FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education

Academic Policies and Procedures Guidebook
for the Doctor of Ministry Degree
http://www.fordham.edu/gsrre
2015
INTRODUCTION

The Guidebook sets forth the academic policies and procedures for the Doctor of Ministry Degree (D.Min.) in the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education. The official degree requirements, and record or progress are maintained in DegreeWorks, which is available on the student tab of my.fordham.edu. Students are responsible to review their records in DegreeWorks each semester and to raise any concerns with their faculty advisor as soon as they become aware of the same.

The policies and procedures contained herein are subject to change at any time, and revisions will apply to all students, both continuing and new students, unless otherwise stated. This Guidebook is intended for widespread distribution and will be reprinted periodically. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each student to obtain and review a copy of the most recent publication. Current policies and procedures may also be reviewed on the GSRRE website at http://www.fordham.edu/gre.

Doctor of Ministry Faculty

Dr. C. Colt Anderson, Dean, Doctor of Ministry Director

Dr. Thomas Beaudoin, Associate Professor

Dr. Claudio Burgaleta, SJ, Associate Professor

Dr. Francis McAloon, SJ, Associate Professor

Dr. Shannon McAlister, Assistant Professor
I. ACADEMIC AUTHORITY

The continuance of each student upon the rolls of the University, the receipt of academic credits, and graduation and the conferring of any degree or granting of any certificate are strictly subject to the powers and authority of the University, which are vested in the President and his designee(s). The operative norms and procedures expected to be followed by all students are those described in the University Code of Conduct approved by Fordham University and published in the Student Handbook issued by the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The decision-making authority of the Dean is exercised in three primary ways: (1) Admission of qualified candidates; (2) Withholding student’s records and transcripts; and (3) Disenrolling students from the program and School.

Unless otherwise stated, the Dean has delegated this authority to the faculty members of the D.Min. Committee to implement the policies and procedures stated in this Guidebook.

II. STUDENT RECORDS

A copy of the University’s policy and guidelines regarding student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) can be found in the GSRRE Bulletin or from Enrollment Services.

A. CHANGE OF NAME AND/OR ADDRESS

Correspondence from the University is sent to the address from the student’s file in Enrollment Services. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the University of any change of address. Likewise, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the University of any change in the student’s name. Notification of the University in the event of either a change of name or address must be done by changing the appropriate information in my.fordham.edu within DegreeWorks.

B. TRANSCRIPTS OF RECORDS

An official transcript is one bearing the University’s seal. Official transcripts of academic records are not given to students or graduates but are mailed directly to the college, professional or graduate school, government agency or business concern they designate. An unofficial transcript is one given to the person whose credits are listed thereon and marked “Unofficial”. The University accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of an unofficial transcript after it has been issued.

Transcripts may be requested from Enrollment Services in person, on-line or by mail. They should be requested well in advance of the date desired. No transcript or certification will be issued for students who have unpaid financial obligations owing to the University. A fee is charged for each transcript, payable at the time of request.
Students desiring to have their transcripts airmailed abroad should inquire about additional postage charges.

Fordham University will not assume responsibility for transcripts that are delayed because they have not been requested in time. All inquiries concerning the issuance of transcripts must be made within six months of the original request.

III. ADMISSIONS

Matriculated students are those accepted for and actively working toward the D.Min. degree offered by the GSRRE. Students are considered to be matriculated upon acceptance into the program. Acceptance as a matriculated student in the D.Min. program of the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education is incompatible with matriculation in the degree programs of any other graduate or professional school except in those instances where a formal joint degree program has been established.

Students who are in the process of completing a degree (whether at Fordham or another institution) at the time of their acceptance into a graduate program must submit an official transcript indicating that the degree was awarded. This should be done before registering for the first time in the graduate program. If the transcript is not received by the second week of the first semester, a hold will be placed on the student’s registration and records.

A. WITHDRAWAL

Students in good standing may voluntarily withdraw from the program by sending a written request to the Dean. Once they have withdrawn, they must apply for readmission.

B. READMISSION

If a student is disenrolled for failure to maintain an adequate grade point average, or failure to make satisfactory academic progress, he or she may not reapply.

A student who is disenrolled for any other reason or who has withdrawn voluntarily may reapply. This is done through the Assistant Dean for Admission, in cooperation with the program director and must receive the written approval of the Dean. The readmission application should meet the current program requirements.

IV. ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION

A. CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

The Doctor of Ministry program has a continuous enrollment policy. This means that graduate students matriculated in the program must register themselves every Fall and Spring semester until graduation. Students are considered registered when enrolled for
course-work or dissertation mentoring. The only exception to this policy is the case of a leave of absence approved by the Dean for serious medical or personal reasons. During an approved leave of absence, students must register for maintenance of matriculation. Students who fail to continuously enroll will be dis-enrolled from the Doctor of Ministry program and will have to re-apply to the program, thus meeting the current degree entrance requirements. In order to receive any form of aid, grant, scholarship or other support from GSRRE students must register for at least six credits each Fall and Spring.

1. 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 advisor, and Enrollment Services. The student will be administratively registered for Leave of Absence. There is no charge for this registration.

Students who are on academic probation may not be granted an unconditional leave of absence. Any leave will be conditional upon their correcting their academic difficulties in the semester upon their return.

Time on a leave of absence counts towards the time limit for completion of a degree. A leave of absence will normally not exceed one academic year. Leaves will not be granted to students whose time limits expire during the period of the leave.

2. FAILURE TO REGISTER

Matriculated students who are neither registered nor on approved leave of absence for two continuous semesters are automatically dropped from the rolls of the GSRRE. 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.

3. REGISTRATION CHANGES

Adding/Dropping courses or changing from audit to credit is permitted only up to the last day for late registration. In exceptional circumstances, with the additional approval of the Dean, students may be allowed to add courses after this date.

Withdrawal after the official drop/add period requires the Assistant Academic Dean’s approval and will appear on the student’s record as a “W” for the course. Students
who withdraw from courses are still liable for tuition and fees according to the schedule published in the Bulletin.

A student registered for a course for credit may change their status to audit with the approval of the program director up to the last day of the drop/add period. After this date, a student may only do so with the Dean’s permission up to one week before the last class/final examination.

a) Add-drop procedure. As noted above, changes in a student’s course of study must be approved by the D.Min. director and in some cases by the Dean. Registration changes should be completed on my.fordham.edu. Those changes students cannot make on my.fordham.edu can be referred to the Academic Assistant Dean. If the Dean’s approval is also required, the form should be submitted to the Dean’s office along with a written explanation of the circumstances.

b) Refunds. The refund of tuition and fees payments or the cancellation of charges incurred for tuition, fees or housing are based on schedules that are issued by Enrollment Services. They are based on University Policy and are not within the purview of the program director or the Dean’s office. The amount refunded or canceled is normally based on the date of withdrawal.

A request for refund or cancellation of charges for tuition other than that listed in the schedule will be considered only if the actual date of the withdrawal is different from that which is indicated on University records. Such a change will be made only for extraordinary reasons. If a student wishes to request such a change, the request must be submitted in writing to the Dean’s office and fully detailed. Supporting documentation to justify the change must be submitted with the request.

4. JANUARY CORE SESSION REGISTRATION

DMin students are required to attend the two week January session in each of their first two years in the program. Four core DMin courses are only offered in this session, two in year 1 and two in year 2.

B. SPECIAL REGISTRATION

Regularly scheduled courses as listed on the GSRRE website will constitute the bulk of course-work for doctoral students. Other options for registration include courses offered at other Fordham graduate schools, courses at other schools within the New York area, and audits.

1. INTERCAMPUS REGISTRATION

Students who wish to register for courses that are offered in another Fordham Graduate School must first obtain the permission of their academic advisor and the
Assistant Academic Dean. After such permission is obtained, students must obtain permission from the course instructor and the other school’s Dean.

**2. 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 advisor 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.

**V. 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 of 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.

Doctoral students who have not secured approval of their dissertation proposal by the conclusion of the semester following the completion of course work are on 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 program director will make a decision about dismissal.

**A. TIME LIMIT ON COMPLETION OF DEGREE**

Students should be aware that they are expected to complete the requirements for their degree, including thesis or dissertation work, in a timely and expeditious fashion. The timing of the degree indicates the currency of the student’s knowledge and training. The number of years to degree is monitored by the New York State Department of Education and other institutions concerned with graduate programs and is often one indicator of the quality of a graduate program. Thus, the policies regarding time limit for completion of degrees have a serious and important academic purpose and are rigorously enforced.

All requirements, including the successful defense and presentation of the dissertation for the D.Min. must be completed within six years of the first semester of study in the Graduate School. Students who are direct doctoral students and receive a
Master’s in curso from Fordham, or students who complete a Master’s degree and then continue directly into the doctoral program must complete all requirements within eight years of the first semester of study in the Graduate School. These time limits apply to all students regardless of full-time or part-time status.

The Dean generally notifies students in their penultimate year that they are approaching the time limit and of the nature of the extension policy. The Dean’s office also generally informs students commencing their final academic year that they have only one year remaining before the expiration of their time limit.

Before the conclusion of their final academic year, the student may apply for an extension to the time limit. Students should be aware that an initial or a further extension to the time limit for degree will be granted only if, in the Dean’s judgment, there is sufficient evidence that the degree will be completed expeditiously and that the dissertation will be one of high merit. Extensions beyond the time limit will not be granted, except for compelling reasons, to students who have not secured dissertation topic approval prior to expiration of the time limit or have otherwise not made substantial academic progress toward the degree.

A written request for an extension must be approved by the Dean as well as approved in writing by the mentor and the readers. As part of the request a student must present the following items:

1. A sufficient portion of the dissertation to permit an objective evaluation of the quality of the work.

2. A timetable for completion of the remaining portions of the dissertation.

Students may petition to have one or more of these requirements adapted to their particular situation. The D.Min. Committee has the right to review any course taken more than five years ago and require that the student demonstrate currency of knowledge in that area. If the extension is approved, students must meet any other conditions imposed by the Dean and must maintain continuous enrollment until all requirements are completed. Failure to adhere to the approved timetable or to meet other conditions may result in disenrollment.

Nonenrolled students. Students who are currently not enrolled, but who will exceed or have exceeded the time limit must apply for readmission. As part of this application, they must present a timetable for completion of all current degree requirements, as well as re-taking of expired courses, and resubmission of the dissertation proposal. If permission to resume studies is granted, failure to adhere to this timetable could result in disenrollment.
B. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

I. ACADEMIC POLICIES

A. Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0: Excellent. Honors-level work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7: Still excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3: Very good. High level of performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0: Good, solid and above average performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7: Good. Still above average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3: Average level of performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0: Satisfactory, acceptable performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7: Minimally acceptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0: Failure. Inferior performance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Procedure Regarding Incompletes

If there is a serious reason for taking a grade of “I” - “incomplete”, students must apply to the professor no later than the last class meeting using the Request for Grade of Incomplete form. It is the Professor's decision to grant or reject the request. This form is available in the Dean's office and must be signed by the Professor and the Dean. The Professor takes the responsibility with the student for the necessary make-up work and final grading. Incomplete grades not resolved by the deadline on the calendar will automatically become an “F”.

After the make-up work and final grading has been done, the formal Change of Grade request should be completed and signed by the Professor and the Dean. This form must be in the Dean's office by the very latest the day before the closeout date on the School's calendar. As with all catalogued information, students are held responsible to adhere to those dates.

With the publication of this set of procedures, the entire responsibility regarding removal of an "incomplete" rests upon the student and faculty member. This is a serious matter, since upon failure of a student to take the proper action all credit for a course is thereby lost by a certain date, and a failing grade will thenceforward mar one's record.

C. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense, and can be defined as “literary theft” when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. One who intentionally plagiarizes the work of another in a course paper, project, or examination can expect to receive a failing grade for the assignment and potentially for the course. The decision will be made by the professor in consultation with the dean and/or assistant dean, and will be recorded in the student’s file. Student’s who commit a second act of plagiarism while
at GSRRE may be dismissed from the school. One who unintentionally misrepresents borrowed material as one’s own original work, either resulting from carelessness and/or ignorance, will have his or her assignment returned with the opportunity to rewrite it in an acceptable form. The following guidelines apply to all written work:

1) Using the ideas, thoughts, words, and statements of another, including those quoted from the Internet, without crediting the source constitutes plagiarism.

2) If exact words of another are used, they must be put in quotation marks or indented, and acknowledged through footnotes, endnotes, and/or bibliography.

3) If the thoughts or ideas, rather than the exact words of another are used, they must be acknowledged through footnotes, endnotes, and/or bibliography.

4) If source material is paraphrased or rephrased, it must be acknowledged through a footnote or endnote. If the paraphrased material includes exact words, phrases, and sentences, they must be put in quotation marks.

5) The underlying criterion for determining plagiarism is claiming as one’s own original work the ideas, thoughts, words, and statements of another without crediting the source.

D. Academic Probation

All GSRRE students matriculated in a Certificate or Master’s Degree program must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 to continue in their program of study. Students who fall below a 3.0 cumulative GPA will be placed on probation and will not be allowed to receive financial aid from the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education. Students whose cumulative GPA remains below a 3.0 for a second consecutive semester will be dismissed from the GSRRE.

E. Appeal of Academic Grades

A student who believes that he/she has received an incorrect grade for a final paper, course, major paper, project, qualifying paper, or dissertation may appeal the grade in accordance with the procedures below.

The student will first discuss the grade or failure of a faculty member to sign approval of paper or dissertation, and try to resolve the issue informally. Should that not be satisfactory, the following procedures are to be followed.

1. Within one month of receiving the grade, the student must request in writing a review of the material and grade by the faculty member who assigned it. In the case of a grade assigned by a committee, the student must make this request to the chairperson of the committee, or if there is none, to program director. As a result of the student’s request, the material in question will be reviewed by the person(s) who assigned the grade, and the result of the review will accord with the academic judgment of the faculty
2. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the initial review, he/she may request a second review. This request must be made in writing to the Assistant Academic Dean within one week of receiving the results of the initial review. The Assistant Academic Dean will institute the second review and should report the results to the student within two months of the request. The method for conducting the review will be at the discretion of the Assistant Academic Dean. If the Assistant Academic Dean concurs with the student’s appeal, he/she will consult the Dean and any appropriate department faculty in determining the grade to be awarded.

3. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the second review, he/she may request a final review. This request must be made in writing to the Dean of GSRRE within one week of the receipt of the result of the second review. The Dean will institute the final review and should report the results to the student within one month. The method for conducting the review will be at the Dean’s discretion. If the Dean concurs with the student’s appeal, he/she will consult appropriate department faculty in determining the grade to be awarded. No further reviews may be requested by the student. At the Dean’s discretion, the appeal may be submitted to the Academic Vice President for review.

Note: Time requirements in the procedure refer to time when classes are in session during the academic year and may be adjusted accordingly for summer, holiday, or vacation periods.

1. Students who do not meet the minimal standards for academic performance are on academic probation. Minimal satisfactory academic performance is defined as having a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.50 (B+ average). Any student receiving any University financial aid must maintain a 3.5 GPA as minimal requirement for continuation of the aid. Administrative “Fs” are computed as “Fs” (0.00) for the purpose of determining the grade point average.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

D. ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT PROCEDURE AND SEQUENCE

Upon acceptance each student is assigned an academic advisor. The advisor 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 6 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 6 credits Advanced Standing can be awarded.

The advisor 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 your research.
VI. THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

A. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Doctor of Ministry degree offered at Fordham University is to provide advanced understanding of the nature and purposes of religious ministry, increased competencies in pastoral analysis and ministry skills, sustained theological reflection on the practice of ministry, and new knowledge about the practice of ministry.

The program, combining theory and pastoral practice, strives for the integration of theological and social science knowledge to advance excellence in religious ministry. The purpose of the program is to enhance the general practice of ministry in its many forms as well as provide expertise in specialized areas of ministerial practice.

In keeping with Fordham University’s Jesuit mission the program gives special, though not exclusive, attention to the Christian and Catholic religious tradition. A major concern of the program, in keeping with the mission of Jesuit education, is to explore the social role that religious ministry can play in dealing with cultural and theological issues.

The D.Min. degree is designed to prepare reflective and competent professionals for positions of leadership in religious ministry. The program strives to discover and nurture sound scholarship, meaningful research, and the interdependence of theory and practice. The D.Min. is conferred on the basis of scholarship, research skills and practical application demonstrated by the student’s course work, examinations, doctoral dissertation and ministerial experience.

B. ADMISSIONS

Admission to the D Min. program requires the possession of a Master of Divinity degree or its educational equivalent. Generally, equivalency is assessed as tantamount to 36 graduate credits in theological or religious studies (typically 15 credits in Scripture, 15 credits in doctrinal or systematic theology, and 6 credits in other areas of theology or religious studies). Students who do not have this background are advised to take such courses in the GSRRE, the Department of Theology of Fordham University, or other graduate theological programs. The practice of ministry is not considered an equivalent substitute for the Master of Divinity degree.

To be admitted to the program applicants should normally have had three years of 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 D.Min. is determined by the D.Min. Committee, which is comprised of the dean, director and D.Min. faculty members. Admission to the D.Min. is selective and offered only to those students who have demonstrated the requisite intellectual ability, academic and ministerial preparation, and motivation.

Those applying for admissions are expected to have a B+ 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 for seeking the degree. Applications are available on the graduate school website: www.fordham.edu/gre. Paper applications will not be accepted.

The admissions deadline is February 1st. Typically applicants are notified by March 10th. Students begin their studies in the subsequent fall term.

Each student accepted into the program is assigned an advisor who guides the student in academic and career matters. Students are expected to maintain a B+ grade point average during the entire period of their doctoral studies. Mentors and readers for doctoral dissertations and projects are decided upon by students in consultation with prospective mentors and readers. The mentor must be chosen from the D.Min. faculty. Readers may be chosen from within or outside of the D.Min. faculty.

C. CURRICULUM

The D.Min. program offers an advanced level of study in pastoral and practical theology and involves their integration with religious ministry. The curriculum also focuses on the acquisition of skills and competencies in pastoral practice and research. A doctoral level dissertation serves as the capstone for the student’s program.

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

The D.Min. program includes the designing, writing and presentation of a doctoral level dissertation or 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 dissertations are evaluated by a committee, presented orally, placed in the university library, as well as in Dissertation Abstracts.

The D.Min. 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 dissertation or project. Twenty one credits are taken in a required core of courses; 15 credits are in either additional required courses or electives. Normally, the degree requires not less than two and no more than six years to complete.

All D.Min. students are required to register for the doctoral mentoring seminar each semester after course work is completed and up to and including the semester in which the student graduates.
D. DOCTOR OF MINISTRY CURRICULUM (36 credits)

There are four separate specializations within the Fordham D.Min. Program: Generalist, Pastoral Ministry, Spiritual Direction and Latino Ministry.

CORE REQUIREMENTS:

- PMGR 8628  Foundations of Pastoral and Practical Theology
- PMGR 8632  Research Seminar in Pastoral Theology and Practice
- REGR 7550  Ethics in Pastoral Ministry
- SPGR 7740  Ignatian Spirituality for Ministry
- ZZGR 8060  Doctor of Ministry Mentoring Seminar (TWO SEMESTERS REQD)

4 specialization options: Generalist, Latino Ministry, Pastoral Ministry or Spirituality specializations.

1. Generalist Specialization

18 credits from this list:
- PMGR 7688  Special Topics: Pastoral Studies
- PMGR 8530  Evangelization: Faith and Culture
- REGR 8900  Special Topics in the Practice of Ministry
- PMGR 7551  Hispanic Family Ministry & Catechesis
- PMGR 7617  Latino Spirituality
- REGR 7792  Contemporary Christian Spirituality
- REGR 7742  Ignatian Way
- SPGR 7794  Women Mystics
- SPGR 7746  Franciscan Spirituality

2. Pastoral Ministry Specialization

- SPGR 7760  Christian Spirituality and Leadership
- PMGR 7688  Special Topics in the Practice of Ministry
- SPGR 7888  Special Topics in Christian Spirituality
- PMGR XXXX  One course in Latino Ministry from:
  - PMGR 7128 Ministry with Latin@s;
  - PMGR 7521 U.S. Latino Theology;
  - PMGR 7551 Hispanic Family Ministry & Catechesis; PMGR 7616 Latino Preaching;
  or PMGR 6617 Latino Spirituality

2 Approved Doctoral Level Courses in other Areas and Schools – seek advisor’s approval before registering.
3. Spirituality Specialization

SPGR 7702  History of Christian Spirituality 1
SPGR 7703  History of Christian Spirituality 2
1 Spirituality Elective – SPGR 6000-8999
3 Free Electives from  REGR 6000-8999 or PMGR 6000-8999 or RLGR 6000-8999 or PCGR 6000-8999 or SPGR 6000-8999

Approved Doctoral Level Courses in other Areas and Schools

4. Latino Ministry Specialization

PMGR 7612  Ministry with Latin@s
PMGR 7613  U.S. Latino Theology

1 Latino Ministry elective PMGR 6616 Latin@ Preaching or REGR 6551 Hispanic Family Ministry and Catechesis or other with approval from advisor

3 Approved Doctoral Level Courses in other Areas and Schools REGR 6000-8999 or PMGR 6000-8999 or RLGR 6000-8999 or PCGR 6000-8999 or SPGR 6000-8999 or other with permission from advisor
VII. DISSERTATIONS AND PROJECTS

Purposes

The D.Min. dissertation or project is focused on ministry. It addresses the nature and practice of ministry and can apply to other contexts of ministry. It may treat an issue arising out of ministerial practice. The dissertation/project identifies an issue or problem in ministry, utilizes appropriate interdisciplinary resources as well as theologically and pastorally relevant methods for its resolution. It may address a particular issue in ministry and offer new insights that contribute to pastoral effectiveness. It may develop a new program based on ministerial needs.

Types or Forms

Dissertation Option

This is a dissertation of publishable quality that investigates a question of significance for ministry that is primarily intended as a contribution to scholarly research in ministry.

Ministry Paper/Project Options

In-Ministry Option:

This option provides for either a paper or a project, and is situated in the current ministerial reality of the D.Min. candidate. Both the paper and the project blend the theoretical and the practical, as well as ministry and theology. The objective is to provide material for the benefit of the church, and to help church workers grow.

The paper typically blends research, academic writing, skill development and personal reflection. After presenting personal spiritual and theological reflection, analysis of the context, a theoretical and theological basis for the project itself, evidence of relevant literature and description of appropriate research methods, the writer narrates and evaluates an intervention implemented over time, usually in a local church. The project typically incorporates some theoretical grounding but its primary emphasis is practical in that it seeks to develop materials and resources for ministry. It may involve the presentation of ministerial materials or resources in various media, e.g., art works in various media, multi-media resources, liturgies, etc., that address some pastoral issue in the candidate’s current ministry.

Ministry-Focus Option

This is typically a study on some issue related to pastoral ministry that is intended for on-campus students who are not involved in ministry while completing their degree.
The project option incorporates some theoretical grounding but its primary emphasis is practical in that it seeks to develop materials and resources for ministry. It may involve the presentation of ministerial materials or resources in various media, e.g., art works in various media, multi-media resources, liturgies, etc., to deal with a ministry problem or situation.

The paper is a publishable document which combines a theology of ministry with a strategy for ministry. As such, it is focused in a congregational setting and deals with theory, strategy and guidelines in order to produce more effective ministry in a particular locale.

The dissertation/project is the distinguishing characteristic of the doctoral degree, and its quality of the dissertations is a primary hallmark of the quality of a doctoral program. GSRRE dissertations are disseminated through the Proquest/UMI service. A copy is also retained in the GSRRE files.

A. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Mentors and Reader

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

After mentors have approved the request of a student to have an outside reader, but before it is sent to the dean for his or her approval, the mentor will circulate to the Pastoral Studies Area faculty the CV of the proposed outside reader and a brief rationale written by the student for his or her request for a particular outside reader. In this way the Pastoral Studies Area faculty will be informed of outside readers working in the School, as well as have the opportunity to offer feedback about the qualifications of those outside readers within a week’s time. Observations, if any, by the Pastoral Studies Area faculty will be sent directly to the mentors.

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

Topic

The dissertation topic must receive formal approval before being undertaken. Formal approval comes after an oral defense of the proposal before the student’s doctoral dissertation committee. The proposal must demonstrate the use of a sound methodology, give evidence of a thorough study of a special field, and make a contribution to the field of religious ministry. When the dissertation is completed and approved by the mentor and a reader, an oral defense is conducted before the dissertation committee. The defense is chaired by the Dean or by a designate of the Dean.
Students typically present their proposals no earlier than their final semester of course work. The proposal hearing may not be conducted until all grades of Incomplete are satisfied, and all financial obligations have been met.

A dissertation is an extended written study of a stated subject, based on original research and independent inquiry. It is a written report and analysis of data gathered through careful and thorough research of all available sources relevant to the chosen topic. It embodies the results of critical reflection and questioning. It is both investigative and evaluative.

Theses vary in their data collection procedures. Some involve documents research and critical evaluation. These are primarily library-based. Others involve the use of questionnaires, interviews, and observation. These are primarily field-based. Many studies use a combination of both approaches.

**Proposal Format**

The proposal should make clear exactly what it is the student proposes to do. In other words, it should answer the following questions: what is the issue to be studied? why is it important to do so? how will it be studied? and what contribution will such a study make to our knowledge and understanding of the field of religious ministry?

The proposal should generally be structured as follows:

1. **Research Problem**: description of the problem, issue, or research question to be dealt with, why the student considers it important, what the student has to say that has not been stated by others, and how the student proposes to contribute to the solution or answer.

2. **Theoretical Orientation**: overview of major theoretical approaches to the field of inquiry, a brief critique of them, a description of the student’s own theoretical approach, and where and how it differs from others.

3. **Thesis Statement**: may take the form of hypotheses to be tested, questions to be answered, or objectives to be achieved.

4. **Methodology**: how the student proposes to collect and analyze data, what the relevant sources of information are, and how they will be obtained.

5. Chapter Outline: tentative chapter titles and summaries of the contents of each chapter.

6. **Bibliography or References**: a preliminary listing, in bibliographic form, of books and articles relevant to the chosen topic.

Considerable thinking, planning, and writing are required in the preparation of the dissertation proposal. The finished product may be fifteen to twenty pages in length.
Circulation of the Proposal:

After a student has developed a proposal and had it approved by his or her mentor and reader, but before it is sent to the dean for his or her approval, the mentor will circulate an abstract of the proposal to the members of the Pastoral Studies Area. The abstract will consist of a one-page summary of the student’s proposal, an outline of the chapters the student will develop, and a bibliography. In this way the Pastoral Studies Area faculty will be informed of dissertations and projects moving forward in the School, as well as have the opportunity to request the full proposal and make suggestions within a week’s time. Observations, if any, by the Pastoral Studies Area faculty will be sent directly to the mentors.

B. DISSERTATION FORMAT REVIEW

Before a candidate can officially graduate and receive a diploma, the dissertation must be reviewed for format. **Format reviews are to be completed before oral defense of the written dissertation/project.** Format review assures that the document meets all formatting and stylistic requirements of the GSRRE and is ready for publication. 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 Dissertation Format Review process:

1. Submit one hard copy and one electronic pdf of the dissertation with signed approval forms to the Director

2. The Director will submit the pdf copy of the dissertation to the Dean’s staff for the format review editor. 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 the Director. When the dissertation is returned from the format review editor, the Director will notify the student by e-mail. The student is responsible to retrieve the dissertation and complete all of the indicated corrections. At this stage the student must register for Dissertation Format Review with the academic assistant dean and pay the required fee. The format review typically takes 3–4 weeks.

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

Dissertations are reviewed in the order in which they are received. The earlier a dissertation is submitted for review, the more likely a student will be approved for
graduation in a given semester. If a dissertation does not meet the standards of the GSRRE 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.

C. DEFENSE

Each student must defend the completed dissertation orally before an examination committee consisting of the mentor and a reader. The program director (or mentor) is responsible for insuring that the examination committee is professionally appropriate, and the Dean reserves the right to appoint a representative. Public notification of the examination, including the time, place, and examiners, should be made at least two weeks in advance. Students should note that the presentation of the dissertation to the Dean, not the oral examination, is the last requirement for the degree. Thus, certification of degree completion cannot be done until after the presentation of the dissertation. Please review the GSRRE calendar for the final date on which defenses may be scheduled each semester.

A draft of the completed dissertation should be submitted to each reader in sufficient time to allow for revisions before the dissertation defense.

D. STYLE REQUIREMENTS

To insure consistency of GSRRE dissertations, students must prepare their dissertations to conform to the guidelines outlined here.

1. STYLE MANUAL:

   *The Chicago Manual of Style (most recent edition)*
   or
   *American Psychological Association Style Guide (most recent edition)*

2. FORMAT

   **TITLE PAGE:** See sample in Appendix.

   **ABSTRACT:** See sample in Appendix. NOTE: The abstract cannot exceed 350 words and should be listed on the table of contents without a page number.

   **VITA:** See sample in Appendix. 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 1 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 dissertation 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 5/8 to ¾ inch above the bottom. All other numbers are placed 2 lines (a double space) above the first line of printing and just inside the right margin, that is, approximately 5/8 to ¾ inch from the top and 1 inch from the right side.

FONT: The pitch of the font should 12. 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:

I. Title Page
II. Dedication or Acknowledgements (if used)
III. Table of Contents
IV. Preface (if used)
V. Introduction
VI. Chapters
VII. Conclusion
VIII. Bibliography
IX. Appendices
X. Abstract (no pagination)
XI. Vita (no pagination)

**D. PRESENTATION to DEAN**

The dissertation is presented in person to the assistant academic dean after the oral defense and final review by the mentor. An appointment for the presentation to the Dean will be set after the assistant academic dean receives and reviews the final dissertation/project. The last date for presentation to the Dean is listed in the Academic Calendar. Exceptions to this date will be granted under only unusual circumstances outside of the student’s control when the University is officially closed.

1. **DISSERTATION PRESENTATION MATERIALS:**

   1. Original of the dissertation with student’s name on the front on the cover.
   
   2. Two copies of the dissertation as a PDF file on a CDR. Each CDR should be in a separate case with the student’s name on the front of the case.
   
   3. An additional, original, loose title page.
   
   4. An additional, original, loose abstract.
   
   5. Two “Dissertation Prepared under my Direction” sheets, signed by the mentor. They should be prepared on Fordham dissertation paper and unbound.
   
   6. Two dissertation oral defense ballots signed by the mentor, readers and Dean or Designate.
   
   7. “Survey of Earned Doctorates” form. This form should be obtained from the Dean’s Office and completed before meeting with the Dean.
   
   8. Instructions for submitting the dissertation through the Fordham library will be given to the student after final approval and graduation.

**E. COMMENCEMENT**

Students who have completed all degree requirements in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this guidebook and the *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education* are conferred with degrees by the University. Degrees are conferred in February, May and September on students who have completed their requirements in the Fall, Spring or Summer semesters, respectively. For graduation, a student must apply for graduation on my.fordham.edu during the first week of their final semester in the program. If the student does not complete all requirements during that semester, they must register for Maintenance of Matriculation for the semester directly
preceding the conferral of the degree according to the continuous enrollment policy. They must also re-apply for graduation in that term. Students who receive September degrees must be registered for the summer session immediately preceding the conferral of their degrees.

Commencement ceremonies are held each May. Students receiving degrees anytime during the preceding academic year are invited to participate. Students who have submitted the “Candidate for Degree Card” on time will receive information about commencement including the obtaining of academic apparel. The ceremonies include a university commencement ceremony followed by diploma ceremonies. The diploma ceremony of the GSRRE includes the distribution of diplomas to the candidates both of masters and doctoral degrees and the hooding of the candidates for the doctoral degree.
***SAMPLE OF DISSERTATION TITLE PAGE

RENEWING PARISH EDUCATION IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
OF CANADA: IMPLEMENTING THE REFORMS OF
THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

BY

LAURA O’DONELL, D Min
M.A. Memorial State University

Mentor
George Smithfield, Ph.D.

Readers
Peter Witherspoon, Ed.D.
Mary Smith, S.T.D.

DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY IN
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK
2007
SAMPLE OF VITA

JOHN SMITHFIELD

Date of Birth: June 18, 1969
Place of Birth: Topeka, Kansas
High School: Pawlings Academy, Wichita, Kansas, June, 1988
Bachelor of Arts: Siena College, Albany, New York, June, 1992
Master of Arts: St. Joseph’s University, Wichita, Kansas, May, 2000
Doctor of Ministry: Fordham University, May, 2006
SAMPLE FORM OF MENTOR’S APPROVAL:

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION
AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This dissertation prepared under my direction by

titled

has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Ministry

________________________
(signature)

________________________
(date)
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

APPROVAL OF D.MIN. DISSERTATION/PROJECT PROPOSAL

STUDENT:

TITLE OF THE APPROVED DISSERTATION/PROJECT PROPOSAL:

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE VOTE:

(1) APPROVED (   )
(2) CONDITIONAL APPROVAL (   )
(3) REVISIONS NECESSARY (   )

SUGGESTED REVISIONS (IF ANY):

MENTOR:_______________________________________________________________
READER:_______________________________________________________________
READER:_______________________________________________________________
ACCEPTED BY DEAN/ASSOCIATE DEAN:______________________________
DATE:_______________________________