

Doctor of Ministry Handbook



2023-2025



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VERITAS

BAPTIST COLLEGE

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Introductory Materials

Welcome to the Doctor of Ministry program at Veritas Baptist College. As you prepare to join a group of Christian leaders like yourself, you will find the biblical principle of iron-sharpening-iron to become not only practical, but also personal. Our students come from a multiplicity of backgrounds, whether that be in local church ministry, parachurch ministry, or some other career path. Yet, one unifying factor is constant with each of our students: an understanding that God has called you to help expand His Kingdom in one facet or another.

Our faculty are not only academicians, they are also practitioners. Veritas has a commitment to continually bring proven leaders to each classroom. You have the advantage to not only learn from their lectures, but also you have the opportunity to see these principles at work in their lives. They are ready to mentor, to train, and to befriend. While they will push you to excel, they will also be some of your biggest encouragers as you progress through the program.

The Doctor of Ministry program equips ministry leaders to grow in areas of biblical hermeneutics, counseling life-dominating problems, mentoring future leaders, and articulating the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Though practical in nature, the program is both founded upon and culminates in a display of academic research.

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) is an advanced professional degree. It is designed for ministry leaders (whether laity or professional) who desire to continually excel in ministry practices. Because of the online nature of a Veritas degree, candidates in this program are able to remain active in their local ministries.

The 30-hour program on which you are about to embark will challenge, stretch, and equip you to better serve the Lord in your ministry. The capstone project will enable you to effectively improve an area of personal ministry while also becoming a resource for the future ministry leaders to be helped.

This handbook is intended to be a guide and overview as you journey through the program. Here, you are introduced to the structure, the philosophy, and the curriculum for the Doctor of Ministry offered at Veritas Baptist College.

“Academically challenging,
but extremely practical.
I love the accessibility
of and feedback from
the professors. I highly
recommend this program!”

-Phil E., *Pastor in Nj*

Mission Statement

Veritas Baptist College exists to equip men and women for dynamic Christian service and leadership in Bible-believing churches and ministries by providing higher education that emphasizes academic excellence, spiritual development, and preparation for ministry, both lay and professional.

Core Values

As an institution, Veritas is committed to four core values. These values find their way into lectures, assignments, conversations, and communication. These are part of our ministry DNA, our culture.

Veritas (*truth*)

We are committed to defining truth biblically, to defending truth faithfully, to declaring truth boldly, and displaying truth compassionately.

Integritas (*integrity*)

We are committed to keeping His Word as well as keeping our own. We strive to be ethical, to deliver on our promises while living out our faith with authenticity.

Humilitas (*humility*)

We are committed to a leadership philosophy defined by serving others, to building His kingdom rather than our own, and living with a proper perspective of God, self, and others. God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.

Qualitas (*quality*)

We are committed to giving our all, to giving our best, and to be consistently seeking for ways to improve. We are impacting current and future ministry leaders with a distinctively Christian education delivered passionately by quality instructors.

These values should be reflected in the lives, the work, and the ministries of our students as well. Christian leaders without veritas and integritas are classified as hypocritical. Christian leaders without humility are not attracting people to the Jesus found in Scriptures. Christian leaders who settle for less than their best are not experiencing the full blessing on their ministries that God is able to give.

Accreditation

Veritas Baptist College is a member of the Transnational Association of Christian Colleges and Schools TRACS) [15935 Forest Road, Forest, VA 24551; Telephone: 434.525.9539; email: info@tracs.org] having been awarded Accredited status as a Category IV institution by TRACS' Accreditation Commission on April 24, 2023; this status is effective for a period of 10 years. TRACS is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE), the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

Program Outcomes

In an academic setting, success must be defined, measured, and monitored. Ultimately, success is defined as knowing and doing the will of God! Yet, for the context of the DMin program, the Veritas definition of success would also include producing graduates that are able to perform the following:

1. Analyze and address ministry leadership situations biblically.
2. Demonstrate competence in applying biblical research to specific methods of ministry.
3. Evaluate the dynamics of ministry contexts in a multicultural setting.
4. Produce and defend a research project to address a specific ministry objective.
5. Develop a more focused biblical ministry in light of personal skills, calling, and experience.

Program Prerequisites

The doctor of ministry degree, though professional and practical in nature, has academic expectations. For those seeking to pursue this degree, the following prerequisites must be met before a person can be accepted into the Doctor of Ministry program:

1. An accredited MDiv degree (preferred) or an accredited Masters degree will also be considered.
2. A minimum of five years of ministry experience.
3. A combined 25-page minimum writing sample from one or two graduate-level papers on any ministry or theological issue.
4. Three recommendation letters from ministry leaders with personal knowledge of your ministry.

Academic Information

The courses taken as part of this program are designed to develop your research skills, your writing skills, and your ministry skills. Each class is part of the preparation for the capstone project. The 30-credit DMin degree at Veritas consists of the following:

FOUNDATIONAL COURSES

(9 credits)

*These courses focus on **personal** ministry. Choose an elective along with two required courses.*

1. DM 700 Consistent Hermeneutics in Ministry (required)
2. DM 710 Biblical Ethics in Ministry (required)
3. DM 720 Family Relationships in Ministry
4. DM 730 Critical Issues and Problem Solving in Ministry
5. DM 000 *Choose from electives such as apologetics, biblical counseling, theology, or missions.*

MINISTRY COURSES

(12 credits)

*These courses focus on **public** ministry. All four courses from this section are required.*

1. DM 800 Research and Writing for Public Ministry
2. DM 810 Evangelistic Ministry in Contemporary Culture
3. DM 820 Discipleship Ministry through the Local Church
4. DM 830 Leadership Development for Ministry

RESEARCH COURSES

(9 credits)

These courses focus on the capstone project. Each course is required.

1. DM 740 Doctoral Ministry Proposal Design
2. DM 840 Doctoral Ministry Literature Review
3. DM 850 Doctoral Ministry Capstone Project

Degree Requirements

The pursuit of advanced degrees requires diligence, self-discipline, and the God-given assurance that you are following His plan. Veritas Baptist College is not seeking students; we are seeking to deploy graduates. To be eligible to be granted this degree, the following requirements must be met:

- Each candidate must maintain a 3.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) in all course work, as well as complete all required course work for this program in order to be granted a degree.

- Transferred credits from other DMin or post-MDiv programs may be considered for acceptance after

evaluation. However, a minimum of fifteen (15) credits must be completed through Veritas, included the following courses: DM 740, DM 840, and DM 850.

- Students must complete all course work within five (5) years, with only rare exceptions being granted due to extenuating circumstances. The program operates on a two-year schedule, with six terms per year, allowing students to complete this degree at an accelerated pace.

- All fees must be paid before approval of graduation is granted. Fees are based upon the scheduled tuition, per hour rate, listed in the current college catalog, plus an initial admission fee, and the graduation fee.

“Every class has pushed me; every class has grown me! I’m glad to say that the classwork has had a direct impact in our ministry.”

-Matt A., *Missionary, Papua New Guinea*

Capstone Project: Key Stages

This capstone is the major research project for the DMin degree. While dissertations in a PhD world are theoretical in nature, the DMin capstone utilizes an applied research method in a current ministry situation with practical application. From the very first course, students begin thinking about, researching toward, and planning for their capstone. As candidates officially enter this stage, the milestones that must be crossed are as follows:

- 1. PROJECT PROPOSAL** (DM 740 Doctoral Ministry Proposal Design)
Students should take this required course as early as possible. Completion of this course requires the student to have an approved project proposal as well as an assigned DMin faculty advisor for this project.
- 2. PROJECT INITIATION**
The student should endeavor to organize and initiate any steps designed for the approved ministry project contemporaneous with taking the other required program courses. As much as possible, working with the faculty advisor, each course assignment should be integrated into support for the ministry project chosen.
- 3. LITERATURE REVIEW** (DM 840 Doctoral Ministry Literature Review)
The Doctoral Ministry Literature Review course is taken the first term available, following all other completed course work, unless an administrative approval is given as an exception. This course will be also used for completion of the approved ministry project.
- 4. PRESENTATION | EVALUATION** (DM 850 Doctoral Ministry Project)
The DM 850 course is taken the semester before graduation. This course is for completion of any final steps in the ministry project, for producing a dissertation that presents the proof for a thesis supporting the reasoning and findings of the ministry project, and for facing a review of the dissertation and project findings by a chosen DMin review committee. Your advisor will help prepare you on how to present a defense of your research.

“The need has never been greater. The time has never been more urgent. In a post-Christian world, Veritas stands ready to equip leaders to stand in the gap and to remind the world that truth matters.”

- J. Michael Lester, *Veritas Baptist College President*

Capstone Project: Sample Research Models

This following information is adapted from “Common Models,” a resource created by Phoenix Seminary for the DMin program.¹ In a capstone project for the DMin degree, various research models are available to the candidate. Generally speaking, the approach used in capstone projects such as the doctor of ministry degree utilize an applied research approach. An applied research approach seeks to either solve a problem or improve a situation. One can readily see how this approach is beneficial for those pursuing the DMin degree.

Within this approach to research, the different methodologies are categorized as qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods.

Quantitative approaches deal with what is objective. Data is usually captured in numerical form and analyzed statistically.

Qualitative approaches deal with what is subjective.

For example, to answer the question, “How do people deal with grief?” would be difficult to capture as a statistic. Compare this to another question: “At what age did you become a Christian?” This question can be answered utilizing a Likert scale, with different categories

of age brackets, and then analyzed statistically. A probable answer to that question would be, “Research indicates that 93% of believers in my city accept Christ between the ages of 6-10.” (Note: This is for sample purposes only and is not based upon personal research.) Depending upon the nature of your project, you may find you use a mixed-methods approach.

“...Strengthened my relationship with God; Provided mentorship from proven leaders; Enhanced my passion for serving the Lord and His people. I highly recommend this program.”

-Erik M., *Christian school teacher in MN*

The following list provides sample models in which to gather data. The list is not exhaustive:

1. Case Study of Ongoing Ministry Situations

The student will select a congregation(s), a ministry, a leader, etc., to study as cases in order to answer a descriptive research question. The dissertation will criticize the survey’s findings and suggest ways to improve that ministry situation.

2. Program Development and Evaluation

The student will develop a ministry program (as a possible solution to a ministry problem) and evaluate its effectiveness. In this approach, the student is seeing the DMin degree bring benefits to his current ministry in real time.

¹ <https://ps.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/DMin-Project-and-Thesis-Guide-2018-19.pdf>. Accessed 5/8/24.

3. Descriptive Surveys of a Ministry Situation

The survey is designed to report current ministry conditions or strategies in quantifiable variables. The dissertation will analyze the discoveries and suggest ways to improve the current ministry setting.

4. Personal Interviews

As an example of a qualitative approach, a student can choose to interview people with personal or expert knowledge in the problem that is attempting to be solved. Their answers are tabulated anonymously and analyzed for any patterns that may yield a possible solution to the project research problem.

5. Theological Research

The student is willing to challenge a contemporary belief or behavior related to how ministry is practiced in his context. Researching from the Scriptures, the student attempts to demonstrate whether that belief or behavior is in alignment with or contradiction to the teachings left to Christ's church.

Capstone Project: Criteria for Acceptance

The following guidelines are meant to help the student understand what the Review Committee will be noticing in your submitted project. As you develop your research project, it is advantageous for you to consider these questions.

1. Is it related to your current ministry?
2. What biblical foundations, theological truths, and philosophical assumptions underlie the researched topic?
3. Is it consistent with the Veritas Statement of Faith?
4. Are the research methods sound and valid?
5. Does the project demonstrate organizational skills such as planning and execution?
6. Is the project, though practical in application, formal and academic in writing?
7. Has the writer followed Turabian accurately in his formatting?
8. Is the research model usable by others / beneficial to the church as a whole?

Capstone Project: The Big Picture

What does the capstone project look like? How many pages does it require? How do I get started? How do I choose a topic? How do I write a research question? The questions can continue *ad infinitum*, because the capstone is a major portion for completion of this degree. Yet, your advisor will personally walk you through each step and help you be set up for success. You are not alone in this journey. To help you understand the scope - the “big picture” for this project - the following outline provides a healthy starting point.

Chapter One: The Introduction

10-15 pages

In this chapter you introduce your readers to the project. What is the problem that you are attempting to address? What is the ministry context that the research is being conducted? What potential benefits could this research bring to other ministry leaders in similar contexts?

Chapter Two: Literature Review of Related Topics

25-30 pages

Provide your biblical-theological basis to explain why the project was designed the way that it was. The structure of the literature review should correlate to either your goals for the project or the hypothesis along with its related themes. As you review the literature, your biblical foundations and theoretical foundations become self-evident to the reader.

Chapter Three: Methodology

25-35 pages

What is your research question? What is your hypothesis? What is your plan to address the problem? What methodological approach are you pursuing? What is the estimated timeline? What are your anticipated results? What instruments will you use to collect, evaluate, and analyze data? Who are the participants in this study? What intervention strategy have you designed as a result of your research?

Chapter Four: The Implementation

20-30 pages

Describe the solution you implemented to solve the problem. Did you use a pre- and post-survey? If you used a multi-week seminar approach to your solution, what were the topics? If personal interviews were utilized, how did these help shape the solution you implemented? What results did you observe?

Chapter Five: The Conclusion

15-20 pages

Was the project successful? How did the actual results compare to the anticipated results? What are areas for future study? How does this research in your local community inform the larger body of Christ?

Appendices

page counts will vary based upon project

Generally speaking, you will include a copy of your intervention material. Did you teach a seminar? Were there handouts? Additionally, survey samples and interview transcripts (as well as interview consent forms) are placed in this section. One will also place field notes from trained observers here as well to substantiate the data.

Bibliography

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