

## Learning Goals Guidelines

The Practice in Ministry and Mission program at Wesley Theological Seminary creates opportunities for seminarians to prepare for ministry in diverse settings through a model of action and reflection. Through field education experiences, seminarians develop proficiency in several key areas of ministry: mission, administration, leadership, teaching, pastoral care, and preaching and worship in congregational settings or written and oral communication in other settings.

As a basis for the internship's Learning Agreement, seminarians will develop concrete learning goals in four of these areas. The goals should make explicit the expectations and objectives of the seminarian, but they should also realistically reflect the goals of the field education setting. The goal should also build on the seminarian's competencies. For example, a learning goal for a seminarian with little experience in preaching may be to preach contextually appropriate sermons for those inside and outside of the faith community. However, a seminarian with preaching experience who wants to become a more effective preacher may aim to develop sermons that illustrate comprehensive exegetical work while still being contextually appropriate for those inside and outside of the community.

Descriptions of each key area are provided below to help seminarians formulate their four learning goals.

### **Mission**

The mission area of ministry invites seminarians to explore God's ongoing work of transformation in the world. This area includes the transformation of individuals, congregations, and local communities. This area includes a constellation of practices including discipleship, education and formation, evangelism, and social justice.

Competency in this area is demonstrated by an ability to accompany individuals and communities in their own spiritual journeys through the study of scripture, prayer, spiritual disciplines, worship, etc. These leaders also demonstrate an ability to accompany individuals and communities as they turn outward beyond themselves towards the transformation of others through evangelism, social justice, advocacy, and public witness.

Excellence in this area is demonstrated by integrating these competencies in the ministry of accompaniment so that, by journeying alongside others, a person's deepening personal transformation leads to social transformation and, likewise, social transformation leads to personal transformation.

### **Administration**

The administration area of ministry invites seminarians to participate in God's transforming work through managing the daily work of the organization. This area includes a constellation of practices such as time management, institutional knowledge, and ability to collaborate with others.

Competency in this area is demonstrated by comprehension of the inner workings of the institution and ability to work with others efficiently and productively to fulfill the mission of the organization. These leaders approach administrative responsibilities as an essential part of their vocation as ministers.

Excellency in this area is attained by competently engaging in the day-to-day life of an organization with compassion, grace, and adeptness and by managing and participating in its administrative activities as a form of transformational ministry that impacts the lives of those inside and outside of the faith community.

### **Leadership**

The leadership area of ministry invites seminarians to discern God's ongoing work in their lives and that of the faith and outside community. It requires cultivating an awareness of one's personal gifts as well as gifts of the members of the community. Leadership includes a constellation of practices such as self-awareness, self-motivation, adaptive thinking, visioning, and innovation.

Competency in leadership is demonstrated by an ability to use one's gifts for ministry to empower the community to live into God's calling. This ability depends upon an ongoing exegesis of the organization and broader community.

Excellence is demonstrated by competent leadership that reflects an ability to help the community to better discern God's calling and to better embody the transforming power of the Spirit. These leaders extend help to people inside and outside the faith community.

### **Worship and Preaching (part of a congregational assessment)**

The worship and preaching area of ministry invites seminarians to explore how they can effectively communicate the gospel through the written and spoken word. This area includes the development of skills in leading worship, in the art of preaching, and in writing appropriate liturgies for the community.

Competency in this area is demonstrated by an ability to use sermons, prayers, reflections, and other liturgical methods to create worship experiences that are clear, meaningful, and useful in communicating the transforming power of the gospel inside and outside of the faith community. Competent leaders should also demonstrate an ability to write liturgies for the faith community.

Excellence in this area is demonstrated by competently preaching and leading worship experiences that are inclusive of the diversity within the community. Excellent leaders demonstrate mature sermon development that draws from a deep well of biblical and theological sources. They also demonstrate an ability to write original liturgies that blend various worship styles appropriate for the community. These leaders have developed their own voice in preaching and worship leadership.

### **Public Communication (part of a non-profit assessment)**

The public communication area of nonprofit ministry invites seminarians to develop and hone skills used in sharing the mission of the organization through public speaking and writing. This area includes leading and speaking at group gatherings as well as producing written communication to use within the organizational setting.

Competency in this area is demonstrated by an ability to communicate effectively on behalf of the organization. These ministry leaders are able to construct meaningful speeches and written documents that illustrate solid research and clear intent to be delivered to those inside and outside the organization, thereby advancing organizational goals.

Excellency in this area is demonstrated when competent writing and speaking attains a high level of effectiveness through its clarity of thought and expression, trustworthiness, conviction, and empathy with the listener or reader. These leaders are able to communicate the mission of the organization to a broad constituent base. These leaders have also found their own voice and convey authenticity in their communications.

### **Teaching**

The teaching area of ministry invites seminarians to explore ways they can engage in constructing opportunities for learning to take place in their ministry site. Inherent to this ministry is the elemental idea that the seminarian is both teacher and learner. This ministry strives to develop teachers who transform the hearts and minds of those in the community.

Competence in this area of ministry is demonstrated by an ability to facilitate thoughtful dialogues and reflections within the community. These leaders strive to develop good teaching skills, including thorough preparation, planning, and listening. These ministry leaders also are driven to improve their own understanding of the subjects they seek to teach.

Excellency in this area is demonstrated when competent leaders have the flexibility to employ various pedagogical methods and the ability to develop theologically coherent studies considered more suitable than currently available educational materials. Excellent teachers also demonstrate the ability to develop trusting, productive relationships with learners, and they create a sense of community and belonging in the members of the learning group.

### **Pastoral Care**

The pastoral care area of ministry invites seminarians to explore ways they can develop and use pastoral care skills appropriate for their congregation or organization. This ministry begins with the conception that pastors embody a pastoral presence within the community being served. Pastoral care also involves practices of self-care that focus on one's own well-being.

Competence in this area of ministry is demonstrated by the ministry leader's deep love of God and neighbor made evident by the empathy, sympathy, and compassion extended to those who are served. The leader understands that personal integrity and trustworthiness is vital to engage in pastoral care. These leaders monitor their personal well-being as they care for others in the community.

Excellency in this area is demonstrated by competent ministry leaders who possess emotional intelligence. Excellent pastoral caregivers are not afraid to journey with others during the difficult moments and personal tragedies of life, including sickness, heartbreak, and imminent death. They know their own limitations and can assist in procuring the appropriate care and services from other professional practitioners.