



**VIU School of Apologetics
Doctor of Ministry
Ministry Project Handbook**

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Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to guide the student through the required DMin degree project. The emphasis should be on the practical application of the project.

The DMin project will serve as an original work that will defend the Christian Faith in a practical applied manner. The project should be designed to do the following:

*Give the candidate practical experience on constructing apologetic projects that will contribute to the candidate's current or future ministry or serve a larger defined population at large.

The Ministry Project will involve the identification of need or problem, design, implementation, and evaluation of an apologetics undertaking in ministry. What you do should address a significant need or issue with a Christian apologetics focus. The project should set out a strategy to effect change that will better equip a ministry for future apologetics work. The project should also better equip the candidate in his future ministry work in the apologetics field. Keep in mind that the chosen target audience must be available to participate and provide evaluation data.

Scope: The Ministry project can be within the context of pastoral, church, school, or other educational or apologetics-oriented ministry, or even the general population.. All projects should have an apologetic focus that demonstrate the ability to apply apologetics knowledge learned in the degree program.

- Here are some *examples of possible* ministry projects:
- Develop a curriculum for use in ministry: online or classroom use. Curriculum can be used in secular or Christian school settings as appropriate (this can include high school through college), or church and parachurch settings.
- Develop a guide or program for train pastors or ministry leaders to witness to a specific group or community in culturally specific context. This can address current topics in morality, ethics, and sexual identity issues.
- Develop and plan a mission trip with an apologetics training focus.
- Develop and plan a community outreach. Study a piece of legislation and develop a response. This can include a political action plan and service.

The 3-Step Flow of the Project

Step one: Write a 5-10 page prospectus that outlines your project. It must include a thesis statement, detailed outline of your stated goals and objectives, and a working bibliography of any relevant materials. The prospectus must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer and your project Supervisor. This will serve as the guide for your project.

Step two: Develop and implement the necessary materials to fulfill the practical project or curriculum. Make sure you keep good records at this stage because that information will be required in the final project paper. Remember to record both positive and negative aspects you discovered at this stage.

Step three: Write the summary report of 40-50 pages. This summary report must show how you followed the guidelines of your prospectus. It should also address and elaborate on the substance of your project (see the “Organization of the Written Paper” section on page 6). This is an academic report of your project so it must be written in accordance with all formatting guidelines, include footnotes, and a bibliography.

Prerequisites

The DMin project can be approved and begun once a minimum of 18-units DMin course work has been completed.

Steps of the Ministry Project

1. Discuss preliminary ideas with the Academic Dean in terms of perceived apologetics problems or needs identified in a particular ministry or ministry setting.
2. Conduct preliminary research for the proposed project through reading, interviews, surveys, observations, census, and demographics data, etc.
3. Submit proposal to the Academic Dean. Approximately 5-10 pages (body of paper excluding title page and bibliography etc.) Must include a working title and Bibliography.
4. The student *may* recommend and enlist a supervisor by first approaching the VIU faculty member. This is not required. The Dean evaluates and confirms student’s choice is appropriate for the subject matter and faculty member is willing
5. The academic dean has the final authority for assigning the supervisor.
6. The Dean notifies the student in writing (email) of supervisor assignment, approval of project, and time frame to complete. (One year) The dean will notify supervisor and the two additional readers.
7. Implementation of ministry project.
8. Submit written paper documenting all phases of the ministry project explicitly following the format and guidelines below for the Final Project Paper. The *body* of the paper, not including bibliography, appendices etc should be approximately 30-40 pages. It is to be spiral bound, double sided, three copies. One for the supervisor and one for each reader.
9. The Dean will arrange with the student and evaluators the date of the oral presentation and defense of the project to be held at VIU Santa Ana campus.
10. The student will complete the oral defense and readers will issue a verdict at the conclusion to the student. (see grading sheet) Any corrections or re-writes required will

be given to the student in writing. Evaluation team members *may* request a Digital copy of the report upon which to make written notations of revisions needed.

11. The student will complete the required revisions or resubmissions in the time frame allotted. The revised report is to be submitted in digital format (PDF) only. Any and all revisions are to be in red font to facilitate locating changes.
12. The 3 readers will evaluate the revised paper and either require additional work or approve it when revisions have been deemed satisfactory. The readers then notify the supervisor who in turn renders the final decision.
13. The supervisor notifies the candidate, the Registrar, and the Dean of completion date.
14. The Registrar enters the final grade and finalizes the course.
15. The student is then to mail a final written copy of the report to the VIU office for addition to the library collection. The final approved digital copy will be added to the VIU library.

Written Proposal

Body of paper formatted as follows:

1. **Title:** Should be very specific.
2. **Problem:** There should be a clear description of the problem to be engaged. It should relate to the project in very specific terms: the need in the setting of ministry, the skill to be developed, and/or the knowledge to be acquired. It is important that the problem be described as a problem and not as a conclusion at which the candidate has already arrived.
3. **The Purpose:** This should be one concise, sharply focused sentence. This sentence is to serve as the critical guiding goal of the project.
4. **Scope:** This is the fine print of the contract. It must show what the candidate is going to do and what he or she is not going to do, if relevant. It is the place to define terms. It is also important that the candidate consider what aspects of the project are within his or her control. The candidate is to complete the work by means of his own initiative and work. The project is to be set up so that it has minimal dependence on others.
5. **Methodology:** This project proposal is your written plan for the project. It should include research, planning, action, and evaluation. This section is to include the measurable objectives for the project utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy verbs.
6. **Timetable:** The candidate is to include a proposed time frame for completing each phase of the project.

7. **Bibliography:** The bibliography is normally two to three pages and should have author, title, and city of publication, publisher and date in accord with Turabian format.

8. **Contribution to Ministry:** The candidate is to explain how the proposed project will contribute in a worthwhile and significant apologetics manner to the ministry.

Final Project Paper

Formatting. Writing style and formatting will utilize the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate Turabian. *VIU Turabian helper* is an excellent quick reference, but the definitive guide will be the Turabian manual. Use title page formatting for dissertation as opposed to a course paper normally used. There are explanations and examples in the Turabian manual.

Organization of Written Paper

The one Ministry Project has two aspects – 1) the practical project itself and 2) the written portion of the project. This second written portion should be a 40-50 page summary explanation of your project and its conclusions. This is not an academic dissertation or thesis, nor is it a completely new subject distinct from your project, but is a thorough articulated support, documentation, and explanation of your project. The following layout can help you organize:

First page: Title Page Following Turabian Format

Second page: Abstract. Template on page 6.

Third page: Declaration page

Body of paper formatted as follows:

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction: This section should contain the statement of the problem, purpose of the paper, overview of the contents of the paper and definitions of terms. This should describe the needs and objectives of the project. It will be similar to the proposal except it will be written in past tense instead of future tense.

Chapter 2 Research and Planning: This section includes describing the research done in validating the completed project.

Chapter 3 Target Audience: This section describes the intended audience or community for whom the project was created and why.

Chapter 4 Development of Project: This section includes a chronological report of everything from setting the goals to the presentation of the project. Actual dates and places are reported. People participating are to be mentioned by name but by position. The outline of events for the program is presented. This section is a complete history of the entire project and could easily be divided into three parts: preparation, presentation, and evaluation.

Chapter 5 Evaluation: This section includes evaluating the research, planning and implementation phases of the project proposal. Also, this section is to include an explanation of whether the proposed goals were met and, if not, why not.

Chapter 6 Summary and Conclusions: This section includes a summary and outcomes, of the project described. It may also provide suggestions for future implementation of such a program or for further development and implementation.

Bibliography: This is the last item in the paper.

Project Materials: All materials and verification of the project work must be sent along with the written paper. Including but not limited to books, booklets, power points, lecture notes, photos, videos, promotional materials, plans, schedules, tests, surveys etc.

Abstract Guidelines

- Limited to one page
- Describe project goals
- Describe the actual implementation of the goals
- State the outcomes of the ministry project

Oral Defense of Project

Factors to be used in evaluating the DMin project will include:

- Well-chosen problem, clearly stated in introduction
- Reasonable purpose of study
- Demonstration of knowledge of related literature
- Concise summary of findings
- Creative application of theory to apologetic situation
- Careful design of program
- Thorough implementation of program
- Precise reporting of program
- Conscientious evaluation of program
- Clear conclusions reflecting problems and purpose
- Control of personal bias

DMin Oral Defense Process

The oral defense is normally done on campus in Santa Ana, CA unless told otherwise by the academic dean. In such cases Zoom may be utilized. Please arrive dressed in business attire in respect of the important event and for the evaluation team.

- I.** Opening prayer by project supervisor
- II.** Candidate will present his project orally. It is to be a *brief* overview of the project since all readers are familiar with the details.

- III. The evaluation team will ask questions, point out needed corrections, and any required additional work or revisions. The student is to answer questions when asked, but not to take on a defensive posture. The intent of the meeting is to assist you in improving your final paper, serve as a learning opportunity. Our purpose is to collaborate with you with the goal of your success.
- IV. The candidate will be briefly excused while the team discusses its findings and decides on status of the project based on the *Ministry Project/Thesis Examination Notes*. The team will select one option “a” through “g” as described on the Examination form. This will be anything from accepted as is, corrections needed; including time frame for required revisions, to approved as is.
- V. The student will be invited back in and briefed on the team findings and decision. Revised report is to be emailed (PDF) to all team members with any revisions in red font.

Role of the Project Advisor

The role of the advisor regarding the proposal and the project is as follows:

1. Be available to the student for consultation and guarantee a turn-around time of no more than 21 days for each item submitted by the student. A student should anticipate regular conversation regarding the proposal and written report of project.
2. Guide in the development and preparation of the project proposal.
3. Provide counsel with respect to methodology, and resources for the project.
4. Monitor each stage of the project to ensure professional relevance and academic discipline according to the standards of doctoral study at Veritas University.
5. The advisor is not to do the work of the student. He/she is to ask the student to revise or edit when appropriate.
6. See that the candidate confines the written project document to the appropriate length.

Required Books

Latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. By Kate Turabian.

Suggested Books

Turabian: The Easy Way by Houghton and Houghton (based on 7th edition but still very handy)

Quality Research papers for Students of Religion and Theology by Nancy Vyhmeister

The Elements of Style by William Strunk and E. B. White.

Research Strategies by William Badke

Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education by Mary J. Allen,

Assessing Student Learning by Linda Suskie,

Assessment Essentials by Catherine, A. Palomba and Trudy W Banta.
DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for any degree.

Signed

Date

STATEMENT 1

This project is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references.

Signed

Date

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my project, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the summary to be made available to outside organizations.

Signed

Date



Ministry Project Examination Evaluation

Student.

Name of Candidate:

Chairman:

Department: Apologetics

Degree Program: Doctor of Ministry in Apologetics

Thesis Supervisor:

Examiners:

Date of Examination:

The Examining Committee, in recommending the candidate for the Degree of DMin, has certified that the thesis submitted by the candidate substantially covers the scheme of research approved for him/her by the thesis supervisor. The Examining Committee recommends the following: [please indicate one only of the following options below].

- ☐ (a) **That the candidate be approved for the award of a degree without revisions.**
- ☐ (b) **That the candidate be approved for the degree of Doctor of ministry in Christian Apologetics subject to completion of such minor corrections** as may be required by the Examining Committee. Corrections should be completed within a period of four working weeks. The Board may stipulate that the corrections shall be scrutinized by one or all examiner(s) prior to the award process being initiated.
- ☐ (c) **That the candidate be approved for the degree of _____ subject to such major corrections and amendments** as may be required by the Examining Committee. Corrections/ amendments should be completed within a period of _____ per recommendation of the evaluation Team.
- ☐ (d) **That the candidate be not approved for the degree of _____, but be allowed to modify the thesis and re-submit it for the degree of _____ on payment of re-submission fee (\$50).** A candidate may be allowed a single opportunity to re-submit the work, so this outcome is not available when a re-submitted work is being examined. The re-submission should take place within a period not less than three months and not more than one year from the date of the original examination.
- ☐ (e) **That the candidate be not approved for the degree of _____, but be approved instead for the degree of _____, subject to completion of such minor or major corrections as may be required by the Examining Board.** Corrections should be completed within a period of four working weeks (minor corrections) to six months (major corrections). The Committee may stipulate that the corrections shall be scrutinized by one or all examiner(s) prior to the award process being initiated.
- ☐ (f) **That the candidate be not approved for the degree of _____, but be allowed to modify the thesis and re-submit it for the degree of _____ on payment of examination fee (\$50).** A candidate may be allowed a single opportunity to re-submit the work, so this outcome is not available when a re-submitted work is being examined. The re-submission should take place within a period not less than three months and not more than one year from the date of the original examination.
- ☐ (g) **That the candidate be not approved for the award of a degree.**

Signed: _____

(Examiner)

Signed: _____

(Examiner)

Signed: _____

(Examiner)

RESUBMISSION NOTES: