



## **DM-900-OL 2 Project Seminar for Arts and Theology E**

**February – March 2016**

**Meetings: Thursdays 8:00p to 10:00p**

### **1. Course Description**

This course will equip the DMin student to identify a DMin project, develop a plan of research and execution for that project, and determine a constructive theological component for the project. The final outcome of the course is a project proposal that is sent to the DMin Committee for approval and assignment of a faculty reader who will oversee the writing of the student's project paper. For a more complete explanation of how the project proposal fits into the total DMin program see "The Project Paper in Context" below. Classes will be taught in a synchronous online format with interaction between classes using the tools of Blackboard.

### **2. Instructor**

Dr. Lew Parks, Director, Doctor of Ministry Program@Wesley Theological Seminary  
Email: lparks@wesleyseminary.edu... Call or text: 717-695-1532

### **3. Texts**

Bolker, Joan. *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising, and Finishing Your Doctoral Thesis*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998. ISBN: 0- 8050-4891-X (Available in digital)

Sensing, Tim. *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2011. ISBN: 978-1-61097-276-5

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, Eighth Edition. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0226816371 (Part I is helpful for planning research). (Available in digital)

### **4. How Does It Work?**

1. We will meet live online from 8:00p to 8:50p and 9:00p to 9:50p. The classroom will be open for chatting at 7:45p. You must be present at the specified times *wherever in the world you may be* and you must have internet connection and web cam

capacity for the entirety of the two hour session minus the intermission. ☐

2. You will receive an email from the instructor inviting you to class and providing you with a URL address to either click on or copy and paste into your browser. Follow any prompts that may appear.
3. In a typical online session the instructor will make presentations that lay the foundations and set the themes for discussions to follow. We will rely on the video tool, the desktop presentations, and the chat tool to maintain a high level of interaction.
4. We will work collaboratively as each person perfects his or her proposal section by section and as a whole. If things go well most persons will have 90% of their proposal completed by the end of the last day of class. ☐
5. Each student will have the opportunity of submitting a revised version of their latest iteration of the project proposal and receiving the instructor's comments twice between each class session.

## 5. Pre-Class Assignments

1. Read the Bolkner text in its entirety and write a 200-300 words description and analysis of your writing practices, e.g. how you produce your sermons and newsletter articles. These paragraphs will be shared with the class.
2. Read the Sensing book in its entirety but pay special attention to chapter 4 ("Tools of the Trade"), chapter 5 ("Other Toolboxes"), and chapter 6 ("Taking Notes").
3. Read and critique two DMin project papers of WTS DMin graduates. Access the Master List of DMin papers in the Documents section of the Blackboard course and survey the entries across the years. Choose two that catch your eye. Choose two papers in hard copy from the Wesley library (1970-2010) or in PDF from TREN (2011-2015).
  - To request a hard copy of a project paper from the Library, email [library@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:library@wesleyseminary.edu). To request a PDF from TREN (*Theological Research Exchange Network*), go to this link and follow instructions: <http://wesleyseminary.libguides.com/dmin>.
  - Analyze the project papers borrowed from the library or downloaded from TREN. For each paper answer three questions (100 to 150 words per answer)... (1) What did the author intend to do to address their condition and how well did they ☐succeed?... (2) How did the author's theological chapter or sections support the project?... (3) If you were running this project and writing this project paper what would you have done differently? ☐
  - These analyses are due as single-spaced word documents sent directly to the instructor's email address above. They should be sent no later than January 30, 2016. We will refer to these documents in class. ☐

## 6. Grading

This is the only DMin course that is pass-fail. A pass grade indicates that a proposal has been forwarded to the DMin Committee for action and accepted by that Committee with a reader assigned. Due dates and extension policies of the program at large apply.

## 7. Wesley's Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes in their entirety. Deviation from the attendance policy may result in reduction of grade or loss of credit.

## 8. Wesley's Disability Policy

If you have a physical, psychological or learning disability and might require accommodations in this course, please contact the Associate Dean for Community Life, Asa Lee, immediately regarding Wesley's policies and procedures for documenting and accommodating disabilities, x8612 or [alee@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:alee@wesleyseminary.edu).

## 9. Wesley's Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offense and will result in substantial penalties, including the possibility of academic dismissal. The Faculty regards the following as forms of plagiarism or dishonesty. (1) Copying from another student's paper; (2) Giving or receiving unauthorized assistance to or from another student during an examination; (3) Using unauthorized material during an examination; (4) Borrowing and presenting as one's own (i.e. without proper attribution) and composition or ideas of another.

## 10. Calendar

Feb 04 Class 1: Syllabus unpacked... Intro to Template... Your first inclinations...

Feb 11 Class 2: Condition

Feb 18 Class 3: Intervention

Feb 25 Class 4: Tools

Mar 03 Class 5: Theological Component

Mar 10 Class 6: Project Question

Mar 17 Class 7: Permissions to Secure... Informed Consent Issues to Address...  
Bibliographies... Putting it all together.

Mar 24 No Class: *Holy Thursday*

Mar 31 Class 9: Writing Disciplines... Public Presentations... Completing the Program

## The Project Paper in Context

As students near the completion of their core courses they will enroll in the *Project Seminar*. This course will equip them to identify a DMin project, develop a plan of research and execution for that project, and determine a constructive theological component for the project.

The final outcome of the course is a project proposal that is sent to the DMin Committee for approval and the assignment of a faculty reader who will oversee the writing of the student's project paper.

The project paper will have three identifiable sections framed by introductory matters on the one end and appendices and bibliography on the other. The main body of the document must meet or exceed seventy-five pages of text. The voice of the writer will be that of a participant observer.

First, the student will identify a positive or negative situation worthy of further study and thoughtful intervention. This "condition" might be in a local church, judicatory, missionary, or chaplaincy setting. The student will employ a variety of tools of qualitative research both to document this condition and to measure the results of the intervention to follow. The tools include but are not limited to ethnographic notes, purposive samples, questionnaires, interviews, surveys, and examining artifacts or documentary sources. Students sometimes chose one or another overarching method for employing these tools such as a case study, narrative research, or appreciative inquiry.

Second, the student will commit to a biblical/theological component that grounds the DMin project. The usual expression for this work is a chapter of twenty to thirty pages. The faculty reader will review and offer editorial suggestions on this chapter during the fall before the student's graduation. The biblical/theological component may be an exegesis of a passage of scripture, a study in biblical theological, a chapter in church history, or some doctrine with special attention to matters of ecclesiology. The component may be offered in any number of forms such as a larger horizon of meaning for the project, a field of symbols for interpreting the project, or as a biblical/theological argument, which the project either confirms or contradicts.

Third, and the heart of the project paper, is the narrative of the intervention undertaken to bring about change in the condition. Normally this will be the longest section of the DMin project paper, and in fact may require multiple chapters. The student provides snapshots from before, during, and after the project. As participant observer the student acts and reflects, initiates change and measures for that change. And when the narrative is complete, the student will provide summary statements as well as recommendations. Often these are contained in a short but separate final chapter.

The DMin program at Wesley requires all students to complete all work on their projects by December 31 prior to graduation. The final edited version of the DMin project paper is due April 1 prior to graduation. Once accepted that final version will be submitted to the library in paper, scanned into a PDF document, and posted publically in the Theological Research Exchange Network (TREN) where all Wesley DMin papers have been preserved since 2011.

The DMin program at Wesley also requires students to offer a “public presentation” of their DMin project and project paper. At these events students will tell the story of their project, its origin and development, its surprises and disappointments. They will share their theological engagement from the theology chapter and reflect on the project’s potential in other settings. About half the public presentations take place in established venues like a meeting of the bishop’s cabinet, a monthly minister’s meeting, or a national gathering where workshops by those on some cutting edge are offered.

The public presentation also may take the form of a self-organized gathering of peers with conversation around the project and a third party scribe noting interesting questions or applications. The public presentations have a documented record of broadcasting the students’ DMin work in a way that opens doors for them to extend it to larger horizons.