

Doctor of Ministry

2026-2027 Program Handbook



CENTRAL BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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Disclaimer

This handbook is prepared to provide our students with information and guidelines. Central Baptist Theological Seminary of Minneapolis can change or amend policies and practices described in this handbook at any time, with or without advance notice.

If you have any questions regarding this disclaimer or the contents of this handbook, please discuss them with the director of D. Min. studies.

Notice of Revision

This handbook is a revised version of any previous D.Min. handbook issued by Central Baptist Theological Seminary of Minneapolis.

This handbook supersedes and revokes all prior versions of a handbook or any memo, bulletin, policy, or procedure on any subject discussed in this handbook that has been issued prior to the date occurring below.

This revised D. Min. handbook is effective beginning July 1, 2026.

Central Baptist Theological Seminary

Doctor of Ministry

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Program Handbook

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GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Thank you for your interest in the Doctor of Ministry program at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. From the cabinet, to the faculty, to the students, everyone involved in the D.Min. program is serious about doing ministry in the context of faithfulness to Scripture. Your reading this demonstrates that you have an interest in furthering your knowledge and skills so that your ministry might be enhanced. This program emphasizes a hands-on approach to ministry within an academic setting.

At Central Seminary, we want to equip ministers whose influence will outlive them. This is the purpose of our Doctor of Ministry program. The D.Min. does not aim to train scholars to pursue research. Its goal is to prepare men of God to minister in such a way that lives and churches are forever changed.

All of the students who enter our D.Min. program have already completed the minister's basic training, the M.Div. Degree or its equivalent. They have all spent years of their lives in vocational ministry, learning where their strengths and weaknesses lie. They are currently active in full-time ministry. They come to Central Seminary to sharpen tools that they have already been using. They come to increase their competence in areas of weakness and to excel in their areas of strength.

At Central Seminary, they find teachers who have mastered the biblical and theological disciplines that make for sound Christian thinking. These same teachers, however, have also taken their learning into the real world of ministry. They have pastored congregations, planted churches, and administered Christian organizations. They know exactly what their students are experiencing because they have lived it. They are not dry-as-dust academicians, but men with a yearning to communicate what they have learned both in academics and in ministry.

The D.Min. program at Central Seminary brings together experienced students with experienced professors to create a true community of learning. It is more than an academic program; it is a network of relationships in which students and teachers build one another up so that each becomes as effective as he can be for Jesus Christ. The tough academics are there, but so is the heart for ministry.

If you want to know more about Central Seminary's Doctor of Ministry program, please call or email me. I am eager to hear from you.

Cordially,



Kevin T. Bauder
Director of D.Min Studies
kbauder@centralseminary.edu

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Admissions Policies

Applications for the Doctor of Ministry program may be secured online at centralseminary.edu. To gain admission into the program, the applicant must meet the following qualifications:

- The student must have graduated from a recognized institution with an M.Div. degree or its equivalent.
- Normally, the applicant's transcripts must show an average minimum grade of B during his M.Div. studies. A limited number of students with an average grade lower than B may be admitted on a probationary basis, if otherwise acceptable.
- The applicant must normally have completed 3 years of significant vocational ministry (paid or unpaid) or logged at least 100 hours of biblical counseling subsequent to receiving the M.Div. degree.
- Applicants must demonstrate growth and competence in church or parachurch ministry and leadership. They must give evidence of the potential to minister effectively while successfully completing doctoral studies.
- Applicants must be engaged in vocational ministry when entering the program. If at any time they leave vocational ministry, they may be suspended from the program.
- Applicants must secure the endorsement of their church or other ministry to pursue the Doctor of Ministry program. References from others who know their ministry will also be required. Forms are provided and procedures are specified in the application packet.
- The applicant may be required to pass an entrance interview with a faculty committee. In some cases, the student may be granted provisional acceptance and the interview may be held in connection with the student's first seminar.
- The applicant must demonstrate the ability to use the English language with skill and precision. Normally, the applicant will submit a 1500-word philosophy of ministry or biblical counseling paper in proper Turabian form.
- At the faculty's discretion, the applicant may be required to pass a written examination of academic, theological, and biblical competence.
- The applicant must meet all spiritual and doctrinal requirements for general admission into Central Baptist Theological Seminary.

International Students

- All international students must submit all of the application documents that are required of any new student. Transcripts of academic achievement submitted in any foreign language must be accompanied by a certified translation into English.
- International students whose first language is not English will be required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language. TOEFL is administered by Education Testing Services (ETS). Information can be obtained at the ETS website (www.ets.org/toeflets.html). TOEFL scores must be submitted by all applicants from non-English speaking countries. Applicants must achieve a score in the range of B1-7 to C2-12 (7-12 out of 12) on the TOEFL Essentials Test. TOEFL scores more than two years old will not be accepted. Information regarding the certificate or tests may be obtained

from American embassies and consulate offices of the United States Information Service or from TOEFL, P.O. Box 6154, Princeton, NJ 08541-6154. Applicants who have received a degree from a college or university in the United States within the previous five years may not need to submit a TOEFL score.

Special Students

Individuals may enroll in Central Seminary's D.Min. program on a non-degree basis. Applicants must be enrolled in a credible and comparable degree program at another institution, or have already received a credible, terminal degree. Applicants may complete an abbreviated application which includes:

- Testimony of salvation
- Transcripts from current or highest level of education

Individuals who are not currently enrolled or have completed a credible and comparable degree must complete the standard application process. Both applications are available on the website and from the admissions office. See *Program Information* for further information.

M. Div. Equivalence

Applicants will normally be admitted to the Doctor of Ministry program on the strength of a Master of Divinity degree plus four years of ministry experience.

Applicants may be admitted with a different recognized Master's Degree in a ministry-related field (Master of Arts in some biblical discipline, Master of Religious Education, or Master of Ministry), subject to the following stipulations.

Category One: Master's degree + 10 years of experience

The applicant must meet the following minimums, in addition to possessing a Master's Degree.

- **Theology** – At least 12 credits of graduate theology plus a course in Hermeneutics
- **Biblical Studies/Biblical Theology** – At least 12 credits of graduate Biblical Studies or Biblical Theology (this total must include both NTI and OTI)
- **Church History** – At least 8 credits of graduate Church History (including both Baptist History and Evangelicalism/Fundamentalism).
- **Practical Theology** – At least 6 credits of graduate Practical Theology (M.Min. credits can only apply toward practical theology requirements) or Biblical Counseling (if pursuing the biblical counseling concentration). The Biblical Counseling credits must include a course or courses on the history and theology of biblical counseling.
- **Biblical Language** – At least one year of basic grammar in a biblical language, either at the undergraduate or graduate level; BI 599 Introduction to Biblical Languages (3 credit course); or successful completion of the Central Seminary entrance examination on a biblical language.

Category Two: Master's degree + 5 years of experience or logged at least 170 hours of biblical counseling

The applicant must meet the following minimums, in addition to possessing a Master's Degree.

- ***Undergraduate Ministry Degree*** – Applicants who hold a Baccalaureate Degree in Bible, theology, or ministry must complete at least sixty hours of graduate-level ministry education, including the above minimums.
- ***Undergraduate Non-Ministry Degree*** – Applicants who hold a Baccalaureate Degree in some other discipline must complete at least seventy-eight hours of graduate ministry education, including the above minimums.

Admissions Procedure

The admissions office should forward transcripts of M.Div. equivalency applicants to the coordinator of the D.Min. program. The D.Min. studies committee will review these applications on a case-by-case basis and will submit its decision through the D. Min. coordinator to the Registrar for processing and communication to the student.

Non-Discrimination

Central Baptist Theological Seminary admits qualified applicants into the D.Min. program who are personally committed to faith in Jesus Christ regardless of race, color, national origin, age, or disability.

Seminary Discretion

Central Seminary is not obligated to grant admission to any student, even if they possess all of the above qualifications. Enrollment in the program is a privilege and not a right. The decision of the seminary will be influenced by several factors, including the number of openings available in the program and the likelihood that the student will contribute to the aims of Central Baptist Theological Seminary and the intellectual and spiritual advancement of their fellow students.

Academic Policies

Appeals

Appeals on any matter of academic policy may be submitted in writing to the director of D.Min. studies, who will present the appeal to the faculty as required.

Auditing Courses

Currently enrolled D.Min. students may not audit D.Min. seminars.

Graduates of Central Seminary's D.Min. program, however, may audit D.Min. seminars at no cost as space allows. Graduates who audit classes will be expected to acquire the materials for and complete all required reading for the class. This privilege provides the Christian worker with a lifetime learning program. Students who audit classes will be expected to complete all required reading for the class but are not required to complete the projects or written

assignments. Following the class, a grade of AUD will be entered on the student's transcript. No grade points will be assigned.

Continuation in the Program

After admission into the D.Min. program, the student must register to take at least one course during each academic year (July 1 through June 30) until the coursework is completed. Failure to do so will result in the assessment of a continuation fee equal to the charge for one credit hour, at the time of the summer term registration. Students should recognize that the program cycles through all courses every two and one-half years. A student who misses a course will have to wait that long before it is offered again. Under those circumstances, completing the degree program on time will become much more difficult. It is in every student's interest to complete the courses in order.

Course Extensions

All work for D.Min. courses must be completed within twelve weeks of the last day of the classroom session. Students who need an extension beyond this deadline may petition the professor for an additional four weeks. Extensions beyond four weeks will not normally be given, and must be approved by the director of D.Min. studies.

Duration of Program

The D.Min. program must be completed within eight (8) years after the first D.Min. course has begun.

Student Appeals

When students are assigned an advisor, they and the advisor will discuss their potential graduation date. If that date falls outside of the eight years, the student should appeal for an extension. The appeal should be sent to the director of the D.Min. committee but should be addressed to the committee. The appeal should state the reason the extension is necessary and a projected timeline for completing the program, taking into account extra coursework and the Major Project timeline.

Committee Procedures

Approval: The student will be notified of the committee's approval of the extension, but not the details of the extension. The director of the D.Min. committee will make a recommendation to the faculty at its next available meeting.

If the faculty approves of the director's recommendation, then the student will be notified as to the terms of the extension. The student must then agree, in writing, to the terms of the extension.

Denial: If the committee denies the appeal, the student will be notified as soon as possible. The student may appeal to the faculty if he disagrees with the committee's judgment. The faculty's decision is final.

Grading

After completing the first four seminars, if the student's GPA in the D.Min. program drops below 2.7, the student will be dismissed from the program.

D.Min. students are doing doctoral-level work. Therefore, student assignments will be graded more rigorously than assignments completed as part of basic seminary education. No grade lower than B- will be credited to the student's work toward graduation.

Grading Scale

A	96-100	4.0	C	81-84	2.0
A-	94-95	3.7	C-	79-80	1.7
B+	92-93	3.3	D+	77-78	1.3
B	89-91	3.0	D	72-76	1.0
B-	87-88	2.7	D-	70-71	0.7
C+	85-86	2.3	F	0-69	0.0

Grading Symbols

A	Work of exceptional quality
B	Work of commendable quality. A grade of at least B- must be earned for all seminars that are to be credited to the D.Min. degree.
C	Average work that might be expected from a person who already holds the M.Div. degree. Not acceptable toward a D.Min. degree but will be recorded on the transcript and averaged into the student's GPA.
D	Minimal work completed, but substandard. Not acceptable toward a D.Min. degree but will be recorded on the transcript and averaged into the student's GPA.
F	Failure to do minimal work. Not acceptable toward a D.Min. degree but will be recorded on the transcript and averaged into the student's GPA.
W	Withdraw. Students who withdraw after add/drop will receive the grade WF unless the withdrawal occurs less than 35 days prior to the first day of the classroom sessions. In this case, the student will receive the grade F.

Leave of Absence

Students who must interrupt their D.Min. studies because of changes in ministry or other concerns may apply for a leave of absence by addressing an explanatory letter to the director of D.Min. studies. The leave of absence allows the student to take a year away from the program without financial penalty. The student, however, remains under the statute of limitations for the program. Leaves of absence must be granted by the faculty and are intended for exceptional circumstances only. Under no circumstances will any student be granted more than two leaves of absence during the D.Min. program.

Standards of Conduct

As a community of present and future local church leaders, Central Seminary seeks to maintain high standards of integrity in all areas of life, including academics, work, ministry, and community relationships. Given these objectives, students are expected to maintain appropriate personal standards and to use wise judgment in matters pertaining to personal conduct.

As an institution, Central Seminary sets certain guidelines to encourage the cultivation of self-discipline in students. The possession and use of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, and tobacco are not permitted. Central Seminary also sees the biblical standards for human sexuality as prescribing a heterosexual relationship within marriage and sexual chastity for those who are single. Students are expected to conform to these standards, thereby giving clear evidence of a Christian life and character that commend the gospel, strengthen the church, and honor the Lord.

Transfer of Credit

Central Baptist Theological Seminary may permit the transfer of up to eight hours of credit into its D.Min. program, subject to certain stipulations. First, the credit must have been earned in another recognized doctoral program. Second, the credit must have been earned for courses that are equivalent to courses in Central Seminary's curriculum. Transfer of credit is not automatic, but must be recommended by the director of D.Min. studies and approved by the faculty. No credits may be transferred from any master's level degree program.

Add/Drop

Students may add or drop through Friday of the first week of a seminar.

Withdrawal from Courses

In order to withdraw from a course, a student must notify the seminary office in writing. Students who cancel their registration at least eight weeks prior to the classroom session will not be charged tuition for the course (though their registration fee will not be refunded). Students who withdraw after that will be charged according to the refund schedule. Once the

seminar has begun, all students who withdraw from the course will receive a WF. See Refunds for further information.

Withdrawal from the Program

Once a student has been accepted into the D.Min. program at Central Seminary, they are regarded as a student of the seminary and are bound by all of its policies. If at any time after acceptance the student desires to withdraw from the program, they must notify the director of D.Min. studies in writing of their decision. Until written notice is received, the student is still under the seminary's policies, and continuation fees will accrue. The student is required to settle all financial accounts with the seminary upon withdrawal.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Expenses

Tuition and Fees

Tuition per semester hour	\$495.00
Application fee	\$60.00
Activity fee	\$20.00
Library fee	\$50.00
Registration fee (non-refundable)	\$100.00
Late registration fee (additional to the registration fee above)	\$45.00
NSF check fee	\$35.00
Late payment fee	\$30.00
Diploma & graduation fee (Other required graduation charges that seniors must meet include such items as cap, gown, hood rental, and diploma cover.)	\$30.00
Transcript fee	\$10.00
Continuation fee	\$400.00
Major Project fee	\$1900.00
Binding fees per copy (student provides all pages to be bound)	\$50.00

Major Project Fee

Upon the approval of their major project proposal, students will be billed for one-half of the major project fee. The second half will be billed during the next semester.

Payments

When students complete registration, they are obligated to pay full tuition and fees. One half of the total cost of the course is due on the first day of the meeting of the class. The second payment is due on the first day of the month after the conclusion of the meeting of the class. A late payment fee will be assessed whenever a payment is missed. An additional late payment fee will be assessed every subsequent month the amount in question remains unpaid. Any issues concerning payment scheduling should be addressed to the provost.

Students must meet all financial obligations to the seminary (including the library) before they will be permitted to register for the next class, to graduate, or to receive an official transcript. Fees and tuition are subject to change. Students may pay their accounts by cash, personal check, MasterCard, VISA, American Express, or Discover. Canadian residents may pay with Canadian funds on a dollar-per-dollar basis with U.S. funds.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Nature of the Program

The Doctor of Ministry degree is a professional degree rather than a strictly academic credential such as the Th.D. or Ph.D. It is designed to offer those who already have extensive experience in vocational ministry the opportunity to increase their biblical and theological competence as well as their ministry skill. The program is neither purely practical nor purely theoretical but seeks to combine study with practical ministry. Students will expand their knowledge of theology and will sharpen their goals, refine their skills, and address their weaknesses in a seminary setting while continuing in active, vocational ministry.

Because the Doctor of Ministry program aims for a balance between theory and practice, none of the seminars is strictly theoretical. Every class is designed to lead immediately to the work of ministry. Course assignments will require the student to stretch intellectually, but every seminar will require students to integrate their learning with their ministerial practice.

The Doctor of Ministry program at Central Seminary focuses upon biblical exposition whether from the pulpit or in counseling situations. Students in other ministries are not excluded but must recognize that the classes will be shaped primarily to strengthen pastors and counselors.

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the Doctor of Ministry program is to enable students to increase their theological and ministerial skills as spiritual Christian leaders.

Objectives of the Program

Each student who completes the D.Min. program at Central Seminary will be able to:

- articulate and critique the various approaches to their discipline and defend their approach
- demonstrate advanced skills for study and writing in areas related to their concentration
- exhibit advanced skill in handling scripture by applying these skills either to various biblical genres or to various counseling situations
- display the ability to integrate the message of the Bible contextually, either through expositional preaching or through biblical counseling

Faculty Organization and Responsibilities

The D.Min. program has several divisions within the faculty. The following is a “User’s Guide” to explain how the faculty divides responsibility for the D.Min. students.

Doctor of Ministry Committee

The D.Min. committee functions as a subset of the faculty. The members of the committee were chosen by the faculty because they hold D.Min. degrees or have substantial pastoral experience. The purpose of the D.Min. committee is to streamline D.Min. issues to make the

program run smoothly. The committee is the first line of consultation and support for the director of D.Min. studies.

The following faculty members compose the D.Min. committee:

Dr. Kevin Bauder, Director

Dr. Brett Williams, Dr. Matthew Morrell, Dr. Jonathan Pratt, Dr. Nicolas Ellen, and

Dr. Joshua Stephens

The D.Min. committee will meet as needed to oversee the program. It will approve each student's abstract and proposal for the major project. When necessary, the D.Min. committee will make recommendations to the faculty.

Director of D.Min. Studies

The director of D.Min. studies is chosen by the D.Min. committee and approved by the president. He is charged with the day-to-day operations of the program, including overseeing every aspect of the program. He works in conjunction with and reports to the vice president of academic affairs.

Coordinator of D.Min. in Biblical Counseling Concentration

The Coordinator of D.Min. in Biblical Counseling Concentration oversees the biblical counseling course curricula, the completion of the 250 biblical counseling sessions required of each student, and the appointment of the advisors of the major project.

Major Project Committee

The director of D.Min. studies will appoint a project committee for each student near the conclusion of their coursework. The project committee is responsible for guiding the student through the process and grading the final project following the defense. The project committee will have the two faculty members described below.

Advisor

The advisor is the student's contact for the duration of the major project and serves as the student's advocate before the faculty. He functions as a counselor, giving direction to the student as he/she develops the major project. The advisor serves as the primary reader of the written report. He evaluates the project in consultation with the reader throughout every step of the process. The advisor will diligently strive to evaluate every student's submission and to return it as soon as possible, but always within four weeks of receiving it, unless providentially hindered.

Reader

The reader serves in a subordinate role to the advisor. The primary duty of the reader is to provide a second opinion in a timely manner on the topic selection, abstract, proposal, and project report. He will provide counsel for the student if requested by the advisor and, if needed, participate in meetings and correspondence with the student.

Non-Degree Students

A non-degree student may take up to 25% of the coursework required for a degree program either as credit or audit. In the D.Min. program, 25% equals two courses or eight credits. Auditors follow the audit policies in the catalog. Credits earned can be transferred into the D.Min. program at a later date, assuming the successful completion of the standard application process. Once a non-Degree application is accepted, the student may take courses for up to three years. Non-degree students are not eligible for Central Seminary's scholarships or awards.

Structure of the Program

The D.Min. degree at Central Baptist Theological Seminary requires each student to complete 32 course hours of work. These 32 hours will involve seven courses, four institutional distinctives exams, and a major project.

Of the seven seminars, two are designed to increase core competency: Creation, Sex, and Gender and Affections, Identity, and Idolatry. The remaining five seminars and the major project give the student the opportunity to develop skill in public ministry or biblical counseling. Additionally, students in the Biblical Counseling concentration will be required to complete 250 sessions of supervised biblical counseling; the advisor may waive up to 100 sessions of this requirement depending on the student's previous counseling experience.

The institutional distinctives exam is required for any students who have not received a degree from Central Seminary. The exam covers four topics: 1) cessationism; 2) dispensationalism; 3) fundamentalism; and 4) Baptist theology. A reading list will be given to each new student during his first course. These exams may be completed at any time during the student's program, but must be completed before the student may be admitted to candidacy.

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	Hours	Requirement
Core Courses	8	Creation, Sex, and Gender Affections, Identity, and Idolatry
Concentration Courses	20	<i>Concentration: Public Ministry</i> DM 809, DM 813, DM 814, DM 861, DM 886 <i>Concentration: Biblical Counseling</i> DM 830, DM 831, DM 832*, DM 833, DM 834
Institutional Distinctives Exams	0	Cessationism Dispensationalism Fundamentalism Baptist Theology
Major Project	4	Major Project and Report
Total Hours	32	

Course Structure

All courses in the D.Min. program are modular in structure. The requirements are divided into three areas: pre-modular requirements, class session requirements, and post-modular requirements.

Pre-Modular Requirements

The student will receive a syllabus at least three months prior to the beginning of the classroom session. The syllabus will contain requirements to be completed in preparation for the classroom session. In some circumstances, these requirements must be submitted by mail, email, or the seminary's Populi Learning Management System. In other cases, they will be due on the first day of the classroom session. Normally, the pre-modular requirements will include a substantial reading component of 2000–3000 pages of reading accompanied by writing assignments in the 5000–10,000 word range.

Classroom Session Requirements

All classroom sessions will center upon classroom interaction between students and the professor. In addition, the professor may require various sorts of work to be completed during the week of the classroom session. Unless otherwise specified, written examinations will not usually be administered. Classroom sessions will typically be offered in virtual classrooms using the Zoom platform. Where sufficient interest is shown, classroom sessions may also be offered in a physical classroom.

* DM 839 Addressing Common and Complex Women's Issues Through Biblical Counseling may be substituted for DM 832 (optional for woman only)

Post-Modular Requirements

The professor will assign a course project to be completed after the end of the classroom session. This project will involve the integration of the course's subject matter with the student's ministry. All work for the course must be completed within twelve weeks of the last day of the class session.

Distance Education

Every D.Min. course is offered through distance education in addition to residential classes. The distance education medium is synchronous, meaning that students participate live in classroom lectures and discussions without being physically present on campus. Each classroom is equipped with advanced software and hardware, high-definition cameras, monitors, and microphones to allow full integration and interaction. At times, everyone in the course will participate remotely. If this is the case, the professor will usually lead the class from his office. Because the classroom sessions are synchronous, coursework, attendance policies, and other class stipulations remain the same as in the residential program.

Distance Education

Technology Requirements

- PC, laptop, or tablet
- 4 GB of RAM – video streaming
- Zoom Application
- An internet connection – broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE)
- Hardwired via Ethernet cable or no more than 25' from modem
- Headset (ear and microphone) (e.g. Apple headphones)
- Speakers and a microphone – built-in or USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth
- A webcam or HD webcam – built-in or USB plug-in, or HD cam or HD camcorder with video capture card
- See the Zoom website for further information

Etiquette

While technology is able to bring the classroom discussion to the personal computer, there are several things to remember that will ensure that the distance and residential students have a good academic and professional experience.

- Room with a closed door – Distance students must remember that they are on camera and their face is showing on a monitor in the classroom. The student must be in a room with a closed door to ensure no unwanted interruptions such as children, spouses, pets, etc.
- Mute microphone until you speak – The software picks up on sound and will automatically bring the student's screen to the forefront of the classroom monitor. It is best to mute the microphone until you are ready to speak.
- Well-lit room – Any dark or blurry figure is a distraction to other students. Make sure you are in a well-lit room with the camera appropriately placed.
- Dress – A student should not be distracting in his/her attire and should be dressed modestly.

Meeting with Professors

With the Zoom platform, there can be one-on-one meetings (chat) between a student and a faculty/cabinet member. These meetings will be arranged via email or phone as needed by either the instructor/cabinet or student. In effect, this is the same as a personal meeting. This will ensure that a distance student has the same ability to contact and/or meet with a member of the faculty/cabinet as a residential student.

Technology Troubleshooting

If there is an issue with the technology, the student is to contact it@centralseminary.edu or troubleshoot at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206175806-Top-Questions>. Distance students should not contact professors for technology help.

THE MAJOR PROJECT

The major project is the culmination of one's Doctor of Ministry studies. It enables the student to research and develop expertise in a specific area of ministry. The major project, however, will be the student's largest hurdle and the greatest creative opportunity in this program—perhaps in his academic career. It will take time, perseverance, and planning. For most students, it is the first experience at writing a book-length piece of work. These factors, plus an already busy ministry schedule, mean that the project will not be completed unless it is carefully integrated into a student's schedule.

Ethical Guidelines for Research Involving Humans

Project proposals must include a developed explanation of research methodology. Because the DMin is professional in nature, some projects may require interactive research with human subjects. If this is the case, the project author must be continually aware of issues regarding dignity, privacy, and accuracy. Researchers will design, plan, execute, and report in a manner that is consistent with biblical and ethical principles, federal and state laws, and current academic standards. The researcher is responsible for understanding any laws that may apply.

Dignity

Every person is made in the image of God and must be treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

Privacy

Authorization: Persons involved (subjects) must knowingly and voluntarily participate in active research (gathering specific information/narratives about or from individuals). Researchers must obtain written or oral permission from the subject (oral permission must be recorded) and records must be available to the project supervisor upon request. Additionally, subjects should be made aware that DMin projects are public documents.

Anonymity: For data to be anonymous, there can be no possible way for the researcher to link the data to the subject. This can only be done through a third-party medium, for example, questionnaires that have no identifying marks. The project supervisor will decide if anonymous data gathering is pertinent to the project.

Confidentiality: If the researcher can link the data to the subject, then confidentiality must be observed unless the researcher has received explicit permission from the subject. Confidentiality refers to the protection of a person's identity, information, or story and his/her ability to control the collection dissemination of such data. Unless otherwise authorized, names and personality specifics must never be included in the project.

Waiving Anonymity/Confidentiality: For some projects (such as those using oral history or group structures), subjects may choose to waive their right to either confidentiality or anonymity. If this is the case, the researcher must make every effort to protect the subject's

privacy and inform the individual that anything they reveal may be disseminated and shared.

Accuracy

The researcher must report, write, and cite data and information received from or communicated by subjects in an appropriate and accurate way. This must be done with the subject's confidentiality and privacy in mind and in accordance with the seminary's research and writing standards.

Description of a Major Project

The D.Min. major project must not be confused with a dissertation. A dissertation is a work of research, whereas a major project is **an experiment in ministry**. A major project does involve a research component, but it cannot be written by simply looking in books. It requires a significant attempt by the student to implement or alter some aspect of ministry. Where a dissertation advances the body of knowledge, a major project advances the practice of ministry. A dissertation is a report of the findings of one's research. A major project is a report of something that one actually does in the context of ministry.

Major project topics should flow out of the context of a student's ministry, providing a solution for a problem, challenge, or question that has arisen. A common mistake is to make the subject too broad. For example, the topic of "Small Groups" is far too broad. Often the first comment that the advisor makes on a student's first proposal is that the topic must be narrowed. This can be frustrating at the outset of the process, but the wisdom of the approach is revealed when the student finds a far more manageable subject to pursue.

The student's project directly affects ministry. The student, while evaluating his ministry, will identify a weakness he desires to strengthen. The major project is the proposed solution that he will apply in his ministry. The following terms provide an overview of the look and feel of a D.Min. major project:

- **The project must be theological** – It must have a theological basis in order to be acceptable. This basis provides the background and rationale for the project.
- **The project must be practical** – It must consist of something that is hands-on and tangible. The project must be more than theory and should relate directly to an aspect of the student's own ministry.
- **The project must be actual** – It must actually accomplish (or at least attempt) its stated goal. For example, if the major project deals with a building project, there actually needs to be a building to construct.
- **The project must be measurable** – It must have discernable metrics to test whether or not it accomplished anything. Testing may take many forms and will vary from project to project.

The implementation of the major project need not prove successful for the project to be acceptable. Some experiments in ministry do not work, but much can be learned through the attempt. The criterion for an acceptable project will have more to do with the way that it shapes

the student's learning and ministry than whether or not it actually accomplishes what it was intended to do.

The major project does contain a research element and has some similarities with a dissertation in that **the student is expected to become an expert in the area of his major project.** Extensive reading and a thorough comprehension of the literature within the specific area of the project are expected. Especially required is full understanding of the applicable biblical data. The research requires a disciplined and systematic study of the topic. Several important questions should be considered:

- What are the biblical and theological issues that relate to this topic?
- What are the implications of what has occurred throughout history to the topic?
- What are the implications of what is happening today to this area of interest?

The work that the student does in these important areas will help to develop a model to answer the problem, challenge, or question raised. It will also help to sharpen the focus of the project.

The student's ministry model should assimilate thoughtful reflection and research into the chosen topic. While the goal is not to write a book on the subject (though some will), the work should be of such quality that it, or parts of it, could be submitted for publication in a reputable magazine or journal. The depth of the research should be such that the student could teach a seminary class (or D.Min. module) on the subject. The student should also consider the transferability of the work to benefit the church at large. An important aspect of the project will be assessing the value of the ministry model that is proposed. Putting the ideas to the test in a practical setting guarantees this to be a growing experience. The student's objective evaluation of the model forms another important piece of the written work.

The final product must be of sufficient length to demonstrate an ability to integrate exegetical and theological insight with the contemporary practice of ministry. Further, the written report must be well written, coherent, properly documented, and in proper form, beginning with the proposal. You are strongly encouraged to use proofreaders. Finally, the major project should reflect doctoral-level quality.

Through the project, the student will be refining his ability to analyze critically an important issue biblically and concretely, which will lay the foundation for a lifetime of ministry as a wise shepherd of the church.

Major Project Report

The student will submit a report on the major project consisting of at least 35,000 words (approximately 140 pages of 12-point Times New Roman font). Criteria for evaluating the report will include the following:

1. The extent and depth of research into the area with which the project is concerned
2. The intellectual content of the project

3. The significance of the project for the practice of ministry
4. The manner in which the project has developed the student's learning and ministry

The report itself should display serious intellectual content, literary excellence, sound compositional structure, and good deployment of academic form. It must be written in conformity with the current edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. The report must also conform to any in-house formal requirements established by Central Seminary.

All submissions for the major project must be in strict academic form. Any submission that requires more than two corrections on any one page may be returned unread to the student. All submissions are to be made to the registrar in both electronic format (MS Word) and paper.

Structure of a Major Project Report

Generally, a major project will be written in five chapters. The chapters will normally use the following outline:

Chapter One: Ministry Context. The first chapter introduces a situation in the student's ministry that will be addressed throughout the project. This chapter will outline the subject, explain how it came to be of interest, and describe the intent of the project. It will also define key terms so that a reader will know exactly what is meant (and what is not meant) when they are used. The student also needs to communicate the limitations of his work, i.e., what the project is not intending to accomplish.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Foundation. The second chapter lays the biblical, theological, and theoretical groundwork for a particular approach to the situation. In this chapter the student will examine all materials, including but not limited to biblical and theological materials, that provide the theoretical underpinnings of his project. This examination will include a review of the relevant literature, explaining what has been (and is being) written on the issue, by whom it has been written, what perspectives it represents, and what insights it provides. This review is to be incorporated into the discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of the project.

Chapter Three: Proposed Plan. The third chapter lays out a plan through which the student intends to address the situation. After deep study about the problem, what is the proposed solution? What is actually going to be said and done?

There should be a clear connection between the ministry model and the problem or challenge identified in the introduction of chapter one. There should also be evidence that the ministry model flows from, or is connected to, the research that was completed in the previous chapters. This chapter should also include a statement of the measurements by which the success or failure of the project will be gauged.

Chapter Four: Implementation. The fourth chapter narrates the actual implementation of the

plan into a ministry model. Ideally, the implementation of the project would correspond to the plan that was proposed in chapter three. In actuality, obstacles almost always arise and adjustments must be made. The fourth chapter should relate not only predicted implementations of the plan but also adaptations that had to be made as the plan was put into operation. This chapter may be more lengthy.

Chapter Five: Evaluation. The last chapter evaluates the success (or failure) of the project and relates what the student has learned by pursuing it. In this chapter the student needs to show what changed and to discuss why it changed. Is the change attributable, in part, to this project, or could it be a result of other factors? The student should be as specific as possible. He should describe what particular results the project produced within his ministry. He should also be looking for ideas for improvement. What could have been done differently? What needs to be done differently in the future?

What advice could be given to those who might use this project? The student must be willing to scrutinize his work fairly and objectively.

Selection of a Topic

At the beginning of his program, the student should list a few areas of interest from which a topic might develop. He should ask the Lord to help him identify what project will be most beneficial to himself and to God's people. Also, while a proposal will not be approved until after classes have concluded, the student should speak with professors early on about ideas that he has.

The best way to complete the project is to choose an area of interest that fits into the student's current ministry in an integral and significant way. Other students have generated ideas in a number of ways. (Previous projects are bound and shelved in the library.)

Questions to be asked in considering a topic:

- Is this an area where I already have significant experience and/or expertise?
- Is this something for which God has given me a great burden?
- Is this something that will maintain my interest for the long haul?
- Is this something that will benefit the church at large?
- What are my ministry strengths? In what ways can I capitalize on those strengths and so broaden my ministry?
- What are weaknesses of my ministry that need to be remedied in some way? (Use the project to develop certain skills or knowledge areas.)
- What is my present ministry? What project would be useful within that present structure? (Ideally, the D.Min. project should dovetail with one's present ministry responsibilities.)
- Do I consistently see certain kinds of problems in my ministry? (The student should become an expert in those issues.)

Generally speaking, project ideas tend to be one of three different types:

- Problem-centered projects focus on specific situations
- Concept-centered studies develop theological issues of interest
- Program or technique-centered studies focus on a method, tool, or program

The primary goal of the D.Min. project is to make the student a better minister of the gospel. If he has ideas that interest him, even if he thinks they might not fit a more academically-oriented project, he should propose them. The faculty is eager to work with the student on his ideas, and creative implementations are encouraged. The student is not bound to follow the format used by previous students.

Major Project Process

The student should begin planning the major project very early in the D.Min. program. If possible, courses should be used to prepare the student for the major project. The process of the major project will be the following:

Stage 1:	The Assignment of a Project Committee
Stage 2:	The Completion of All Class Work
Stage 3:	The Approval of a Topic (includes abstract and projected timeline for completion)
Stage 4:	The Submission and Approval of a Proposal
Stage 5:	The Admission to Candidacy
Stage 6:	The First Two Chapters
Stage 7:	The Completed First Draft
Stage 8:	The Second Draft
Stage 9:	The Oral Defense
Stage 10:	The Final Draft

The student should note the presence of deadlines throughout the major project process. These represent final dates for submission of specific stages of the major project. Students should work ahead of the dates rather than waiting for the last day to submit their work.

All submissions of work (abstract, proposals, and drafts) are to be made in the following manner:

- Send electronic copies in MS Word format to the advisor and the registrar. Most advisors and readers will make corrections using the “Reviewing” function in MS Word. Email attachments are acceptable and preferred.
- Send paper copies of all submissions to the registrar.

Students are strongly urged to consult regularly with their advisor and to submit material chapter by chapter. Submitting the project step by step will help keep the work fine-tuned and will preclude the major surprises and changes that can occur when this incremental approach is not followed. This strategy also helps complete this substantial work in bite-sized pieces, providing motivation and a sense of achievement along the way. In any case, the student should consult with his advisor concerning the timing of chapter submissions. The process for submissions should be included on the student’s timeline.

During these early reviews, the project committee will warn of potential problems with technical matters (grammar, syntax, and spelling) and with content problems (quality and clarity of argumentation and presentation). The advisor will return a marked copy of the draft no more than four weeks after he has received it. (If a student submits a draft during June, July, or August, the faculty may not follow this schedule.)

Writing Standards. Major projects must be written in standard English. They must be free from grammatical, syntactical, spelling, and typographical errors. If, in reading any submission of a major project, the advisor or reader discovers any grammatical, syntactical, spelling, or typographical errors, those errors will be marked and must be corrected before the project is finally accepted. **If the advisor or reader discovers more than two such errors on any single page or more than ten such errors in the entire manuscript, the reader may cease reading the manuscript and return it to the student for corrections to be made.**

Students must conform **from the beginning of writing** to the acceptable format, the current edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press). For abbreviations, please consult *The SBL of Handbook of Style* (Hendrickson Publishers).

It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that all errors of spelling, grammar, and conformity to Turabian be corrected before submitting the final draft. Submitting work to an individual who has expertise in the Turabian format will be well worth the expense to the student. It is not the responsibility of the advisor or reader to make such corrections. The advisor’s role is to review the quality and clarity of research and argumentation. A list of qualified proofreaders may be obtained from the registrar.

The student must remember to make backups of everything. Take care not to become another statistic in the list of students who have depended solely on their hard drives to keep their work stored safely.

In the rare case of issues or problems that arise between a student and his project committee, a student may approach the director of D.Min. studies to attempt resolution. If the matter remains unresolved, the student may make a formal written appeal to the D.Min. committee and then the faculty.

Stage 1: The Assignment of a Project Committee. The director of D.Min. studies will assign a project committee for each student as he nears the conclusion of his coursework. Committee selection will be based upon the topic of the project and availability of faculty. The project committee will consist of two faculty members who will stay with him through the duration of the major project process. One member will be the student's advisor, and the second will be the reader.

The student will work primarily through his advisor for guidance and support through the major project process. The student may suggest a faculty advisor at that time if a strong preference exists. The D.Min. committee will make the final decision on all project committees.

Stage 2: The Completion of All Class Work. All seminars should be completed prior to the formal start of the project. It is understood that preliminary research and groundwork on the project may have begun prior to class work completion. Students are encouraged, if possible, to use their class assignments to develop elements of their major project research.

Stage 3: The Approval of a Topic. Before submitting an application for approval of a major project topic, the student should seek counsel from his project committee advisor and the director of D.Min. studies. The advisor will guide the student through the entire process involved in completing the major project.

After identifying a topic, the student will write a single-spaced, one- to two-page abstract (or summary). He will submit this to the registrar for D.Min. committee approval.

In this abstract, the student must answer the following questions:

- How would you summarize your project in one sentence? This sentence should appear in the first paragraph of the abstract.
- What will you do for your project?
- Why should people care about this work?
- What need is it meeting?
- What are the reasons for choosing this topic?
- Are you familiar with other related work that has been done?
- Who is your intended audience?

In addition, the abstract must include a projected timeline for completion of the project that identifies dates for each major step of the project, project completion, oral defense, and graduation date.

When your abstract satisfies your project committee, your advisor will submit the abstract to the D.Min. committee for its approval. The D.Min. committee will discuss the abstract and make suggestions for further development. Approval from the D.Min. committee is required before you proceed to the next stage.

Topic approval forms for the D.Min. major project are available from the seminary office or the seminary's website. The student should complete this form under the guidance of his advisor. The form must be received by the registrar for approval by the D.Min. committee no later than **February 1** of the year before the student intends to graduate.

All abstracts are to be submitted to the registrar and will include the following:

- A topic approval form
- A project abstract
- A projected timeline for completion of the project

Stage 4: The Submission and Approval of a Proposal. The proposal takes the form of a summary of the anticipated project. Its structure should reflect that of the project, including chapter divisions and major sections. The proposal should include descriptions of proposed chapters, relevant Scripture, a brief review of related literature, and target dates for the completion of each chapter. The proposal should also include an **initial bibliography** of the sources that the student has consulted in preparation for the major project. The submission should include 20-25 pages of text and should be written in **strict academic form**.

The proposal must be submitted to the seminary office for project committee approval, in consultation with the D.Min. committee, no later than **May 1** of the year *before* the student intends to graduate. The proposal should be approved within six months after the completion of the last class session.

Important: The proposal, once submitted and approved, becomes essentially a **contract** for the major project. Any significant deviations in the direction of the project will require a new proposal. The student should expect that he and his committee will revise the proposal several times. This up-front work will save much time later, and much of the work on the proposal will be part of the project itself.

The proposal must include the following:

1. A concise, clear title
2. An opening paragraph clearly stating and describing the specific problem and the rationale for choosing the project
3. A chapter by chapter outline for the report

4. Research questions that the student intends to answer under the respective chapter heading (see chapter content outlined above)
5. Research methodology that the student intends to use. How will the research be accomplished?
6. A proposed ministry model to address the topic/problem, a statement of what the student hopes to accomplish through it, and a mechanism that describes how the project will be evaluated
 Note: The ministry model should be the fruit of convictions derived from the initial research.
7. A bibliography including at least 25 works that the student intends to research
8. A timeline which will serve as a basis to finish the work. It should include deadlines for such things as the submission of each chapter, final project submission, project defense, and graduation.
 Note: The timeline is to be prepared for the student's benefit. It will help the student move step-by-step toward completion of the project. No one will contact the student if he fails to submit a chapter on the proposed deadline. The completion of the project requires self-discipline and commitment to the deadlines set by the student. The seminary's deadlines are definite dates. Students are encouraged to make submissions earlier than the seminary's timeline.
9. A signature page must be submitted with the proposal.
10. The proposal may be written in first person where it is applicable.

Stage 5: The Admission to Candidacy. Admission into the D.Min. program is not the same thing as admission into candidacy for the degree. A student is admitted into candidacy only after the following steps have been completed:

1. All residence work in both required and elective seminars must be completed successfully. A grade of B- must be earned for all seminars that are to be credited to the D.Min. degree.
2. The student's personal spiritual life must give evidence of maturity and the presence of the fruit of the Spirit.
3. The student's ministry must give evidence of competence and progress as a minister.
4. The student's major project proposal must be approved by the D.Min. committee.

When these requirements have been fulfilled and the proposal for the major project has been accepted, the D.Min. committee will make a final evaluation and admit the student into candidacy if it believes that he meets the qualifications. Once the student has been admitted into candidacy, he may formally begin work on the major project.

Mere fulfillment of the academic and practical requirements does not in itself guarantee admission into candidacy or the awarding of the D.Min. degree. The candidate must hold to the system of doctrine that is set forth in Central Seminary's statement of faith and must be in agreement with the purpose and principles of Central Seminary. If the student has reservations in these areas, he is expected to communicate his reservations. The faculty will assess whether

the student actually meets the requirements for candidacy and reception of the degree. The candidate will be judged as to his character, general fitness for ministry, cooperative spirit, and adherence to the convictions of Central Baptist Theological Seminary of Minneapolis.

Stage 6: The First Two Chapters. The first draft of the first two chapters must be submitted to the seminary office for project committee approval no later than **August 1** of the year preceding the student's anticipated graduation. An updated bibliography should be submitted with the first two chapters. The committee may request chapters to be individually submitted with an earlier deadline. This process accomplishes several important functions. It allows the project committee to ensure that the student is heading in the right direction and presenting academically acceptable work.

Important: The use of the word *draft* should not allow anyone to conclude that the student may submit substandard chapters. The draft should be in **strict academic form** and should reflect the precise use of the English language. From the student's point of view, it should be a finished product, even though the faculty is likely to require changes. Chapters with poor grammar or form will be returned unread to the student.

Stage 7: The Completed First Draft. A completed first draft is due no later than **October 1** of the year before the student intends to graduate. The completed first draft should include any appendices that will be submitted.

Stage 8: The Second Draft. The complete, corrected second draft, if required, is to be submitted no later than January 1 preceding the expected graduation.

Stage 9: The Oral Defense. Once the project committee has approved a satisfactory draft of the major project, the student is required to defend it verbally before the entire faculty. Defenses will normally be scheduled during February and will not typically be permitted after **March 15**. Students who miss the deadline for defending their major projects may not be permitted to graduate until the following year.

Stage 10: The Final Draft. After satisfactorily completing the oral defense, the candidate will complete any required changes to the written project. The changes may include matters of content, style, or form. The final draft must receive approval from the student's project committee, from the director of D.Min. studies, and from the director of library services.

Two paper copies and one digital copy of the final draft must be received by the registrar no later than **May 1**. The two paper copies for Central Seminary's library will be bound at the student's expense. The digital copy should be in pdf format.

Paper copies should be printed in non-water soluble type on acid-free paper with at least a 20 percent rag content. At the current binding rate, students may also submit an additional copy (or copies) of the major project to be bound for their own use. The additional copy must meet

the same print and paper requirements as the other copies.

Grading of the Major Project

The project committee will assign a grade to the major project based upon the written work in the corrected draft and the oral defense. The grade will be Pass, Pass with Recommendation, Pass with Requirement, or No Pass. The grade will assume that necessary alterations, if any are required, will be made before the final draft is submitted. If these changes are lacking, the grade may be altered or the student may be denied graduation. The grade will appear on the student's transcript, but not on the major project itself.

Checklist/Worksheet for the Major Project

Projected Completion	Events	Actual Completion
	Assignment of Advisor	
	Completion of class work	
	Submission of Topic Approval Form with abstract	
	Topic Approved	
	Submission of Proposal	
	Approval of Proposal	
	Admission to Candidacy	
	First Draft	
	Chapter 1	
	Chapter 2	
	Chapter 3	
	Chapter 4	
	Chapter 5	
	Appendix 1: Proposal	
	Second Draft	
	Oral Defense	
	Graduation	

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Kevin T. Bauder, Director

All courses are four (4) credit hours.

DM 800 Creation, Sex, and Gender

This course develops a biblical understanding of human marriage, sex, and gender, grounding that understanding in the doctrine of creation and tracing it through both testaments. This biblical understanding then becomes the mechanism for evaluating contemporary redefinitions of these concepts.

DM 801 Affections, Identity, and Idolatry

This course explores the idea of human personhood and develops a biblical understanding of the role of affections, along with the cognitive understanding and the volition, in shaping human identity, then addresses the problem of inordinate affection as the ground of idolatry. This course also explores biblically and historically Christian ways of understanding personhood and shaping the affections.

DM 809 Preaching Poems, Proverbs, and Parables

This course develops understanding and skill in the exegesis and exposition of the Bible's most imaginative literature: poetic and wisdom literature in the Old Testament, and parabolic literature in the New Testament.

DM 813 Preaching Narrative

This course develops understanding and skill in the exegesis and exposition of narrative passages in the Old Testament.

DM 814 Preaching Prophetic Literature

This course develops understanding and skill in the exegesis and exposition of prophetic passages of the Old Testament.

DM 830 Biblical Framework Counseling and Mental Disorders

This seminar course will provide an exposition of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation to reveal a biblical framework model of counseling by which to evaluate the common to complex issues of life. This seminar course will also demonstrate an in-depth use of the biblical framework model to evaluate and address the defining features of mental disorders presented in the DSM-5 and future revisions that will come.

DM 831 Biblical Counseling Diagnostics and Methodologies

This seminar course will provide biblical theological diagnostics along with biblical theological methodologies for counseling people accordingly in various aspects of life. This seminar course will also teach students how to develop appropriate homework that will help individuals work

through various issues of life according to Scripture.

Prerequisite: DM 830 Biblical Framework Counseling and Mental Disorders

DM 832 Addressing Common and Complex Problems through Biblical Counseling

This seminar course will explore various problems individuals face in life from the common to the complex. This seminar course will also provide various biblical avenues by which to help individuals address these issues accordingly.

DM 833 Biblical Analysis and Process of Addressing Conflict

This seminar course will explore what it means to develop, have, and maintain a community of peace within the local church as described and prescribed in Scripture. This seminar course will also provide a biblical theological framework by which to identify and address conflict within the body of Christ.

DM 834 Physiological Issues and Biblical Counseling

This seminar course will explore the distinctions between the physical brain and the immaterial mind through a biblical theological framework along with various implications thereof. This seminar course will also evaluate various physiological issues and identify ways to interpret and address those issues through the biblical framework model of counseling.

DM 839 Addressing Common and Complex Problems Women Face through Biblical Counseling (for women only as requested)

This seminar course will explore various problems women face in life from the common to the complex. This seminar course will also provide various biblical avenues by which to help women address these issues accordingly.

DM 861 Theory and Practice of Public Worship

This practicum seeks to study and apply the principles that regulate Christian worship, evaluate the history of their development and application, and respond to their principle challenges, as these matters pertain to the life of local churches in the contemporary environment.

DM 886 Public Defense of the Faith

This course prepares ministers at an advanced level to address contemporary challenges within their own churches and communities to the Christian system of faith and practice.

DM 895 Major Project

The major project demonstrates the student's ability to sustain a full-length line of research and argument. It should contribute by advancing the conversation in areas related to expositional preaching.