Veritas Baptist College

Doctor of Ministry Handbook

2026

Contents

Introduction....1
Mission Statement....2
Core Values....2
Accreditation....2
Program Outcomes....3
Program Prerequisites....3
Academic Information....3
Degree Requirements....4
Capstone Project: Key Stages....5
Capstone Project: Sample Research Models....6
Capstone Project: Criteria for Acceptance....7
Capstone Project: The Big Picture....8
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirement....11

Introduction

Welcome to the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) 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 multiple backgrounds—local church ministry, parachurch ministry, and other settings. Yet, one unifying factor is constant with each of our students—an understanding that God has called them 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 not only the advantage of learning from their lectures, but also 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 DMin program equips ministry leaders to interpret the biblical text, counsel people with life-dominating problems, mentor future leaders, and articulate the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Practical in nature, the program is founded upon and culminates in academic research. The 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, *pastor*

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 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, in 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 another graduate degree in religious studies with an accumulation of at least 30 credits.
2. Significant vocational ministry experience.
3. A combined 25-page minimum writing sample from one or two graduate-level papers on any ministry or theological issue, which demonstrate good research and writing capabilities.
4. Three letters of recommendation 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.*

1. DM 710 Biblical Ethics in Ministry
2. DM 800 Research and Writing for Public Ministry
3. DM 830 Leadership Development for Ministry

ELECTIVE COURSES (12 credits)

*These courses focus on **public** ministry. Choose four DM elective courses. (Students also can choose doctoral CM courses and approved doctoral ED courses.) Here are some of the electives:*

DM 700 Consistent Hermeneutics in Ministry
DM 720 Family Relationships in Ministry
DM 730 Critical Issues and Problem Solving in Ministry

DM 802	Biblical Foundations for Leadership
DM 810	Evangelistic Ministry in Contemporary Culture
DM 820	Discipleship Ministry through the Local Church
DM 831	Leading Change in Ministry
DM 832	Cross-Cultural Leadership
DM 860	Preaching the Old Testament
CM 705	Principles of Effective Communication
CM 820	Leadership Principles and Ethics
ED 700	Historical and Social Foundations of Education
ED 710	Curriculum Philosophy and Analysis
ED 800	Issues and Trends in Exceptionality
ED 810	Issues and Trends in Teaching and Learning

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, including 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 graduation approval 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, *missionary*

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 INITIATION**
   The student should endeavor to organize and initiate any steps designed for the approved ministry project contemporaneously with taking the other required program courses. As much as possible, each course assignment should be integrated into support for the ministry project chosen.

2. **PROJECT PROPOSAL (DM 740 Doctoral Ministry Proposal Design)**
   Students should take this required course after completing twenty-one credits or eighteen credits with concurrent enrollment of another course along with DM 740. Completion of this course requires the student to have an approved project proposal as well as an assigned DMin faculty advisor for this project.

3. **LITERATURE REVIEW (DM 840 Doctoral Ministry Literature Review)**
   The Doctoral Ministry Literature Review course is taken after successful completion of DM 740.

4. **PRESENTATION | EVALUATION (DM 850 Doctoral Ministry Project)**
   DM 850 is taken after successful completion of DM 840. This course is for completing 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 defending 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 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.

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 critique 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.

> [The DMin program at Veritas has] 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, *Christian school teacher*

[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's *A Manual for Writers* 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 set you up for success. You are not alone on this journey. The information below gives you the "big picture" for this project:

Chapter One: Introduction	**15–20 pages**
Chapter Two: Theological and Theoretical Constructs	**30–40 pages**
Chapter Three: Methodology	**25–35 pages**
Chapter Four: Findings and Results	**20–30 pages**
Chapter Five: Conclusion	**15–20 pages**
Appendices	
Bibliography	

The following detailed overview of a DMin dissertation outline below is mostly quoted directly from Tim Sensing:

I. Chapter 1: Introduction
   A. Introductory paragraph(s)
   B. Description of the ministry context
   C. Statement of the problem
   D. Statement of the purpose (including a description of the intervention)
   E. Basic assumptions
   F. Definitions, delimitations, and limitations
   G. Concluding paragraph, ending with a clear thesis statement

II. Chapter 2: Theological and Theoretical Constructs: What have others said and done that contribute to and support your dissertation?
   A. Introductory paragraph(s), including a justification for your project
   B. Description of theological themes pertaining to the project
   C. Description of theoretical frameworks or models contributing to the project
   D. Application or integration of the theological and theoretical perspectives to the project
   E. Concluding paragraph

III. Chapter 3: Methodology: How you have studied the problem?
   A. Introductory paragraph(s)
      1. Transition
      2. What is qualitative research?
      3. What is PAR?

B. Overview of the format of the project intervention (curriculum, sermon series, model of ministry, training series, etc.)
C. Sampling
    1. Definition of the particular sampling protocol
    2. Description of the participants (how many? how selected? their function in relation to you as the leader of the project)
D. Description of the project sessions (what kind? how many? how long? session objectives, session content; an expansion of 3b above)
E. Evaluation methodology (What types of evaluation? How will evaluation be administered? How will data be collected? How will the data be analyzed? How will results be interpreted?)
    1. Data Collection & Data Triangulation
        a. Insider evaluation
        b. Outsider evaluation
        c. Researcher evaluation
    2. Data Analysis
        a. Coding methods
        b. Analytical Triangulation (Convergence and divergence with data collected and theological and/or theoretical constructs)
            (1). Patterns
            (2). Silences
            (3). Slippages
F. Concluding paragraph

IV. Chapter 4: Findings and Results
A. Introductory paragraph(s)
B. Evaluation of findings
    1. A description of the results derived from the data analysis
    2. A description of the conclusions derived from the data analysis
C. Concluding paragraph

V. Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications: Why is this study significant?
A. Introductory paragraph(s)
B. Interpretations
C. Trustworthiness
    1. Applicability
    2. Dependability
    3. Credibility
    4. Reflexivity
D. Significance and implications
    1. Sustainability
    2. Personal significance: Summary of personal and professional insights gained from the project (Correlate with the purposes of DMin degree and your aspirations for entering the program; leadership development)

3. Ecclesial significance: Summary of implications for your ministry context and further ministry growth, additional study of the context, or for ministry leaders who may choose to replicate the project in the future in a different context.
4. Theological interpretations and significance of the data (Correlate with the theological constructs of chapter 2)

E. Questions still not answered or that warrant further research
F. Concluding paragraph(s)

VI. Bibliography
VII. Appendices[2]

[2] Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Dissertations*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2022), 109–112.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirement

IRB Training

All postgraduate students conducting dissertation research involving human subjects must complete Veritas Baptist College–approved IRB training prior to submitting a research proposal for review. Documentation of completed training must accompany the IRB application.

IRB Review and Approval

1. IRB approval is required for all dissertation research involving human subjects before any data collection begins.
2. No recruitment, data collection, pilot studies, interviews, surveys, or observations may occur until formal written approval has been granted by the Veritas Baptist College Institutional Review Board (IRB).
3. Any substantive changes to an approved research protocol requires that a revised application be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to implementation.

Research Restrictions Involving Minors

Veritas Baptist College does not approve research that requires direct contact with minors, including but not limited to:

- Interviews with minors
- Surveys administered directly to minors
- Direct observational research involving minors where the researcher interacts with participants

Dissertation research proposals that include direct interaction with minors will not be approved and must be revised to comply with institutional policy.

Compliance and Enforcement

Failure to obtain required IRB training and approval constitutes noncompliance with institutional policy and may result in:

- Delay or denial of dissertation approval
- Suspension of research activities
- Academic consequences as determined by the College

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student, in consultation with the dissertation chair, to ensure full compliance with this policy and all IRB requirements.

v. 20261019

Veritas Baptist College | 208 Walnut Street, #115 Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
812.221.1714