MINISTRY (D.MIN.)

This hybrid program offers both on-campus and online coursework.

The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) is a professional doctorate that represents advanced academic study in the practice of ministry. Doctor of Ministry studies are intended for experienced ministers to deepen capacities for skillful service, for the benefit of the minister and those in their care. At the same time, D.Min. studies place students in a larger community of discourse where they are able to learn from and contribute to research in the practice of ministry.

The curriculum facilitates a practical theological itinerary in which various fields contribute to ministerial awareness and action, including spirituality, pastoral care and counseling, religious education, and theological studies.

The Catholic and Jesuit heritage of Fordham resides in the Doctor of Ministry through curricular emphases, a prevailing pedagogy, attention to spiritual growth, and commitment to justice. Coursework puts Catholic tradition in dialogue with diverse traditions in the interest of personal integrity, ministerial know-how, and intellectual rigor.

The Doctor of Ministry currently offers two concentrations: Generalist and Spirituality.

In keeping with current standards of theological education, D.Min. students will gain an "advanced understanding of the nature and purposes of ministry, enhanced competencies in pastoral analysis and ministerial skills, the integration of these dimensions into the theologically reflective practice of ministry, new knowledge about the practice of ministry, continued growth in spiritual maturity, and development and appropriation of a personal and professional ethic with focused study on ethical standards and mature conduct in the profession." (Association of Theological Schools, Commission on Accreditation, Degree Program Standards)

Learning outcomes include:

- facility in relating research to ministerial practice (competence in translation between scholarship and action);
- demonstrating the capacity to reconstruct practice (competence in attention to and revision of ministerial performance);
- skillful theological reflection concerning practice (competence in making sense of ministry as theological material);
- facility in reflecting on maturity across professional and personal domains in relation to academic studies (competence in demonstrating integration).

Are you interested in attending the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education? Request more information **or schedule an** information session **today.**

CIP Code

39.0705 - Lay Ministry.
You can use the CIP code to learn more about career paths associated with this field of study and, for international students, possible post-graduation visa extensions. Learn more about CIP codes and other information resources.

Admissions

Admission to the D.Min. program requires the possession of a Master of Divinity degree or its educational equivalent. Equivalency is assessed in terms of a master's degree in theology or a ministry-related field and significant related experience that enables the applicant to engage as a ministry peer with other students in our professional doctoral program. In order to adequately interpret scripture and the theological tradition in a ministry setting, applicants ordinarily possess a minimum of six hours of graduate studies in the following areas: scripture (with courses in both the Old and New Testaments), doctrinal or systematic theology, and ethics or moral theology (including social justice studies). Given the cultural contextuality of contemporary ministry, applicants ordinarily possess six to 12 graduate credits in the area of pastoral studies or ministry (including practical theology or religious education). Students who do not meet the minimum graduate credits in the above-mentioned areas can take these courses with GRE or another accredited graduate theological school. These credits, however, will not count toward the completion of the D.Min.

GRE has developed the following template for determining whether the applicant who does not have an accredited M.Div. degree meets the minimum for equivalency, which is based on the work of lay ministers who do not perform certain liturgical and sacramental roles. Normally, an applicant will need a total of 52 credits in ministry-related graduate courses and significant ministerial experience in settings such as in a parish ministry, hospital chaplaincy, religious school, campus ministry, etc. Applicants seeking equivalency are also encouraged to submit CPE units and substantial noncredit training programs related to the positions they have held.

To be admitted to the program, applicants should normally have had three years of full-time or equivalent experience in ministry after their first theological degree. They should also manifest the capacity for an advanced level of competence in and reflection on religious ministry.

Admission of candidates to the Doctor of Ministry is determined by the Doctor of Ministry committee, which comprises the director and D.Min. faculty members. Admission to the Doctor of Ministry is selective and offered only to those students who have demonstrated the requisite intellectual ability, academic and ministerial preparation, and motivation.

Those applying for admission are expected to have a B+ or better average in their master's program. They must supply a copy of their college, seminary, and graduate school transcripts, as well as three letters of recommendation, two from professors with whom they have studied and one from a ministerial supervisor. Applicants must also submit a statement of purpose that answers each of the questions listed, along with a writing sample, typically a research paper from an earlier degree program.

Please see our admissions pages on the web for admission deadlines.

Each student accepted into the program is assigned an adviser who guides the student in academic matters. Students are expected to maintain a B+ grade point average during the entire period of their doctoral studies. Mentors and readers for doctoral theses/projects are decided upon by students in consultation with prospective mentors and readers. The mentor must be chosen from the Doctor of Ministry faculty.

Reader(s) may be chosen from within or outside of the Doctor of Ministry faculty.

Requirements

The Doctor of Ministry program offers an advanced level of study in practical theology and its integration with religious ministry. The curriculum also focuses on the acquisition of skills and competencies in pastoral practice and research. A thesis/project serves as the capstone for the student's program.

Various kinds of learning comprise the program of study: lectures, readings, community, discussions, self-directed learning, peer learning, library research, workshops, and experiential learning. Close attention is also given to the various contexts in which students exercise their religious ministries.

The Doctor of Ministry program includes the designing, writing, and presentation of a thesis/project that deals in a significant manner with theory and practice of ministry. This work should reach the level where it contributes to the practice of ministry and is applicable to other ministerial situations. To complete this work, each student identifies a ministerial issue, conducts the necessary research using appropriate methodology, and presents a practical proposal for dealing with the issue. Doctoral theses/projects are evaluated by a committee, presented orally, and are normally available through Proquest Dissertations at the Fordham University libraries.

The Doctor of Ministry program requires that students take a minimum of 36 advanced credits beyond the Master of Divinity or its equivalent as well as complete a doctoral thesis/project. Twenty-one credits are taken in a required core of courses (12 of these required credits are offered only during two successive January terms, which involves on-campus attendance at two-week-long hybrid courses) and the other 15 credits are in either additional required or elective courses. Attendance at the January-session courses in these first two years is required to participate in the degree. Normally, the degree requires not less than two and no more than six years to complete.

Additionally, before completing 18 credit hours of studies and prior to proposing their thesis/project proposal, students must submit two research papers for Research Readiness Review (RRR). Ordinarily, students request a RRR from two different Doctor of Ministry faculty, for two different Doctor of Ministry courses. At least one satisfactory RRR is required before moving to the thesis/project proposal stage.

All D.Min. students are required to register for the doctoral mentoring seminar (ZZGR 8060) each fall and spring semester after coursework is completed and up to and including the semester in which the student graduates.

Course Requirements (All Concentrations)

The courses listed below are required for all concentrations.

Course	Title	Credits
PMGR 6510	Theology of Ministry	3
PMGR 8628	Pastoral and Practical Theology	3
PMGR 8632	Research Seminar: Pastoral Theology and Practice	3
SPGR 7902	Ignatian Spirituality for Ministry	3
PMGR 8650	Ethics in Pastoral Ministry	3
ZZGR 8060	DMin Mentoring Seminar [1]	6
Concentration Courses [2]		*15*
Total Credits		**36**

[1] Required each semester after coursework is completed up to and including the semester in which the student graduates.
[2] Information about Concentration requirements can be found below.

Concentration-Specific Course Requirements

Spirituality Concentration

In addition to the common Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) course requirements, this concentration requires the following:

Course	Title	Credits
SPGR 7702	History of Christian Spirituality I	3
SPGR 7703	History of Christian Spirituality II	3
One Spirituality Elective [1]		*3*
Two Free Electives [2]		*6*
Total Credits		**15**

[1] A Spirituality elective is any course with the SPGR subject code numbered 7000-8999, a list of which can be found on our course listing page.
[2] A free elective is a course from the subject codes REGR, PMGR, RLGR, PCGR, or SPGR numbered 7000-8999, a list of which can be found on our course listing page. Note that some PCGR courses at the 6000-level may qualify; check with your faculty adviser. Courses from other areas or schools may be substituted with the approval of your faculty adviser.

Generalist Concentration

In addition to the common Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) course requirements, select any five courses with the SPGR subject code numbered 7000-8999, including (but not restricted to) those listed below, or any of the courses with the PMGR or REGR subject codes listed below:

Course	Title	Credits
PMGR 6617	Latinx Spirituality	3
PMGR 6618	Hisp Family Ministry & Catechesis	3
PMGR 8530	Evangelization: Faith & Culture	3
PMGR 6688	Issues in Pastoral Studies	3
SPGR 7746	Franciscan Spirituality: Francis, Clare and Bonaventure	3
SPGR 7760	Christian Spirituality and Leadership	3
SPGR 7792	Contemporary Christian Spirituality	3
SPGR 7794	Women Mystics	3
SPGR 7830	Discernment in the Christian Tradition	3
REGR 6150	Foundations for Intercultural Ministry and Religious Education	3

Special topics courses are occasionally offered. Students may substitute doctoral-level courses from other GRE areas or Fordham schools with the approval of their faculty adviser.

[1] PMGR 6618 Hisp Family Ministry & Catechesis is also accepted.

Theses and Projects

Purposes

The Doctor of Ministry thesis or project is the keystone of the program. Students create a work that enriches their practice of ministry, meets academic and professional standards of quality, and is related to broader questions bearing on the practice of ministry. It may contribute to ministry in other contexts. The thesis or project should reflect integration of the student's learning in the program, be grounded in contemporary research in theological and allied fields, aid and express the student's maturing practice and vocation, and be geared toward ministerial impact. It should display the student's capacity for making theological sense of ministry.

Types or Forms

Thesis

This work, closer to the traditional dissertation format, investigates a matter of significance for ministry that is intended as a contribution to academic or professional discourse concerning ministry as well as serving the student's practice of ministry.

Project

Projects may be either "in ministry" or "for ministry." In-ministry projects are creative works that serve the practice of ministry in which the student is currently situated. The project will take place within the current ministry and be concluded by the end of the degree program. For-ministry projects are creative works that serve the practice of ministry to be carried out after the conclusion of the degree program.

The Doctor of Ministry thesis or project is the distinguishing characteristic of the doctoral degree, and its quality is a hallmark of the quality of a doctoral program. Copies of all theses and projects are normally available through Proquest Dissertations at the Fordham University libraries.

Proposal

Mentors and Reader

In consultation with potential mentors, students will make arrangements for a mentor to guide them in their thesis/project as well as at least one reader. The reader should be chosen after, and in consultation with, the mentor.

If the reader is from outside Fordham University, and after a mentor has approved the request of a student to have an outside reader, the mentor will circulate to the Doctor of Ministry faculty the CV of the proposed outside reader and a brief rationale written by the student for the request for the outside reader. In this way the doctoral faculty will be informed of outside readers working with GRE as well as have the opportunity to offer feedback about the qualifications of those outside readers within a week's time, sent directly to the mentors.

Once the student's doctoral committee has been established and the proposal is accepted, the student works out a schedule for submission of materials in collaboration with the mentor and reader(s). (Professors are typically not available for mentoring or consultation during the summer, holidays, or leaves.)

Topic

The thesis/project topic must receive formal approval before being undertaken. Formal approval must be given to the proposal by the student's committee. When the thesis or project is completed and approved by the committee, an oral defense is conducted with the committee.

Students typically submit proposals after completing 24 credits of coursework. The proposal may not be accepted until all grades of Incomplete are satisfied and all financial obligations have been met.

Proposal Format

A good D.Min. proposal should provide a framework that clearly and succinctly describes who students are in ministry and what preparation they have undergone for this thesis/project; what ministry question they are addressing and why; how they plan to do so and why; and what they intend to happen through the thesis/project and why. It should also include a plan for the work (what will be generated according to what sort of timeline) and a bibliography of the essential works that will inform the thesis/project.

The proposal should generally be structured as follows:

- Authorship: Who am I, and what do I do in ministry?
- Focus: What is the focus of my thesis/project, and how is it related to my ministry?
- Service: Whom does this thesis/project serve? How are the voices of those whom this work is "about" and "for" to be accounted?
- Change: What do I want to happen as a result of this work, how, and why? How is the work intrinsically related to that action/impact/intervention?
- Sources: What are the essential sources that will inform the work?
- Research Process: What is the step-by-step process by which the research will unfold? Where will the research take place and with whom?
- Thesis/Project Outline: What is the content and format of the work (chapters, appendices, etc.)?
- Calendar: On what timeline will I create the thesis/project?

Circulation of the Proposal

After a student has developed a proposal and had it approved by the mentor and reader(s) but before it is sent to the dean's office for approval, the mentor will circulate a one-page, student-generated abstract as well as a full draft of the proposal to the Doctor of Ministry faculty. In this way the doctoral faculty will be informed of theses and projects moving forward in the school as well as have the opportunity to make suggestions within a week's time. Observations, if any, by the faculty will be sent directly to the mentors.

Thesis/Project Format Review

Before a candidate proceeds to thesis/project oral defense, the thesis/project must be reviewed for format. Format review assures that the document meets all formatting and stylistic requirements of the GRE and is ready for publication (employing the most recent edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* or *Turabian*). During the Format Review, every page of the manuscript, including the introductory material and reference section, is reviewed thoroughly.

Follow the steps outlined below for completion of the Thesis/Project Format Review process:

- Register for Format Review as you do for a course, and pay the fee.
- The dean's staff will submit the dissertation to SafeAssign (or a similar program) to detect plagiarism. If any matters of concern are uncovered, the report from the program will be sent to your mentor, who will follow up with you until matters of concern are corrected. Once the thesis/project is returned from the format review editor, the dean's office will forward it to the student, who is responsible for implementing all of the indicated corrections. The format review typically takes three to four weeks.
- Following approval by your mentor and reader, submit one electronic Word document and one Adobe PDF file of the thesis/project to the assistant dean.

Because of the number of theses/projects submitted each semester and the significant amount of time it takes to review each one, deadlines for submission and approval of theses/projects by mentors and readers will be strictly adhered to. These deadlines are posted in the academic calendar each semester.

Theses/projects are reviewed in the order in which they are received. The earlier a thesis/project is submitted for review, the more likely a student will be approved for graduation in a given semester. If a thesis/project does not meet the standards of the GRE in the semester in which the oral defense was conducted, the candidate will incur additional charges to register for the next semester and will also need to register for the following graduation date.

Defense

Each student must publicly defend the completed thesis/project orally before an examination committee consisting of the mentor and reader(s). The program director (or mentor) is responsible for ensuring that the examination committee is professionally appropriate. The Office of the Dean will schedule the examination date, time, and place only after the mentor has approved a thesis/project that has been revised after the format review. Public notification of the examination— including the time, place, and examiners—must be made at least two weeks in advance. Please review the GRE calendar for the final date on which defenses may be scheduled each semester.

Note that a post-format review draft of the completed thesis/project should be submitted to both mentor and reader(s) at least two to four weeks prior to the oral defense date.

Style Requirements

To ensure consistency of GRE theses and projects, students must prepare them to conform to the guidelines outlined here.

1. Style Manual

Turabian: A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. (most recent edition)

2. Format

TITLE PAGE: See sample in the Resources section.

ABSTRACT: The abstract cannot exceed 350 words and should be listed on the table of contents without a page number.

VITA: See sample in the Resources section. NOTE: The vita cannot exceed one page and should be listed on the table of contents without a page number.

PAPER: The paper must be a minimum of 20 lb. weight.

MARGINS: The top, right, and bottom margins should be one inch; the left margin should be 1 ½ inch to allow for binding. Any printing in the margins will count as a mistake. If the margin is exceeded by more than five characters, the thesis will be rejected.

PAGINATION: Number the first page of any chapter in the center of the page a double space below the last line of text, approximately five-eighths to three-fourths inch above the bottom. All other numbers are placed two lines (a double space) above the first line of printing and just inside the right margin; that is, approximately five-eighths to three-fourths inch from the top and one inch from the right side.

FONT: The font size should be 12 points. If proportional spacing is used, the average number of characters per inch (CPI) should not exceed 15. No pencil marks are allowed. If special symbols are required, the symbols within a word processing package should be used. If the needed symbols are hand-lettered, black ink must be used. No press-on (transfer) letters are allowed.

PRINT: A laser printer should be used.

CORRECTIONS: Excess white-outs or corrections (erasures, etc.) are not allowed. Students should reprint the entire page.

3. Arrangement

1. Title Page
2. Dedication or Acknowledgements (if used)
3. Table of Contents
4. Preface (if used)
5. Introduction
6. Chapters
7. Conclusion
8. Bibliography
9. Appendices
10. Abstract (no pagination)
11. Vita (no pagination)

After successful completion of the oral defense and final corrections are approved by mentors and the dean

1. email a PDF copy of your thesis or project to the assistant dean;
2. email an extra copy of the title page to the assistant dean.

Submit your thesis or project online in ProQuest following the instructions in the Clearance and Commencement section of the bulletin. **Please copyright your work in ProQuest before completing the submission process.**

Program Policies

The policies in this section are intended to supplement the general GRE policies and procedures that can be found in the Student Resources section of the GRE Bulletin.

Leave of Absence

Students who encounter circumstances that prevent their continuous enrollment may request a leave of absence through the program director

and dean. A leave of absence is normally granted only for extraordinary personal reasons outside the student's control that prevent involvement in graduate studies (e.g., serious medical problems). In other situations, such as employment opportunities, students are expected to register for dissertation mentoring. The request for a leave should specify the reason for the leave and the time period involved, and include related documentation. The D.Min. committee will forward the request and its recommendation to the dean, who will grant, deny, or modify the recommendation. The dean will inform the individual, the program adviser, and enrollment services. The student will be administratively registered for Leave of Absence. There is no charge for this registration.

For the complete GRE Leave of Absence policy, refer to the Policies and Procedures section of the GRE Bulletin.

Failure to Register

Matriculated students who are neither registered nor on approved leave of absence for two continuous semesters are automatically dropped from the GRE rolls. If they desire to continue their education at Fordham, they must apply for readmission through the assistant dean for admission in consultation with the D.Min. committee and receive the approval of the dean. Such readmission is not automatic.

January Core Session Registration

Doctor of Ministry students are required to attend the two-week January session in each of their first two years in the program. Four core courses are only offered in this session, two in Year 1 and two in Year 2. Missing any courses offered in the January session will extend the time to degree completion by at least a year. Students who need to miss courses in the January session must follow the waiver process (form available from the assistant dean).

Registration at Other Universities

Students who wish to register for courses at other universities must be matriculated in the doctoral program. Only one course at another university may be taken each semester after consultation with the student's adviser and the approval of the dean. Registration for such courses follows the procedures and fee schedules of the host university. Student's are liable for tuition and payments to the other school. Upon completion of the course, students will request a transfer of the credits to their Fordham permanent record. A grade of B+ or better is required for transfer courses.

Satisfactory Academic Performance and Progress

The dean reserves the right of review and dismissal regarding students' performance and progress in the program. Students who do not meet the standards for satisfactory academic performance and progress will be placed on academic probation. **Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher to remain in the program. Students who do not maintain a 3.5 GPA or continuous enrollment will no longer receive financial aid and may be dismissed from the program.** If the deficiency is not corrected, the dean, in consultation with the program director and the D.Min. committee, will make a decision about dismissal.

Satisfactory academic progress is defined as completing at least one of the dissertation/thesis requirements each year after the semester in which course work is completed. Requirements include the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation defense. Notwithstanding their academic performance or the time remaining for completion of degree requirements, students who do not make satisfactory progress toward the degree may be dropped from the rolls. Unsatisfactory progress may include an excessive number of withdrawals, incompletes, leaves of absence, or other delays in meeting the requirements for the degree.

Students who do not complete one requirement each year are on academic probation. Such students have the next semester to complete the requirement and to file a mandatory timetable for completing all remaining requirements. The timetable must include at least one deadline per semester (e.g. "Complete Chapter 1 to 3 of the dissertation in the fall semester.") If the requirement is unmet by the end of the semester, or if the timetable deadlines are missed, the dean, in consultation with the D.Min. committee, will make a decision about dismissal.

In addition, doctoral students who have not secured approval of their dissertation proposal five semesters before the expiration of their time limit are subject to academic probation. Such students have one semester to secure approval of the dissertation proposal and a timetable for completion of the dissertation. If they do not secure approval of the proposal and the timetable, the dean, in consultation with the D.Min. committee, will make a decision about dismissal. Note that an individual student's requirements for academic progress may be affected by the time remaining until the student reaches the time limit for degree completion.

Academic Advisement Procedure and Sequence

Upon acceptance, each student is assigned an academic adviser. The adviser is to be consulted at each registration period (October for spring semester, March for summer and fall semesters).

Each student is required to take a minimum of six credits per semester.

Advanced standing will be determined at or shortly after admission to the D.Min. program. Students applying for advanced standing will be expected to provide all relevant documentation, including syllabi and transcripts. International students must provide certification (and translation) of the authenticity of materials presented. Transfer and/or advanced standing credits will be added to a student's academic record after the student completes 12 credits if the student is in good academic standing and has no incomplete grades.

Advanced standing can be applied to meet core or elective requirements.

All courses accepted for advanced standing credit must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have received a grade of B+ or better.
2. The courses were completed within five years of admission to the D.Min. program.

A maximum of six credits advanced standing can be awarded.

The adviser is assigned by the dean's office and is not the same thing as a mentor. A mentor is chosen by a student, with faculty consultation, to guide research.

Resources

Sample Documents

Sample of Dissertation Title Page

Sample Form of Mentor's Approval

Sample of Vita

Forms

Approval of D.Min Dissertation/Project Proposal Form