned project, it is important to begin organizing quotations and references.

The reading and research to complete the Ministry Track Modules will demonstrate the student's comprehensive knowledge on Biblical background, historical background, theological background, and the current state of the art in the planned area of the D. Min. project.

### Phase 3: Project Proposal Phase

#### Key Tasks

- Write foundation paper for project area of ministry
- Complete a D.Min. project proposal
- Comprehensive examination and approval of project proposal

As the student completes Phase 3, this assists in refining the focus for the final project. The student should continually discuss with his or her Mentor regarding (1) what is the state of the art of work in the problem area, and 2) how is the candidate's proposed project hypothesis designed to advance ministry practice in the problem area.

In the third phase, the student should secure approval of the project proposal during the comprehensive examination. The completion of a foundation paper allows the student to present the project proposal and the foundation paper in front of his/her Doctoral Committee. The presentation is led by the Ministry Track Leader. Drafting chapters 1-3 of the Final Paper can be pursued right after approval is secured. This will accelerate project completion in Phase 4. The student may submit to his or her mentor to receive early feedback.

### Phase 4: Final Paper on D.Min. Project Phase

#### Key Tasks

- Project conducted and feedback gained for analysis
- Organize project analysis and draw conclusions
- Identify future refinements and promulgation options among broader audience
- Completed final paper
- Oral defense before Doctoral Committee, refinements, and graduation

In the fourth and final phase of the Doctor of Ministry program, the candidate is to conduct and analyze the data gathered by the project and complete the Final Paper. The candidate should closely work with his or her Mentor in finishing the paper and make any necessary edits and refinements. The main content of the completed Final Paper should be approximately 120 pages in length, excluding the front matters, appendices, etc. The Final Paper is to be accompanied by a 15-20 page English summary and a one page abstract in the language of the paper.

Electronic copies of the Final Paper and English summary must be submitted to the candidate's Doctoral Committee by March 31th of the Graduation year for June Graduation. The D.Min. Office schedules an oral defense, as conducted by the Doctoral Committee. The candidate may have to make adjustments depending on the decision of the Doctoral Committee. Once the candidate completes the oral defense, he or she then completes changes suggested for the Final Paper. After changes are completed and approved by the Mentor, the Candidate coordinates with the D. Min. Office to prepare three bound copies of the Final Paper. The Candidate receives a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Olivet University!

## **Project Overview**

The Projects in the Doctor of Ministry program are grouped within Ministry Tracks such as:

1. Education
2. Cross Cultural Communication
3. Church Planting and Evangelism
4. Gospel and IT
5. Church Music and Worship
6. Business as Mission
7. Spiritual Formation
8. Children and Youth Ministry
9. Media and Design

Examples of ministry projects include:

- Urban Evangelism Guide
- Classical Nativity Music
- Blog / Twitter Evangelism
- Bible Study Workbook – Galatians – Romans – Lenten Study
- Youth – College – Adult – Husbands – Women Ministry Guide
- Equipping Church Planters
- Leadership and Development in an Intercultural Context
- Korean Strategies for Japan Ministry – China Ministry
- Improvement in the Practice of Worldwide Missionary Activities
- A Course in Member Care
- How to Address Post-Modern Issues Among Students
- Worship Guide for Small Church
- A New Model for Stewardship Training

- New Ideas Concerning Distance Learning, Student Chat Rooms, e-Library
- Discipleship Guide for Chinese University Students

This list is a sampling of potential projects to start a candidate thinking of their respective and gifts. It is not an exhaustive list, but is designed to initiate creative thinking and reflection.

The student should seek God's will in determining their interests and choosing a project. Let Romans 12:1-2 be your guide.

"Therefore I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasant to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by renewing your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is- his good, pleasing and perfect will."

## Doctoral Committee

The learning is "transactional" in that candidates realize everyone brings something "to the table". Students will find it important to draw from the experience and transactions with others on a project. In addition to literature reviews and reading in the subject area of interest; Olivet will provide input through Annual Intensive Colloquium, Mentors, the Olivet library, peer group interaction, and on-line resources. The Doctoral Committee consist of Ministry Track Leader, the Mentor, a third reader, and two additional doctoral council members. The Ministry Track Leader, the Mentor and the third reader make up the core doctoral committee in assisting the student in phase 2-4. This committee will support the student in his or her work; helping prepare the Final Paper and then for the oral defense. The committee also approves the Project Proposal and Foundation Paper. The mentor of the Doctoral Committee must be proficient in the language of the project.

Further description of the members of the Doctoral Committee:

- Ministry Track Leader- member of the faculty with an earned doctorate and considerable experience in the field.
- Mentor- a person who has already earned a doctorate degree, who will be a wise and faithful advisor, friend, and teacher -( see Exhibit 3 for the job description).
- Third Reader- a person who has already earned a doctoral degree, who brings specific expertise and experience in the candidates chosen field of study and endeavor.
- Two additional doctoral council members of the Zinzendorf School of Doctoral Studies.

## Final Paper Overview

The Final Paper will incorporate the form of a professional paper to be catalogued in a library. It will be of a quality to be published and distributed for use by colleagues. Papers written in each Phase of the Doctor of Ministry program should also incorporate the form of a professional document. Parts of each of these papers will most likely be incorporated in the Final Paper; thus a student saves time by early on adhering to a professional standard. The Final Paper addresses the implications of one's findings for the practice of ministry.

The Project Proposal Form is an important document for the student to complete at the end of Phase 3 prior to beginning the D. Min. Project. The Project Proposal is to be approved by the Doctoral



Committee as mentioned in the previous section. From the date of admission into the D. Min. program the student has (6) six years to complete the D. Min. Project and Final Paper.

Throughout the D.Min. program, papers written in English are to follow the standard Turabian procedures.<sup>[1]</sup> Papers prepared in another language will comply with the Doctoral Paper Format supplement document provided by Olivet University.

The project will reflect critically on some aspect of ministry and be useful to professional colleagues. It is not essential that the theories practiced in the project result in a positive outcome. It is equally important to understand and report on theories that did not work. We learn in life from both our successes and failures.

If the final research project or paper involves human research, OU requires formal review and approval through the Doctoral Council, which is the acting ethics review board (ERB). It has been designated to approve, monitor, and review all research involving human subjects in the Doctor of Ministry program. The ERB ensures that the any human subjects are not placed at undue risk, that they have voluntarily agreed to participate and that they have received appropriate informed consent. The ERB is responsible to meet all federal regulations and that all ERB members have had appropriate training. (Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46)

Our prayer at Olivet is the entire Doctoral experience is challenging, collaborative, reflective, and transforming for the student. The University's goal is to set up an environment for growth in learning and expression that will happen for each student as they progress towards their degree.

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<sup>[1]</sup>Kate L. Turabian. *A manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations Chicago Style and Students and Researchers*, 9<sup>th</sup>ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

## **Mentor and Ministry Track Leader Responsibilities**

Project Mentors teach, support, encourage their students. A Mentor may have no more than three Doctor of Ministry students at a time. The Mentor relationship should begin as the student completes Phase 1 Core Courses. The Mentor guides students through the Project Proposal phase and then on until the completion of the D. Min. Project. Mentors and students are to in be regular contact and either must notify the D.Min. Office if this is not happening. Mentors file reports twice a year with the D. Min office on the student's progress or lack thereof. The Ministry Track Leader, Mentor, Third Reader, and two additional doctoral council members are responsible for the oral defense and approval, with revisions, of the Project Proposal.

The Mentor must be fluent in the language the student will be using for the Project.

The Ministry Track Leader and Director of the D.Min. Program make Mentor assignments on their professional judgment and have the final authority for these assignments. However, the student does have the right to appeal the assignments or the committee decisions to the Doctoral Council.

## EXHIBIT 1: FOUNDATION PAPER AND PROJECT PROPOSAL

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During phase 3, the student should:

- Complete a Foundations Paper(s) to summarize state of the art in field of interest.
- Complete D. Min. project Proposal and Oral discussion with Mentor / Ministry Track Leader

A foundation paper should include:

- Biblical foundations – what Bible references can be cited that provide clarity, affirmation and interpretation regarding the ministry area chosen by the candidate
- Historical foundations – What are the historic roots of God’s action through people as they lived out their faith regarding the ministry area? What changes or trends have occurred during recent years?
- Theological foundations – Connecting the biblical and historical interpretation what is the basic theological perspective of the project. How would you formulate theological meanings that are appropriate the project at hand?
- The current state of the art of work that is underway regarding the proposed area should be summarized.

The paper will demonstrate the student’s comprehensive knowledge of his or her area of interest. A bibliography of between 30 and 40 references should be developed by the student including footnotes regarding quotations or ideas gleaned from library and research on the subject area at hand. A student should read and review 3,000 to 3,500 pages of materials in this Phase. The foundation paper can be 60-80 pages in length. It can be written in the language that will be used in the final paper.

Refine and focus a final decision for the student’s Doctoral Project.

- An important task in Phase 3 is to make a written and oral presentation of the student’s project proposal. This discussion should take place with the student's Mentor and Ministry Track Leader. What is the state of the art of work in the problem area? (Material from Phase 3 foundations paper is relevant)
- What is the student’s deal with the problem? (This begins research design activities)

A completed Project Proposal will reduce the oral project review to a written document. It will draw upon the Phase 3 Foundation Paper upon which the Project rests. The context is to be used by the student as a “laboratory” to grapple with the problem at hand and the research methodologies to be employed by the student will be discussed.

## EXHIBIT 2: DOCTOR OF MINISTRY FINAL PAPER

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### Chapter 1: Introduction and Background of the paper

Statement of the Problem

Negative effect of the Problem

What made the candidate interested in this problem?

Purpose of your Research

Significance of your study

Limitations or Delimitations

Definition of terms if it is necessary

Research Methods

### Chapter 2: Biblical/Theological Literature Review

Include what Bible says about your topics or related subject area. There should be enough address of the topic from Bible commentaries, theological texts, and articles. Be sure to use Old Testament as well as New Testament. Commentaries that are used in literature review should be proven as academically reliable sources.

Apart from the biblical review, the robust theological foundation should be demonstrated. For instance, in-depth theological analysis, evaluation, and application on the selected topics are required.

### Chapter 3: Historical Literature Review

Include what Church history says about the topic. Candidates can check if there are both primary and secondary historical sources which they can access to.

- **Contemporary Literature Review:**

DMin Final paper should review current literature (last 10-20 years) that related to the topic. Through reviewing current literature, you show that you are ready to apply research to your Dmin Project.

- **Field Research**

Field Research is necessary especially when you propose a new model of ministry. By reviewing contemporary models of ministry, you are able to gain insight which part you can make a contribution to ministry with your DMin Project.

### Chapter 4: Project description

- Purpose of Project: Re-introduce the purpose of the Project or the study.
- Design of Project: Define more specifically the research design with focus on its validity to targeted ministry.
- Targeted Participants: Identify which participants are to be selected and what is the method of sampling. Discuss or justify the sample size in this chapter.

- Procedure: Describe the methods and procedures of the projects.
- Instruments: Describe the data collection instruments.
- Hypotheses and Research Questions: State the hypotheses or research questions in the proper form and style.
- Data Collection and Data Analysis : Describe all methods and all procedure for data analysis: types of data to be analyzed, preparation of data for analysis. Remember to state not only what statistics will be used, but also to select the level of significance for all significance tests.
- Expected Result

## **Chapter 5: Evaluation of the result**

Data, Graph from the evaluation of Project. Survey, One on One meeting

**RESULTS** Provide the answer(s) to the research question with supporting data. Results of each hypothesis should be discussed separately so that the structure of this chapter is largely built around the hypotheses. Estimate: 20-30 pages

Present your findings and relate them to the research questions so that convincing answers are provided and you provide a solution to the stated problem or demonstrate your hypothesis. It is probably helpful to organize your chapter around your primary research questions

### ***Suggested Element of Chapter Five***

#### **The Study and Researcher**

- The Chapter's purpose
- Its organization
- Generic qualitative studies
- Brief restatement of the research question is also appropriate
- The researcher's interest in the phenomenon to be investigated
- The researcher's background, training, and experience in conducting ministry project.
- The role of the researcher played in data collection and analysis
- Discussion of significant effects the researcher may have had on the data at any stage of the project

#### **Description of the Sample**

- A detailed description of the participants sample actually used in the study, including demographic information. Participants' age, gender, ethnicity, educational status, and area of residence. Enough detail about the participants must be described to answer the research question.
- The chapter also should describe other participants or near- participants that withdrew or were withdrawn from the study, along with the reasons for their withdrawal. Finally, describe any other aspects of or influences on the sample participants and their participation that might bear on findings.

## **Research Methodology and Data Analysis**

Describes how the generic qualitative approach was applied to the process of data analysis. (Focus on how the analytic methods of thematic analysis and which approach to thematic analysis- inductive analysis, Theoretical Analysis or Thematic analysis with Constant Comparison.

## **Presentation of Data and Results of the Analysis**

- The basic meaning units derived from the data are presented (Generic Qualitative analysis begins with the raw data (which is not usually presented here; it may be summarized in appendixes)
- Meaning units are clustered into themes.
- The themes are described in more general terms.
- Each level of the analysis should be supported by actual words and portrayals from the data themselves.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion/Future work**

In this chapter, suggest the implications of your finding for a better understanding of your ministry setting. How your new model of ministry brings contributions to practice of current body of ministry. Relate your findings to previous studies. Also state the limits of the study or project carefully. If you discerned unexpected conclusion, highlights these.

Also you can imply how a new model of ministry will apply or expand to apply to ministry in future. You can also discuss recommendations for further studies. Those recommendations developed directly from the data or from methodological, research design or other limitation of the study or relevant to other research problems.

The Conclusion of final paper needs to be made after you discuss and check with your mentor about overall conclusion of your research and finding from your ministry project.

## EXHIBIT 3: MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

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**Primary Responsibility** – Teach, Support, Encourage and Mentor, in the spirit of Jesus, up to three Doctor of Ministry students from Admission to the Doctoral Program through Project Proposal phase, completion of D. Min. Project, paper writing, approval of Final Paper and oral presentation of student's final paper to the Expanded D.Min. Doctor Committee. The D.Min. committee is responsible for Final Paper approval and degree confirmation with Mentor agreement. The Mentor works competently in the Candidate's 'language of choice' and may also have English skill.

### Responsibilities

- Attend Doctor of Ministry Colloquium sessions as possible
- Interface with the Professional Associate(s) on the Project Team for input and approval of the Candidate's Project
- Meet regularly to advise the candidate; via telephone, in person, or internet
- Submit twice a year summaries for each candidate of meetings to the D.Min. Office
- Support establishment of a peer group of your candidates to advance their work
- Assure maintenance of the highest standards for Doctor of Ministry works
- Especially for non-English candidates, see that the written English summary is well prepared.
- Participate in the Candidate's Doctoral Committee work.
- Schedule Proposal and Final Project Defenses with the D.Min. Office.
- Assist with written and oral summary.
- Utilize the current D.Min. Handbook as a guideline for student work

### Additional Comments

- All Mentors must hold a D.Min., Ph.D., or other Doctoral degree from an accredited institution of higher learning.
- Mentors must participate in and complete Olivet D.Min. Mentor Training class.
- Mentor communication and questions should be routed to the Ministry Track Leader.
- Maintain, at all times, the Christ centered spirit of Olivet University.

## EXHIBIT 4: ENGLISH SUMMARY

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Since the English Summary of the Project is the basis for the oral presentation (or defense) before a Doctoral Committee. Final Papers in languages other than English shall have an English Summary. The Summary shall be an addendum to the Final Paper and appear after the Bibliography. The English Summary shall be approximately 15 - 21 pages in length, in Turabian form. The English Summary should be available at least two weeks before the Candidate's Oral Presentation.

The summaries are prepared after the Final Paper is completed. If a manual, study guide, artwork or the like is prepared for the D. Min. project, it is to be summarized also. After a Title page indicating the Complete Title of the Final Paper, the author, and Mentor, the six Sections of the Summary shall accurately reflect though brief in form the full text of the Final Paper. The numeration of footnotes will start at #1 in the Summary, and sources of footnotes should have already been included in the Bibliography; thus the English Summary does not have a separate Bibliography.

An outline of the English Summary with estimated page content is as follows:

Section	Approximate Pages
Introduction	1-2
State of the Art in Passion Area	4-5 (use footnotes if needed)
Proposed Project and Support	2-3 (summary project proposal)
Project Data Report	4-5 (tables, graphs may help)
Report Results	3-4
Future work in this Area	1-2
Approximate total	15-21

## **EXHIBIT 5: ETHICS REVIEW BOARD (ERB) APPROVAL**

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In general, research conducted by students for the D.Min. degree falls into the category of “exempt” research, that is, the proposed research project was reviewed and it was determined that the only involvement of human subjects is in one of the categories listed under 45 CFR 46 Section 101(b)(1)-(6) and 21 CFR 56. 104(d). Recently announced changes make exemptions even more likely.

The student completes and submits to the Doctoral Committee the “Application for Human Subjects Review” and all relevant accompanying documentation. The Doctoral Committee Chair reviews the submission for completeness. Corrections and/or additional information may be requested as appropriate. If the determination is that the research is exempt from further review, the Chair sends an email to that effect to the student and the student is free to proceed with the project. If the determination is that it is eligible for expedited review, the Chair is the person who also handles expedited reviews and notifies the student of the results of the review. If the project requires review by the full board, it is placed on the agenda of an upcoming meeting and the application packet is provided to all board members. The Chair notifies the student of the outcome of the review.

The student must get approval from the ERB for any change in a protocol that affects human subjects and submit a Request for Change in Protocol to the ERB. Approval must be obtained before proceeding.

The Doctoral Council, which is the acting ethics review board (ERB). It has been designated to approve, monitor, and review all research involving human subjects in the Doctor of Ministry program. The ERB ensures that the any human subjects are not placed at undue risk, that they have voluntarily agreed to participate and that they have received appropriate informed consent. The ERB is responsible to meet all federal regulations and that all ERB members have had appropriate training. (Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46)