MAJOR PROJECT PROPOSAL, MAJOR PROJECT CONSULTATION, and MAJOR PROJECT

The Major Project is the culminating achievement of the Doctor of Ministry degree. It not only contributes to the student's understanding and practice of ministry, but further contributes new knowledge and understanding of the practice of ministry more broadly.

The student will complete the Major Project Proposal in DSEM4 (H), Major Project Proposal Preparation. The Proposal prepares the student for this project through the articulation of a carefully thought out plan, familiarity with the state of the field in the student's area of interest, and confirmation of the project's viability through the Major Project Consultation. The Proposal itself will serve as the basis for chapters 1 and 2 of the Major Project.

Major Project Proposal

The Major Project Proposal (MPP) consists of three sections.

The *first* is a narrative account describing the following topics. This will form the basis of the introductory chapter of the Major Project:

- Research topic or desired product, research question or goal of project, significance of research for student and wider field of ministry
- Type of project (e.g., analytical essay, qualitative research, mixed quantitative and qualitative research, development of educational resource)
- Assumptions, theological and otherwise, brought to the project
    - Definition of central terms
- Research or constructive methodology to be used
    - Steps to be taken
    - Relevant experience and qualifications for this methodology
    - Identify specific resources available for the completion of the project (e.g, library resources, online data bases, software, special programs, etc.)

The *second* is a literature review. This will form the basis of the state of the field chapter of the Major Project:

- This is a narrative discussion of the 12-15 resources that will be the student's main conversation partners for this project. The essential question governing this discussion is: how do these resources inform, guide and influence my thinking about what I am trying to learn? In the course of the review the student shows how the proposed research fills a gap in currently available materials, deepens understanding in some significant area, or contributes to discussion is some substantive way.

The *third* contains the following:

- Annotated bibliography listing another 15-20 resources pertinent to the project with a substantial paragraph about each indicating the concepts, ideas, approach or data that contribute to the project and/or shape its context.
- Tentative outline of the Major Project.
    - For each chapter, be explicit about the anticipated contribution it will make to the

overall project as well as the evidence you expect to use in support of this contribution.
- Tentative schedule for completion of the project.

Major Project Consultation

Upon approval of the Major Project Supervisor, the student should advise the Chair of the DMin Committee that the Major Project Consultation (MPC) is ready to be scheduled. The Consultation may take place in person or remotely. It is attended by a minimum of three persons:

- the student
- the Major Project Supervisor
- a faculty member of the Doctor of Ministry Committee, who chairs the MPC.

Copies of the Major Project Proposal should be distributed to the Chair of the Doctor of Ministry Committee and all who will attend the Major Project Consultation at least ten days prior to the scheduled consultation.

The Major Project Consultation consists of a review of the project by those present. The student introduces the project; all present discuss its significance, method, and design. There are four possible outcomes:

- Approved as presented
  - The student proceeds directly to the project as proposed.
- Approved with recommendations
  - The student takes the recommendations into account and begins to work on the project.
- Approved with required changes
  - The student must submit a revised MPP to the project supervisor before work on the project begins.
- Required resubmission of revised MPP
  - A second MPC must be held before the project begins.

The chair of the consultation will report the results of the consultation to the student, the supervisor, the chair of the DMin Committee, and the registrar within one week of the event. If the committee calls for required changes, the project supervisor must notify the registrar and the chair of the DMin Committee when the revisions have been satisfactorily completed. No credit is given for the MPC, but the registrar records this step toward completion of the degree.

In all cases, the MPC must be completed before students seek Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, if needed. Such approval is needed if the research involves living human subjects. The student should request a Human Subject Study Application (HSSA) packet from Franklin and Marshall College's IRB administrator in the Office of College Grants. Once the necessary forms have been submitted and approved, permission to proceed is renewable annually for up to three years. If the project changes significantly during the course of the research, a Human Subject Study Amendment Application must be filed. Sample HSSA documents are available on the seminary website.

Major Project

The Major Project itself is written by the student under the guidance of the Major Project Supervisor. It is expected to be at least 100, but no more than 200, pages in length (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, Times New Roman 12 pt or Arial 10 pt font), excluding front matter, bibliography, and appendices. This expectation may be adjusted if the project is not primarily discursive but substantially in another format, such as the production of a movie or art installation, accompanied by substantial written commentary. In keeping with seminary policy, Chicago Style is to be used. The definitive source for this style is *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th Edition. The recommended practical handbook for applying Chicago style to theological writing and seminary assignments is *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th Edition by Kate L. Turabian.

The structure of the Major Project itself, including the content of particular chapters, is to be agreed upon between the student and the project supervisor, with the supervisor having the final determination. The most common format incorporates much of the MPP, although this material will revised as it is integrated into the resulting project. For instance, the literature covered in the literature review, as well as additional resources, is likely to form much of chapter 2, but will also figure significantly in discussions throughout the work. The number of chapters and their individual foci will be worked out between the student and the supervisor in keeping with the type of project undertaken. A common format, well-suited to qualitative research, is as follows:

Front Matter:

- Title page
- Copyright page (will also include signatures of supervisor and Chair of DMin Committee in final version)
- Abstract
- Dedication page, if desired
- Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction (includes material from the first section of the MPP revised in light of how the project develops)

- Research topic, research question or thesis within this topic, significance of research for student and wider field of ministry
- Research or constructive methodology to be used

Chapter 2: State of the Field (includes material from the second section of the MPP revised in light of how the project develops)

- Literature review
- Significance of project, gap filled by this project

Chapter 3: The Research or Product

- What was done
- What was found or created

Chapter 4: Analysis and Conclusions

- What this project offers: proposals, syntheses, new resources

Chapter 5: Next steps

- Significance of the Conclusions
- Pastoral implications

Appendices (if appropriate)

Throughout the project, the student is expected to be in regular contact with the project supervisor. Student and supervisor should work out a mutually agreeable set of expectations concerning how work is to be submitted (e.g., electronically or on paper), how much work is to be submitted at any given time (e.g., a chapter at a time, a full draft), and when the student should expect feedback (e.g., 2 weeks after submission of a chapter). The following non-negotiable deadlines for the final semester of the degree program should govern these expectations:

Submission of full draft to supervisor	January 1
Supervisor's feedback to student	February 1
Penultimate draft to supervisor	March 1
Supervisor gives permission to present at Symposium	March 15
Symposium	Early-April
Submission to ProQuest	April 30
Graduation	First Saturday in May

Overall, the Major Project should demonstrate the student's ability to:

- Conceptualize an important problem or issue in ministry;
- Articulate a rationale for the significance of the project;
- Hypothesize probable findings and conclusions, where appropriate;
- Show familiarity with and an understanding of the literature applicable to the research area and its pertinence to the chosen topic and engage in conversation with that literature throughout the project;
- Utilize a method appropriate for the question or issue under consideration and be able to justify its pertinence;
- Reflect theologically on the central issue of the project;
- Offer suggestions for further research.

The Major Project Supervisor makes this evaluation when granting permission to present at the DMin Symposium.

The Major Project, when successfully completed, will receive 9 credits.

Major Project Presentation at the Doctor of Ministry Symposium

The DMin Symposium is held annually, usually in early April. It provides an opportunity for graduating students to present their work and receive feedback on it. The audience is both live

and remote.

The presentation itself will be moderated by the Major Project Supervisor, asking questions to which the student will respond within the time allotted (generally no more than 60 minutes). The following questions provide a typical framework; the supervisor is encouraged ask additional questions to ensure that the key contributions of the student's project are presented clearly.

Introduction (5 minutes)

- How did you become interested in the project?
- What is the basic research question or thesis at the core of the project?

The Project (35 minutes)

- What methods were applied in your research? What data/information did you gather?
- What were your major findings and discoveries?
- How did you analyze your data, make your argument and justify your conclusions (theologically, historically, social scientifically, etc.)?
- Having completed this project, what further avenues of research does it suggest to you?

Impact/Significance (7 minutes)

- How has the project impacted your practices of ministry (e.g., preaching, pastoral care, leadership, teaching, etc.)?
- How has the project influenced your vocational development in ministry (e.g., ministerial identity, sense of mission, etc.)?
- How do you see the project contributing to church and society?

Questions from the audience (10 minutes)

All audience members will be asked to complete an evaluation of the presentation. The student will receive these forms within a few days of the presentation and is encouraged to use feedback from the presentation and evaluations in making corrections, clarifications, additions or ideas for further research in the final version of the project.

Final Submission of Major Project

The Major Project will be published through ProQuest. In the academic year of graduation, the student will receive instructions on electronically submitting the final document for publication from the Chair of the DMin Committee or the Seminary Librarian. The ProQuest website includes models for the title and copyright pages under Resources for Students. The student must upload the final version of the project to the ProQuest website by April 30. The Major Project Supervisor must sign off on it by May 2.