

THE SUPERVISED YEAR

Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUPERVISED YEAR

Field Education and Supervised Ministry is one important part of the comprehensive academic Master of Divinity and Master of Theology and Ministry MATM degree programs offered through Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University. The purpose of these is to prepare persons for leadership in the church, chaplaincy, and non-profit or agency ministerial leadership.

The Minister-in-Training will have completed a minimum of 21 hours of academic studies toward the number of hours required for the M.Div. degree, and for the M.A.T.M. degree. Normally, the student will have completed basic studies in Bible, Theology, Church History, Pastoral Care and other courses related to the practice of ministry. Many will also have had from one to three years of experience in part-time ministry. The intention of the curriculum at Brite is to incorporate integration in Ministry Studies as fully as possible, and the Supervised Year in Ministry is the intentional expression of that effort.

To that end, a major emphasis of Field Education is to provide a Supervised Year program. Its purpose is three-fold: (1) to make a Minister-in-Training available to a local church or agency for service as pastor, youth minister, student associate or other agency-based ministry; (2) to help the student toward a better self-understanding both as a person and as a pastor or non-profit ministerial leader; and (3) to help the student develop a sustainable spiritual discipline. Being a pastor or non-profit ministerial leader includes a self-understanding (intrapersonal) as well as one's relationship to persons and groups (interpersonal). Awareness and reflection on experience are keys to growth in ministry. The program is designed to place theory and practice in the same arena, if not complementing each other, then at least moving toward reconciliation.

Under careful supervision and with the support of a Peer or Lay Training Committee, the student is exposed to total ministry and is guided in the process of facing the issues of life – dissecting them, examining each part in the light of theological reflection – in collegiality with leaders, pastors, lay people and peers. Thus, the student is engaged in valid work of ministry. They will have the opportunity of gaining insights and skills in integrating academic knowledge, theological reflection, spiritual formation, competence in the functions of ministry, and awareness of personal functioning and interpersonal relations.

The purpose of this manual is to familiarize all persons who will be related to a Minister-in-Training and their placement with the expectations and responsibilities of the program. Usually located mid-point in the student's academic program, the Supervised Year consists of two semesters and carries 6 semester hours credit. The concurrent model of field education is practiced at Brite Divinity School because it permits the mutual interplay of classroom and professional experience in a field setting which provides both a place for student financial support and a base for professional learning.

The Supervised Year gives the opportunity to Ministers-in-Training to integrate what is learned in classroom settings with actual ministerial practice in the field. The field setting, be it congregation or agency, should experience benefits as well.

The Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry encourages field supervisors, committees and boards who exercise oversight for students to uphold the important balance between practice and classroom responsibilities. By monitoring how well students are achieving a proper balance among study, work, and personal care, lifelong patterns for positive ministry may be inculcated in them for decades to come.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with great appreciation that we acknowledge the work of several whose scholarship and experience have aided greatly in the development of this program and training manual. Especially we are grateful to the work of Rev. Debra W. Haffner and Dr. Kate Ott of the Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing; Donald F. Beisswenger of Vanderbilt Divinity School; Craig L. Emerick of Perkins School of Theology; Doran McCarty of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; William S. Pregnall of Virginia Theological Seminary; and the Field Education Staff of Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Each of these will find their words and ideas reflected here and we are grateful.

On the whole, however, the Supervised Ministry program at Brite Divinity School is the legacy of its most recent director, the Rev. Dr. Stephen V. Sprinkle, now Emeritus Professor of Practical Theology. This manual and the program it describes would not be were it not for the many years of dedicated service Dr. Sprinkle gave to the program and to the school. The program's commitment to being a *theological* enterprise is due to his determination to help students not only thrive in ministry but reflect on the theological significance of their work.

AN OUTLINE OF THE SUPERVISED MINISTRY PROGRAM

Purpose: To produce growth in ministry, competency in professional skills and self-understanding.

1. To help students develop vocational self-identity.
2. To provide ground for testing theological, psychological and sociological concepts.
3. To help students develop ability to do critical and reflective thinking by relating theory to experience.
4. To lead students toward professional competence in ministerial practice.
5. To integrate academic studies, experiential discovery and reflective insights.

The program is designed to organize and provide learning experiences during the student's second Divinity School year in the context of local parish life and/or other approved settings. This experience shall include the following elements:

- I. Setting. The Divinity School will enlist and train congregations and non-profits in understanding what it means to be teaching institutions, within whose activities there are functional roles in which student and supervisor can negotiate a Covenant for Learning.
- II. Covenant for Learning. The student benefits by doing work which has meaning and related to their own felt need for personal and pastoral development. The supervisor and lay committee benefit in understanding the student's goals to which they mutually agree by relating work experiences to them.
- III. Supervision is by "one who is both engaged in the practice of their ministerial profession and duly qualified to supervise." The Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry has the responsibility for identifying, enlisting and training supervisors. Through papers, personal interviews with the minister-in-training, and contact with site supervisor, LTC, and TRG, the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry further contributes to each student's supervision.
- IV. Theological Reflection Groups. The Theological Reflection Groups (TRG) are regularly scheduled meetings of small groups of students with a pastoral leader and a faculty consultant. These conferences are reflective and integrative in nature. Aspects of ministerial practice are presented during the conference for analysis and evaluation, utilizing, and integrating the various theological disciplines. The student is expected to be able to share (communicate) their theological perspective.

- V. Evaluation. Evaluation takes place during each semester (formally) and through weekly supervisor sessions (informally). Its purpose is to assess both student growth and development and task performance in the light of stated learning goals. Student, supervisor, Lay Committee, and the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry Director are all involved in the evaluation process.
- VI. Credit. Supervised work in the field setting, along with participation in Theological Reflection Groups (TRG) I and II, will earn the student a total of six semester hours credit.

SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS

Supervised Ministry 2023–2024

FALL 2023 SEMESTER

Due Date	Description of Report
08/30/23	Covenant for Learning Due
09/20/23	First Short Paper Due
10/04/23	Fall Student Initial Self-Evaluation
10/18/23	Second Short Paper Due
11/15/23	Theology of Ministry Draft Due
11/29/23	Fall Final Supervisor Evaluation
11/29/23	Fall Final Student Self Evaluation
11/29/23	Fall LTC Final Evaluation
11/29/23	Fall Final Progress Report
11/29/23	Fall TRG Leader's Final Evaluation

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION:

Forms requiring signatures must be submitted by the supervisor (or, in one case, TRG leader) after all other signatures have been obtained. Digital signatures or a clear chain of emails are acceptable.

Forms without all required signatures will be returned to the student.

All assignments (the Covenant for Learning, Short Papers, Theology of Ministry, and Evaluations) must be submitted electronically to supervisedministry@tcu.edu using these instructions:

One item per email. In other words, please be sure your supervisor doesn't attach four forms to a single email or I will have to send them back and they will not be marked "received." Said in yet another way: each supervisor will send me four separate emails.

Rename each file before attaching it by using this template:

Student-Last-Name, Student-First-Name, [student/supervisor/LTC/progress report].pdf.

Example: Shelton, Andy, supervisor.pdf

The **subject line** of each email should match the name of the file (see examples above).

SPRING 2024 SEMESTER

Spring due dates will be posted at a later date.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION GROUPS

Initial Meetings 2023–2024

FALL SEMESTER

Meeting Day	Date	Time	Meeting Place
Monday	August 21, 2023	4:15–6 p.m.	TBD
Friday	August 25, 2023	12:45–2:30 p.m.	TBD

SPRING SEMESTER

Meeting Day	Date	Time	Meeting Place
Monday	January 22, 2024	4:15–6 p.m.	TBD
Friday	January 19, 2024	12:45–2:30 p.m.	TBD

Section I

Program Design

FIELD EDUCATION/SUPERVISED MINISTRY

BRITE DIVINITY SCHOOL

Field education for ministry is an authentic learning-serving experience where genuine encounter produces growth in ministry, competency in professional skills, pastoral insight and self-understanding. As the real life context of theological education, field learning is designed (1) to help the student develop their own vocational self-identity as a minister by providing experiences with a variety of ministerial tasks through serving a parish or other expressions of the church as well as agency settings; (2) to provide a ground for the student to test and reconstruct their theological, psychological and sociological concepts; (3) to help the student develop the ability to do critical and reflective thinking by relating theory to experience; (4) to help the student formulate and experimentally refine their own unique skills toward an acceptable level of pastoral and professional competence; and (5) to integrate academic studies, experiential discovery and reflective insights in such a way as to lead to personal confidence and effective ministry.

While the financial needs of the student may influence choice in placement, from the Divinity School's perspective the educational benefits of field education are central and primary.

THE SUPERVISED YEAR: AN INTEGRATIVE EXPERIENCE IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

In the Brite Divinity School Curriculum, the Supervised Year in Ministry is an intensive encounter with Practical Theology. Practical Theologians do theology from the standpoint of a critical examination of ministerial arts and practices. Through a careful assessment of context, resources for theological understanding, resources from allied sciences, such as social theory, psychology, and leadership studies, the practices of ministry become living laboratories through which the presuppositions of faith traditions are examined, and a new, more relevant understanding of situations that face the faith community daily is constructed. Like a spiral upward, practical theology demands attention to new, more faithful and accountable ways to do ministry and to be a minister in today's world. Therefore, the tasks of ministry as Practical Theology are never-ending, but hardly repetitive. The major questions that face the minister as Practical Theologian are: 1) What is really going on here?, and 2) What is God communicating to us about the situation and the choices we face in it?

To that end, the Practical Theology Area of the Faculty has devised a mission and goals, within which the Supervised Year in Ministry describes its shape and learning objectives. The mission of the Practical Theology Area of Brite Divinity School is: to equip individuals "for ministry, especially in the arts and practices of ministry and in the methods of theological reflection that both generate and hold accountable those ministry practices."

The goals by which students in the Supervised Year are expected to address throughout the two semesters of the program are:

1. To demonstrate "progress in understanding and integrating contextuality in the arts and practices of ministry."
2. To demonstrate "progress in the capacity of engagement between theology and practice that allows for the ongoing generativity and imaginative reconstruction of both theology and the skilled and flexible practice of ministry."
3. To demonstrate "increasing ability to be in leadership formation through consultative and supportive relationships balanced with the ability to self-supervise that enhances their ministry leadership in community over time."

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Each student brings their unique background, experience and personal goals to the field education program. Complementing their specific personal objectives, it is expected that students will find an opportunity in approved settings for the following:

1. To demonstrate the ability to define learning objectives and to specify these in a Covenant for Learning and in consultations with the field supervisor.
2. To demonstrate by their performance that they have developed initial competence in their work as mutually understood and defined with the supervisor.
3. To demonstrate by their behavior in regular conference with their supervisor that they can learn from others and can receive and grow through supervision and evaluation.
4. To demonstrate that they can evaluate and be critical of their own work, and clarify personal, pastoral, professional and theological objectives in the process.
5. To demonstrate that they understand and can relate to others and to the institutional structure in which they work.
6. To demonstrate personal growth, especially in learning to deal with stress, vulnerability, conflict, and in coming to a sense of their own personal and pastoral identity.
7. To demonstrate personal growth and professional competence in the establishment of appropriate personal and professional sexual boundaries in ministry.
8. To demonstrate a commitment to a deepening and sustainable spiritual growth plan with which to undergird their ministry.

One can readily see how the mission and goals of the Practical Theology Area are addressed in these Learning Objectives, showing increasing competence in understanding, interpreting and articulating accountability and collegial learning, developing self-critical leadership styles and methods, becoming increasingly articulate theologically through written, oral and aural work, planning intelligently and faithfully for lifelong formation in the arts and practices of ministry, and becoming more adept in the practices of theological reflection and contextual interpretation of situations and settings in ministry.

GENERAL DESIGN

Graduation requirements for all M.Div. and M.A.T.M. degree candidates include one year of engagement in an approved field education setting concurrently with other academic studies. Students must successfully complete both semesters of the Supervised Year in order to satisfy curricular requirements for graduation. While the students may carry specific responsibility in one defined area of ministry (i.e., youth, Christian education) it is necessary that they have an opportunity to share in and observe the broad variety of ministerial roles and functions.

1. Field Experience. While the supervised field education unit will usually be a part of the student's second year in Divinity School, whenever possible students are encouraged to seek a first-year field experience which has potential for the later supervised experience. In the experience the student will generally have a clear ministerial focus (pastor, chaplain, minister to youth, for example). While students are encouraged to have a total experience in ministry, the focus provides a thread of continuity throughout the period of involvement.

2. Support System. While learning through the field experience can be unbalanced in various ways, the educational support system will provide both individual and group supervision. Throughout the Supervised Year the student and the supervisor need a minimum of one hour per week to review case material, discuss critical events and reflect on what is happening, in terms of the Learning Covenant.

The Theological Reflection Group process also provides for reflection with peers and other persons equipped to help students learn from their experience in the field.

A Covenant for Learning defines both the supervisory relationship and the learning goals and reflects the specific focus of the placement setting. The Covenant is signed by the student, supervisor and the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry. Both the student and supervisor complete written evaluations during both semesters in the field unit. The evaluation seeks to consolidate the learning experience, assist in future planning, and assess effectiveness of performance. It also is one of the points at which the director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry shares in the education of each student.

THE SETTING

Many congregations and agencies cooperate with Brite Divinity School by employing students as pastors, associates, ministers to youth, or as non-profit interns. Some also provide needed experience and compensation for students who are not in the credited, Supervised Field Education Year in ministry.

Those approved as settings for the supervised and credited field experience agree to (1) guarantee time for a member of the ministerial/agency staff to become a trained supervisor and provide on-going supervision for a student; (2) provide a lay or peer committee to share with the student through supervision and evaluation; (3) accept the terms of the Learning Covenant negotiated by the student, supervisor and Divinity School at the beginning of each semester.

THE COVENANT FOR LEARNING

Field experiences are most valuable to students and supervisors when there is a specific and written covenant regarding their work experience. The student benefits by doing work that has meaning and is related to their own felt needs for personal and professional development. The supervisor benefits in that they know what learning the student desires and is committed to. A covenant provides both individuals an opportunity to share their needs, expectations and insights with each other. This covenanting procedure eliminates many of the hazy, unclear areas often found in the supervisor-student relationship. The field education program at Brite, as well as at other Divinity Schools, has revealed that writing a teaching-learning covenant is of utmost importance if the field experience is to be profitable for both student and supervisor. **The preparation and continued updating of this covenant is a requirement of the program.** Such preparation demands some time and effort at the beginning of the field experience, but it is more than justified in the quality of supervision the student receives.

The following steps chart the students' process of preparing the learning covenant: (1) Determine personal areas of learning needs. (2) Prioritize the list of learning needs. (3) Determine how assigned work activities fit learning needs. (4) Meet with your supervisor and share your needs. (5) Come to agreement on work activities. (6) Formalize the reflection/interaction sessions. (7) Write down specific performance objectives. (8) Determine when and how each performance objective will be evaluated.

The covenant is a process at the beginning of the first semester of the Supervised Year where the student and supervisor establish, as clearly as possible, the nature of their work relationships with each other. While changes will be necessary, the process of assessing mutual expectations and perspectives is important. Some of the practical and fiscal arrangements of the year will also be consolidated into the Covenant for Learning as the means by which the educational dimensions of the field experience take form, an approved placement is defined, and upon which credit is given.

The covenant is to be completed by announced dates and one copy returned to the Field Education office at Brite Divinity School. TRG Leaders may require students to provide copies of the

covenant to each member of the group. Be sure to check with the TRG Leader about this matter early in the Supervised Year. Several aspects of the covenant deserve further comment:

1. What the student wishes to learn in the setting should be discussed with care. Certain learning experiences are important for all students whose field education is in church settings. In these placement settings, the student should be provided the following learning experiences or convincing reasons given by the supervisor and student why they are not given:
 - a. The student is to preach at least one sermon per semester in some worship service that is significant in the life of the congregation, and that sermon should be evaluated by the pastor and a lay committee.
 - b. The student is to have some observation and supervised experience in hospital, membership, evangelistic, and pastoral calling.
 - c. The student needs to have some observation and/or supervised experience in the teaching ministry for children, youth and adults.
 - d. The student needs to have some observation and/or supervised experience in administration and leadership styles.
 - e. The student needs to have some observation and/or supervised experience in social action and community leadership.
 - f. The student needs to have some observation and/or supervised experience in interpersonal skills.
2. Supervisors will expect responsible participation from the student. Except for scheduled vacations, consistent with both Divinity School and setting calendars, the student will be in the field setting during the two semesters they are registered for Theological Reflection Group in accordance with the terms of the covenant.
3. Regular discussions, reflections and shared tasks between supervisor and student throughout the year are at the heart of field education (see section on Supervision). The intent of this relationship is to assist in sharpening insights, securing feedback and evaluating development of initial competence in the functional area of the student's work. Written reports during the year will provide the supervisor and field education staff with insight into the student's thought and growth.
4. The staff who are leading the Theological Reflection Groups seek to provide an environment in which questions and issues which arise in the field setting can be discussed confidentially with peers and reflected upon within the total context of theological education. This peer group (TRG) becomes a vital part of the support system.
5. Students and supervisors are to make written evaluations during each semester, followed by an evaluation conference. This is an occasion to assess self-development and create plans for the remainder of the student's Divinity School career.

The final student report and evaluation should deal responsibly with the kind of issues suggested in the section on Evaluation. The student's self-evaluations are to be shared with the supervisor who is to return them, along with their evaluations, to the Field Education Director. The student will be given a written copy of the supervisor's evaluation (see section of Evaluation). Thus, the evaluation process engages supervisor, student, lay or peer committee, peers and the Field Education Director.

EVALUATION IN FIELD EDUCATION

The purpose of basic degree programs at Brite Divinity School according to its Mission Statement, is to educate individuals “to lead in the ministry of Christ’s church, the academy, and public life as witnesses to God’s reconciling and transforming love and justice.”

While it is difficult to define precisely what is necessary to fulfill such a purpose, it is expected that both conceptual and behavioral growth and development should occur in the lives of Ministers-in-Training. There is a need for understanding, skill, abilities and maturity to serve effectively in ministry. At Brite Divinity School we believe this kind of growth requires both theory and practice.

Evaluation in field education serves three related purposes: The first is to assess how the student has grown in the areas where they had indicated a desire to grow and develop. It asks about the degree to which predetermined goals are being attained. The second purpose is to assess the student’s performance in terms of the Learning Covenant. The third is related to the student’s self-understanding and the ability to initiate and carry out ministry.

Though the evaluation of the student’s progress toward these goals is at times subjective, such an assessment is necessary for growth and to keep in touch with reality. It can open new avenues for learning when properly used. Students also need to acquire insight and understanding about the effectiveness of their own work and relationships with other people. These are the goals of evaluation in theological education.

Students will be evaluated in terms of the learning objectives as stated earlier in this manual. They will be evaluated by their supervisor and a lay committee in consultation with the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry. Students will be evaluated on the awareness of their own personal needs and their sensitivity to the needs of others. The student is to own their individual actions, taking responsibility for the results. Supervisors and the setting will be evaluated by the students in consultation with the Director.

SUPERVISION IN FIELD EDUCATION

Supervised practice of ministry in a field setting, concurrent with formal academic education, can provide a student with formal academic education, and with maximum learning opportunities for the integration of thought, activity, concept and behavior.

If church, agency and Divinity School are seen as the joint context for theological education, then important learning is gained by the student in each setting. By its nature, the Divinity School can provide much supervision within its walls, both from teachers and peers. The opportunity for educational supervision in a field setting on a regular organized basis has been largely non-existent in “academic-only” surroundings. The combination of both classroom and field setting offers optimum learning and growth experiences.

THE SUPERVISOR

The supervisor is “one who is both engaged in the practice of [their] profession and duly qualified to supervise.¹ Identifying and enlisting ministers who are engaged in the practice of the profession is a first and on-going basic element of this program. Individuals in whom integration for ministry has occurred in deep and sustained ways are most desirable as Field Supervisors in this program, and are continually being recruited. Building on the present field education program, primary assistance will come from senior or associate ministers of churches and agency administrators where students are working or will work.

¹ Cited by Charles R. Fielding, Education for Ministry, (Dayton, Ohio: American Association of Theological Schools, 1966), pp. 176-177.

Secondary assistance will come from pastors serving churches adjacent to an approved field setting. These supervisors will be necessary for the setting where the student is serving as pastor of the church or as minister/chaplain in church or community agencies.

In some instances, where the setting is isolated or where relocation has removed a supervisor, a committee of two to three lay persons can fulfill some supervisory functions. For example, the committee can enter into the Covenant for Learning with the student, provide feedback and evaluation, and serve as a “sounding board” for the student.

The supervisor must be willing to participate in regular and on-going training sessions at the Divinity School and provide appropriate supervisory materials. Those ministers and/or lay persons who are enlisted as supervisors will covenant with the Divinity School to provide such training and materials (see section on Supervision).

THE SETTING

Supervision requires “for its setting an institution within whose activities there are functional roles in which student and supervisor can negotiate a covenant for learning; the roles of both supervisor and student must be appropriate to their particular professional identity (in this case the Christian ministry.)”

The setting most often utilized will be a congregation or an agency of the church. There may be other kinds of institutions available to the student whose professional identity and practice is Christian ministry which will also be suitable as setting for the Supervised Year.

The setting needs to provide the student with an opportunity to enter into realistic and viable roles and functions as outlined in the learning covenant negotiated between the student, the supervisor and responsible representatives of the church/agency. The full shape and content of that agreement will need to be determined in the field setting, with the supervisor and student entering into the agreement.

THE PROFESSIONAL PEERS: THE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION GROUP

This phase of activity can best be carried out in the Divinity School setting. The Theological Reflection Group (TRG) which carries three academic hours credit each semester for two successive semesters will provide for (1) peer interaction, and (2) the integration of learning from field and Divinity School, (3) greater awareness of one’s own theology as related to faith and events. To achieve these goals the conferences requires the student’s participation for one hour and 45 minutes each week of the two semesters.

THE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION GROUP LEADER

The role of the TRG Leader is to facilitate the communication and maturation of each student’s theology of ministry. The setting for this development is the TRG Group, a small group of students usually 7 or less enrolled in the Supervised Year which holds regularly scheduled meetings during term time with the TRG Leader. Aspects of ministerial practice are presented during these conferences for reflection and analysis, utilizing the various theological disciplines.

Normally, the TRG Leader will meet with students enrolled in their section weekly during term time. In the event that a regularly scheduled meeting cannot be overseen by the assigned TRG Leader, both the Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry and all affected students should be notified as soon as possible. Arrangements to make up the postponed meeting are to be shared with the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry as soon as these arrangements are made. An evaluation of each student is to be carried out at the end of each semester. This evaluation is to be shared with the student, as provided for in the directions for executing these evaluations.

The TRG Leader may exercise a broad range of initiative in the design and content of TRG sessions. At the TRG Leader’s discretion, books and articles may be assigned to be read (in addition to

those required for every Supervised Ministry student). Case studies, verbatims, critical incident reports, or other instruments may also be assigned. Since the TRG Leader has a comprehensive calendar of student requirements and deadlines, reminders should be given occasionally at TRG meetings.

Each student's theology of ministry is to be carefully reviewed and considered by the TRG Leader. A copy of each student's Theology of Ministry is to be made available for the TRG Leader, to the Faculty Consultant, and for each member of the TRG Group. Each student's theology of ministry is to be considered during session time. The TRG Leader may request a faculty consultant to read and evaluate student work. In this event, the Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry will help these connections to be made. TRG Leaders will lead their groups through a reconsideration of their Theologies of Ministry for the second semester.

While the situations shared by students during TRG sessions are to be held in confidence, matters of concern should be brought to the attention of the Director. In all such instances, the well-being of the student is the paramount consideration. Other matters should be brought to the attention of the Director, such as tardiness or absenteeism.

TRG Leadership must be ordained ministers who are degreed by an ATS accredited seminary or Divinity School. Normally, candidates need to have experience in pastoral or agency leadership and good connection with their appropriate judicatory.

The qualities Brite seeks in its TRG leaders include, but are not limited to:

- Expertise in ministry
- Manifested insight into the tasks of theological reflection
- Demonstrated understanding of the faith tradition
- Commitment to a vibrant devotional and spiritual life
- Ability to assist students in the integration of theology and practice
- Ability to assist students in identifying issues of and for ministry
- Sensitivity to interpersonal and group dynamics
- Fairness and impartiality in dealing with students
- Ability to confront creatively and positively
- Enthusiastic interest for leading such a group

SUPERVISORY TRAINING

Through the office of the Field Education Director, the Divinity School is responsible for the regular and on-going training of the field education supervisors. Each supervisor who will be functioning in a given semester will participate in the appropriate sessions as announced by the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.

It is important for supervisory training to take place in the Divinity School setting because: (1) the supervisors need to be at home in the Divinity School setting where the student is also at work; (2) there needs to be some interaction, formal or informal, between Divinity School faculty and supervisors and (3) the Divinity School setting probably provides the widest range of resource persons for the training sessions.

The Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry serves as a "supervisor of supervisors" in many respects, but also as an administrator who organizes and facilitates the supervisory training events, utilizing as wide a range of supervisory specialists as is possible.

SUPERVISORY MATERIALS FROM SPECIFIC DENOMINATIONS

Judicatory officials from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Methodist Church will provide persons and resources for the supervisory function of students in their respective traditions:

1. To assist in the enlistment of supporting ministers to serve as supervisors with accompanying demands for time and personal involvement with the student minister.
2. To cooperate in identifying new contexts to be utilized in supervision.
3. To assist the Director and supervisors in the consultative process relative to supervision and evaluation.

Section II

The Field Setting

THE FIELD SETTING

PLACEMENT PROCEDURE

The church or agency providing supervised field experience for a Divinity School student must serve its needs as well as those of the student. Field Education involves a mutuality between the student, their learning goals, a supervisor, the Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry, and an approved placement setting. The following principles shape the placement of a student in a setting:

1. The church or agency should see their participation in the field education program as an opportunity to share in the theological education of a student preparing for ministry.
2. There must be a clear but limited task for the student to perform, a primary focus in the relationship.
3. A carefully defined job description, clearly outlining the students' responsibilities is an essential part of the learning covenant. It is open for modification by common agreement between the church or agency, supervisor, student, and the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.
4. The responsibility is to have a central focus while requiring participation in total ministry. A minimum of eight hours per week is expected. **More than twenty hours per week must be reviewed by the Divinity School and receive approval of the Director of Field Education.**
5. Students preparing for ordination should have opportunities to serve in a clergy role to help them identify and clarify issues central to ministry. The setting needs to provide the student with an opportunity to reflect upon these issues and ways they might be managed or understood.
6. **The Divinity School recommends that there be a clear public acknowledgement of the student's presence, function and role within the setting.** The acknowledgement may take the form of an installation service. This is understood to be the beginning of the congregation's commitment to being a teaching congregation. A lay committee must be appointed so that the student may be given support and periodic evaluation. When possible, it is important for the student to participate in the selection of the Lay Training Committee.
7. The terms of the agreement should be clear to all parties.
8. Since Brite Divinity School has a non-discriminatory policy, students must be interviewed for the placement positions available without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.
9. It is expected that the church or agency will provide compensation for service the student renders. Rising costs, including travel, tuition and living expenses make this necessary for students. The Divinity School strongly recommends that compensation be established on an annual basis and vacation time be clearly specified. A procedure for negotiating academic conflicts should be agreed upon at the outset.

10. When a position is arranged to meet the field education requirement, provision must be made for a lay committee and supervision. Supervision must be approved by the Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry and, if necessary, will be arranged by the Director. The Divinity School is committed to the involvement of lay persons from the church or agency in providing support, feedback, supervision and evaluation for students.
11. If there are questions about any portion of this procedure, please contact Rev. Andy Shelton, the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry at Brite Divinity School, TCU Box 298130, Fort Worth, TX 76129, (817) 257-7585 or a.j.shelton@tcu.edu.

Section III

Covenant for Learning and Theology of Ministry

NEGOTIATING THE COVENANT FOR LEARNING

Covenant means a binding of persons in mutual trust and loyalty before and with God. Covenant is the quality of relationship between minister-in-training (student minister), pastoral supervisor, peer or lay training committee (on behalf of the teaching parish or agency), the Divinity School, and God.

Writing a learning covenant is the discipline which brings persons together on the basis of love and truth. As mutual trust is experienced, loyalty can be developed toward common goals and understandings for the internship. Thus, writing a learning covenant can be a vital means for setting the tone and the direction of these relationships.

The outcome of this process is a written statement of covenant. Because of the highly personal and unique character of each student, supervisor and church or agency, each person must do their own homework by completing the covenant. The final draft is due as indicated on the Supervised Ministry calendar. Copies should go to the following:

- Supervisor
- Each member of the Lay Training Committee
- TRG Leader and group members as required by TRG Leader
- Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry

The goal of this process is better service from the student and greater learning opportunities for the student.

HOW TO BEGIN

1. Dialogue

That's where it begins. Dialogue means literally "talking things through." It's as basic and profound as listening to others and listening to and expressing your innermost self.

Dialogue means being responsible to your own claims and to the claims of another. The preparation for responsible dialogue has been done to the degree that each person has applied themselves in completing the following worksheet.

Sitting down and talking things through offers you new insights into yourself, your values, feelings, priorities, and personal viewpoints.

2. Some Suggestions to Facilitate the Dialogue

- a. To provide ample time for the dialogue, set an initial meeting of student, Lay Training Committee and supervisor. Its purpose: to share respective worksheets with one another and clarify their meaning.
- b. Then sort out your ideas and feelings. This means time alone — in your “quiet place” or talking it through with another person. You, however, make your own decision.
- c. The student then initiates individual conversations with supervisor and each member of the lay committee to define and clarify goals for work and learning.
- d. In a second meeting with supervisor and lay committee, sort out the priorities which are mutually agreeable at this time.

3. Checkpoints in Writing the Learning Covenant

- a. When writing the covenant, seek to avoid either extreme rigidity or excessive generalization.
- b. It may be useful at the outset to use an outline format which reads easily and encourages succinctness and clarity.
- c. The Divinity School wants its claims represented, too. The basic expectations have been spelled out in the Job Description. Already signed by student and supervisor. The Divinity School expects some significant involvement in each of the principal functions of ministry:
 - Ministries of Care
 - Community Relations — Social Concern and Advocacy, especially with underserved and underrepresented minority communities
 - Congregation at Worship
 - To include a minimum of one sermon evaluation per semester
 - Education
 - Evangelism
 - Management within the Parish or Agency
 - To include responsibility for the full management–implementation–evaluation–in some program area
 - Denominational relationships to include denominational activities consistent with the Covenant for Learning
 - Constructive engagement with people of other faiths

- d. In formulating the Covenant for Learning, use the SPIRO model as check points for writing statements of intent:
- S Specificity – concrete terms
 - P Performance – what will student be doing?
 - I Involvement – extent of activity
 - R Realism – is it attainable within the timeframe?
 - O Observability – stated in such a way that student and others can see the results and know when a goal has been achieved.
- e. As the learning covenant begins to take shape, care should be taken to keep it consistent with the job description, the ministry for which the student is being paid.
- f. Consider the issue of time management. At heart, it's the issue of stewardship: how does this minister-in-training use God's gift of time, talent and energy? Students usually work through the Supervised Year while taking other coursework at Brite. Careful attention must be paid by the supervisor and the LTC to take into account the demands of the student's other school work for attending class, reading, writing papers, and preparing for exams when working with the student to establish work expectations. Students are to use the Divinity School Classwork worksheet to help supervisors and their LTC members understand their academic commitments by listing their fall coursework and should provide an update upon registering for spring coursework. The highest exercise of responsibility is the proper recognition of limitations.

Work through the Divinity School Classwork Worksheet on page 29.

4. The Work Agreement

Time should be given to each of the following which are understood to be a part of the field assignment:

Sunday Morning – two to two and one-half hours on Sunday morning is adequate, although many parishes will require longer on a Sunday morning. This time may be given to teaching, preaching, leading worship, personal conferences and/or attending worship.

Other than Sunday Morning – This would include any work with groups or classes that meet later in the day, pastoral care, social concerns or administrative responsibilities.

Preparation Time – Time for preparation needs to be kept reasonable in relation to the work to be done. If a sermon is to be preached many hours should be allowed for preparation; teaching may require less, but this is time spent in ministry.

Staff Time – Either in a staff meeting or on a one-to-one basis, the student needs some time each week with the pastoral supervisor to discuss tasks to be performed and responsibilities to be met.

Supervision – **The student is to receive four hours of one-to-one supervision a month when supervision is the only item on the agenda.** A regular time and place is recommended.

Lay Training Committee – **This is to be a two-hour, once a month meeting with the committee; the supervisor may or may not be present** but it is highly recommended that the supervisor NOT ATTEND EVERY MEETING. The student needs to have the freedom to develop their own style of functioning with the Lay Training Committee.

Travel – While the Divinity School attempts to assist students in serving within reasonable distances of Fort Worth, travel is still a time-consuming factor. Effort should be made to keep to a minimum the number of round trips necessary each week between the church/agency and Divinity School. Travel time can take valuable hours away from either service or education.

Use the Work Agreement worksheet on page 30 to help flesh out these expectations.

COVENANT FOR LEARNING

Brite Divinity School Field Education Program

Due August 30, 2023

Available online as fillable form

GENERAL INFORMATION

Student

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Acad. Yr. _____

Position _____

Supervisor

Name _____

Position _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Supervised Ministry Setting

Name of Church

Address _____

Phone _____

*If a **contract** exists beyond the covenant,
please provide the following information from it:*

Begin _____ End _____

Vacation _____

DIVINITY SCHOOL CLASSWORK WORKSHEET

Course taken (names of course and semester hours):

Course	Hours
TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS	

Preparation Time: As a rule of thumb, a student will spend nine hours of time per week preparing for a 3 semester hour class.

Add semester hours & preparation time for GRAND TOTAL: _____

Example: A student taking supervised ministry (3 semester hours) plus two additional courses (three semester hours each) will TOTAL 9. Multiply by 3 for a total preparation time of 27. Add the semester hours to the preparation time for a GRAND TOTAL of 36 hours a week.

WORK AGREEMENT WORKSHEET

Average Weekly Time

Sunday Morning

(Outline duties and times)

Other than Sunday Morning

(Outline duties and times)

Preparation Time

(Specify for what purpose)

Staff Time

(Staff meetings of instruction time for student)

Supervision

(Indicate time and place)

Lay Training Committee

Travel

(To and from setting)

_____ TOTAL

LEARNING GOALS AND WORK ARRANGEMENTS

3. The Student's Learning Goals: see the following pages for instructions.

Competence in Task Performance: The Doing of Ministry, page 34.

Please attach separate sheet.

Areas of Personal Growth: Being in Ministry, pages 34-35.

Please attach separate sheet.

Personal Spiritual Growth in Ministry, pages 37.

Please attach separate sheet.

- B. Goal Achievement: indicate how the sequence of work or supervisory sessions will facilitate achieving goals.

- C. General Duties of Student: _____

- D. Work Schedule (tasks and hours per week): _____

- E. Total Hours Per Week: _____

ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING

F. Individual Supervision

When _____

Where _____

G. Lay (or Peer) Training Committee

Convener _____

Meetings (When/Where) _____

H. Theological Reflection Group

Leader _____

Meetings (When/Where) _____

OTHERS TERMS OF THE LEARNING COVENANT

This portion of the Covenant for Learning involves the supervisor, the student and the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.

The basic expectations of the Divinity School and the Office of Field Education and Supervied Ministry are:

1. That this covenant will be worked out by the student in conference with the supervisor. The Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry may make suggestions when it is returned. The Covenant should be redesigned as new learning goals and possibilities emerge but it serves as a point of departure.
2. That the student will utilize the relationship with the supervisor to grow and learn through examining their experiences in a deliberate and consistent fashion. The kinds of reports agreed upon are meant to facilitate learning.
3. That the supervisor will make available at least one hour of personal or group supervision each week (or the equivalent of same) where the student's learning, concerns or problems are the primary agenda item.
4. That the supervisor and student will make a mid-point and final evaluation and assessment regarding the fulfillment of this covenant, learning gains, problems encountered and future hopes and needs. These evaluations are to be sent to the Director of Field Education and Supervised

Ministry for use in assessing satisfactory completion of the field education component of the curriculum and for use in faculty consultation with the student.

5. That the supervisor will share in the programs for interpretation and training in order to know the expectations of the Divinity School, to further develop abilities in working with students, and to evaluate their own work with students.
6. That the Field Education office will provide constructive support and consultation for supervisors throughout the year as needed.
7. That this Covenant will not be broken without the consultation of all parties involved.

The above agreement will be reviewed at the end of each semester during the supervised field year and modified according to the mutual consent of student and supervisor in accordance with the needs of the student and of the setting.

A copy of this covenant is to be returned to Brite Divinity School for approval by the specified date below. A copy should be kept by the supervisor. The student's program in the Supervised Year does not begin until the covenant is completed.

Student's signature

Supervisor's signature

Date

***** (The student is responsible for filing a copy of this agreement and any revisions with the Director of Field Education by August 30, 2023)**

COMPETENCE IN TASK PERFORMANCE: THE DOING OF MINISTRY

Developing of professional skills through “task performance” is a part of growth in ministry. **Choose two or three areas (tasks) that are priorities for the Year and write two to three paragraphs about each. Attach as a separate sheet to the covenant.** The following list is not exhaustive, but rather gives you some ideas that you might consider as learning or improvement goals. The goals need to match the expectations of your field setting as well as your professional growth needs.

- Administration
- Baptism
- Bible Study
- Budget building
- Care-giving
- Children’s work
- Committee work
- Counseling
- Conflict management
- Developing small groups
- Drama
- Education program planning and execution
- Eucharist
- Evangelism
- Family life
- Family-events-communication-spiritual growth
- Funerals
- Healing
- Healthy sexuality in the context of ministry
- Hospital visiting
- Hospitality
- Intergenerational ministry
- Long range planning
- Membership
- Music
- Music-choir
- Nursing home visits
- Planning and completion of youth programs
- Planning liturgy and worship
- Prayer life
- Preaching
- Recreation
- Sacraments
- Service groups-community and/or church projects
- Social action and advocacy
- Spiritual disciplines
- Spiritual life
- Stewardship
- Teaching
- Time management
- Unity concerns
- Youth and children-music and worship

AREAS OF PERSONAL GROWTH IN MINISTRY: BEING IN MINISTRY

Personal growth is not a matter of doing tasks better. It is coming to understand “being” in ministry. Personal growth is consideration of who you are as a person as well as a pastor. Personal growth can be found through facing your humanness, failures and successes in life and ministry. Growth is related to personal and theological reflection in approaching your innermost being. Issues can be identified by what makes you uncomfortable when you are doing or “being” in ministry. **Choose two or three areas (not limited to those listed below) that are priorities for the Year and write two to three paragraphs about each. Attach as separate sheets to the covenant.**

AREAS OF PERSONAL GROWTH COULD BE RELATED TO:

Anger – how you respond when you make mistakes and are angry with yourself. How much “cold” or “warm” anger do you have? How much projection do you do? How do you face anger in others?

Frustration – When nothing goes right with the tasks you have taken on how do you handle your frustration?

Feelings – How do you deal with all of your feelings, concerns, love, anger, disappointments, successes? Remember that even success can bring separation and loneliness. Most feelings are neither good or bad until you place a value or meaning on them. What do you value?

Change- All change brings some sort of grief. What is your grief process?

Denial – How much of your time do you spend denying that change is necessary or that you even have the power (choice) to make a difference?

Hope – What is your hope and where is your support as a person? What keeps you going when all else fails? Who or what is your model for life and ministry?

Time – Do you have difficulty with time management? If you do not complete projects on time what choices do you make so deadlines are not met? If you are always ten minutes early for appointments, why? What makes it necessary for you to be in control?

Interpersonal – What are your strengths and weaknesses in interpersonal relationships? How can you most completely be yourself in ministry?

Projection – When things go wrong is it because of your age, gender, position, circumstances, or did you just make a mistake? Do you take ownership for your own life and actions without emphasizing your own failure or the mistakes of others?

Perfectionism – Perfectionism may well be an excuse for not acting. Do you have to be perfect? Does God only “love” those who are “righteous” or those who are “perfect sinners?” Do you have to always be right?

Answers or “let me fix you” – If you need to have answers for all of life’s issues including the problems of your friends, family and congregation, you carry a big load. Is it necessary? What do you receive from “fixing” someone else, assuming that it is possible?

Being – How important is “presence” or “being” and what does it mean? Could it be that to be helpless may be more Christ like than doing everything as it should be done? Can you be in silence with the hurting without taking the hurt away and allow the healing to take place from inside the individual with God’s presence being there through your being?

Boundaries – setting boundaries for involvement, knowing when to hold fast and when to let go. The construction of healthy boundaries in ministry involves sexual self-awareness, a thorough understanding of professional expectations for ministers, and the implementation of best practices in maintaining these boundaries with all parties in the ministerial context.

Priorities – setting priorities in parish activities.

Personal – caring for personal/family needs.

Expectations – How do you handle the expectations of others?

Intrapersonal – In a sense all of these can be related to how one feels about self. What is your self-image? Do you like yourself? Where are you personally and emotionally in dealing with strengths and weaknesses, authority and vulnerability, limits and needs?

These are just a few areas or ideas that could point toward issues of personal growth. Growth is reflective, intrapersonal and interpersonal. What are your personal growth issues?

PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN MINISTRY

Prayer and spirituality refer to disciplines of the mind and heart. Personal growth in this area may include establishing a prayer schedule or a regular period in which you read the devotional classics. For others who already have these basic disciplines in place, growth may mean keeping a personal journal, going on periodic retreats, or finding a spiritual director for yourself.

Set your personal goals for spiritual growth and personal renewal.

What steps are you going to take this year to enhance your spiritual health?

Attach your plan, and how you intend to be kept accountable in this regard, as a separate sheet to the Covenant for Learning.

THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY

Your Theology of Ministry paper serves as the capstone experience of the Supervised Year.

An ancient maxim guides the church in faith: *lex credenda, lex orandi*, “As we believe, so let us pray,” or “Belief serves as the pattern for our prayer.” How and what a minister believes largely sets the pattern for service. It is of paramount importance that students in Supervised Ministry begin to articulate their faith clearly and concisely.

Your Theology of Ministry will continually grow and change. Yet here and now it must begin. **The Theology of Ministry paper should cover seven to 10 pages.** If you have done a credo for theology class, you will have the advantage of articulating your faith in a more or less systematic way. If not, then this exercise will be helpful for you in further class work.

RESOURCES, METHOD, AUDIENCE

Christian theology is God-talk. Talking and writing theologically are a bit like praying, teaching, and preaching. Much of the same vocabulary is used. There are significant points of difference, however. Theological speaking and writing are reflective. The task is different. Your task in this Theology of Ministry is to articulate the content of your faith as a Christian minister in the clearest and most coherent way possible.

Resources

Your resources are classic ones: scripture, tradition, reason, and experience.

Scripture – We have the entire canon of the Bible from which to draw. You have a “working canon,” that is, favorite or more influential sections of scripture which are deeply meaningful to you. Wrestle with yourself to use more and other sections of scripture to help form your faith statements.

Tradition – The faith of the church through the ages has been a constant deliberation over what God is doing, has done, and will do. You draw your heritage from a particular segment of this great tradition, that is, your denominational background. The lively interaction of your denominational heritage with the faith of the great church through time provides you with precious resources for talking about God today.

Taken together, scripture and tradition are the fund of resources which establish one’s faith. Reason and experience set faith in coherent order in the context of personal conviction.

Reason – Articulated faith must make sense. Your reasoning mind gives order and coherence to the content of Christian faith for our time. Use your logic, your learning from other fields of human understanding, such as science, history, and philosophy in partnership with your good sense to organize and present an intelligible faith.

Experience – Like filters of various sizes and grades, experience sifts the raw data of our everyday existence and perceives patterns in the events of our lives. As these perceived patterns interact intelligently with the content of the church’s faith, connections are made, meaning arises, and

convictions emerge. Our experience, then, affirms the faith we have received, and correlates it with how we live in this time and place.

These resources, two which establish faith, one which construes it, and one which affirms it in terms of convictions, are the building blocks you have to use for this Theology of Ministry.

Method

Your choice of method will take you the next step. “Method” in theological reflection is a fancy way of saying how you present and organize your Theology of Ministry. You have a number of options here. Karl Barth chose a Christocentric method, with Christ at the hub of the wheel and doctrinal matters flowing back, forth, and around Christ the Great Reconciler, like the spokes and rim of the wheel. Gustavo Gutierrez moves from God’s preferential option for the poor to theological issues in his liberation method. Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza uses feminist interpretation of scripture as her starting point. Paul Tillich preferred a “method of correlation” in which he lined up biblical revelation alongside life experience and studied the interplay between the two. John Macquarrie uses a dialectical approach between existence and being, the interaction of the two lending new insights to his articulation of faith.

You need not choose a single one of these options, **but you need to devise a consistent way of structuring your Theology of Ministry and stick to it.** For theological beginners, perhaps you will choose to reflect consistently upon a significant passage of scripture, or a biblical image of leadership.

Audience

The audience for your Theology of Ministry means those who are primarily intended to read it. Your audience includes the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry, and your judicatory who will determine your readiness and fitness for ordination or standing, assuming you intend to submit this paper to them. As best I can tell, this paper was originally included in Supervised Ministry because students needed guidance in preparing a paper for their denominational committees. Now this assignment has developed into a cogent statement of your theology as you assume the role and responsibilities of ordained ministry.

Here is a suggested format for your Theology of Ministry:

Section I: Christian Ministry and Christian Doctrine

Reflect concisely in this section as a Christian minister upon **at least the following doctrines** of the Christian Faith: the Triune God, the Person and Work of Jesus the Christ, Creation and the Human Condition, the Nature and Work of the Church, and the Last Things.

Section II: Calling and Mission, Authority and Identity

Reflect concisely in this section upon your theology of Call and your understanding of the purpose, work, and priorities of the Christian Minister. Also, deal with your theological understanding of ministerial authority, especially as it relates to your denominational polity and tradition. Since human sexuality is a major concern for ministerial ethics in the 21st century, demonstrate in this section your understandings of sexual and gender diversity in the community of faith, and your self-understanding as a sexually healthy minister. Finally, demonstrate your self-understanding as a person generally, ministering in the name of Jesus Christ in today's world. You will want to consider your primary relationships in this section (family, friendships), your personal leadership style and the reasons for it, and the role spiritual discipline and life-long learning play in your life.

Please work at relating your doctrinal insights in Section I to the expressly ministerial matters with which you deal in Section II. For example, if in your discussion of Jesus Christ you have understood his work under the classic themes of Prophet, Priest, and Sovereign, then you should reflect upon these roles in your section on the mission and priorities of a Christian Minister.

INITIAL THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY AND REVISION

Articulating a valid practical Theology of Ministry is hard, rewarding work. The Supervised Year is designed to maximize the value of this exercise for each minister-in-training. The sequence of First Draft and Revision compel each student to see the articulation of one's Theology of Ministry as an on-going, lifelong process.

First Draft

The First Draft, or Initial Theology of Ministry is due on November 15, 2023 by 4:00 p.m. Copies of this First Draft are to be made available to the TRG Leader and each member of the TRG Group. According to the schedule of the TRG Leader, the group will have opportunity to evaluate and comment upon this draft. The Director will also make comments and suggestions for revision in writing soon after mid-semester.

Revision, or Second Draft

Revised Theologies of Ministry are the capstone of integrated theological reflection for the Supervised Year. In order to sharpen the Revision of the Theology of Ministry, the second semester of the Supervised Year will offer resources and discussion to intensify and improve each minister-in-training's ability to reflect theologically. **The Revised Theology of Ministry is due in the Spring Semester (date to be determined).** Failure to turn in this Revision, or to produce a Revision without depth and excellence of theological reflection, will result in a No Credit grade for the Supervised Year.

ASSIGNMENTS THAT PERTAIN TO THE THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY

The reading and written assignments (short papers) required for Supervised Ministry will assist students in preparing their Theology of Ministry paper (see page 39 of the Supervised Ministry manual).

On September 20, your **first short paper** is due. This is a one- to two-page, double spaced reflection on Robinson's *What's Theology Got to Do With It* (or another text approved by the Director). In this paper, summarize how reading Robinson's treatments of theological categories (Scripture, Trinity, God the Creator, Human Sin, etc.) might help you write your Theology of Ministry.

On October 18, your **second short paper** is due. This is a one- to two-page, double spaced reflection on the book of your choice from the selection offered in the prospectus and listed in the Supervised Ministry manual on page 56. In this paper, summarize how reading the book you chose might help you write your theology of ministry.

On November 15, your **first draft of the Theology of Ministry** is due. You will find more information about that paper on page 39 of the Supervised Ministry manual.

These three papers are to be submitted electronically to Rev. Andy Shelton at supervisedministry@tcu.edu.

Remember that you also have other pieces due. You can find the entire list of due dates on pages 8 and 9 of the Supervised Ministry manual.

Section IV

Supervision

TRAINING OF SUPERVISORS

- I. The Divinity School accepts its responsibility to provide ongoing training for supervisors so that the quality of learning is enhanced. The training process will be planned to:
 - (1) Review and discuss self-understanding of the supervisor's professional role with particular attention to the role of supervisor;
 - (2) Increase the supervisor's ability to assess the student's personal, professional and educational needs and to identify learning experiences through which those needs may be met;
 - (3) Sharpen the ability of the supervisor to help the student reflect upon the theological dimensions of daily practice of ministry;
 - (4) Increase the supervisor's ability to enhance the learning that takes place in the supervisor-student relationship;
 - (5) Demonstrate ways in which persons learn from one another;
 - (6) Develop supervisory knowledge and skills, discussing various modes of supervision and their strengths and weaknesses, and identifying those for which each supervisor is best suited;
 - (7) Inform supervisors of developments in Divinity School programs and policies.
- II. The training of supervisors will be implemented through the following procedures:
 - (1) Formal training events for supervisors usually will be held at the Divinity School;
 - (2) The persons involved in the training events on the leadership and/or participant level will be the supervisors, the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry, other resident faculty and other professional leadership. Students may be invited to participate as needed.
 - (3) Leadership for these events will be selected by the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.
- III. The evaluation of training of supervisors will occur in the following manner :
 - (1) Supervisors will be given the opportunity to participate in an oral evaluation and submit a written evaluation at the conclusion of the training event.
 - (2) Each leader will be asked to submit a written evaluation within two weeks of the conclusion of the training event.
 - (3) A review of each training event will be conducted by the Divinity School's Field Education Committee.
 - (4) Results of the evaluations and reviews will be reported to the Field Education Office, all supervisors and trainers.
- IV. The expenses for formal training of supervisors are under-written by the Divinity School.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SUPERVISORY SESSIONS

1. Select a time and a place where there will be no interruptions for at least an hour and where both student and supervisor can feel comfortable and relaxed enough to do some real reflecting and sharing.
2. Firm up a regular meeting time and place. It is recommended that the meeting place not be at the Divinity School. If conflicts of schedule arise, then adapt the time for each week in which there is a conflict. But don't neglect having a session each week. Even missing one week tends to set back the ongoing reflection-interaction process and throw off its timing. Weekly sessions build toward a greater relationship and more helpful sharing.
3. At the beginning of each session share the "agenda" of items that each of you wants to bring up and discuss that week. This will bring things into the open and will help you pace the meeting and deal with the most important items.
4. Bring the teaching-learning covenant to each meeting so that it will be a guide to the whole field experience and items on it will not be forgotten or neglected. The covenant will remind both supervisor and student of mutual responsibilities and of working goals.
5. The student should ask for feedback (both positive and negative criticism) from the supervisor on specific actions he or she has taken during the week. This will encourage the supervisor to give feedback (if not asked, he may withhold his feelings, not being sure that the student wants to hear them) and it will help make the feedback specific.
6. Agree during the first sessions that you will each work at sharing concerns and feelings about your relationship during your time together each week. This covenant of honesty and openness will facilitate greater growth in your relationship and will tend to maximize learnings from the field experience.
7. Discussing programs, assignments, projects, and relationships with members of the church is in order during the sessions, but this ought not be allowed to detract from the primary purpose of dealing with the supervisor-student relationship and the evaluation of the student's performance in the practice of ministry.
8. Spend at least one full session together in a discussion on both the mid-term and final report forms filled out by each person.
9. It will be helpful at times to write down on a sheet of paper certain feelings or concerns and then to share those papers. This fairly structured approach will enable each person to express himself/herself more completely when candidness is difficult.
10. Make use of good active listening skills in your session together. Work at hearing and being sensitive to each other. This will maximize the short time that you have together.
11. A case study might be used during some sessions, prepared by either supervisor or student. This will help make the discussion concrete in terms of real life ministry incidents.

12. On occasion it might be helpful to invite another member of the church staff or lay person to the session in order to get feedback for the student from someone other than the supervisor. But again, this should be an exception rather than the rule because the supervisor-student relationship is primary.
13. The supervisory process is a two-way street. Both supervisor and student should feel free to share hopes, disappointments, joys, frustrations, goals, and concerns regarding the practice of ministry — not just the student. The personal learning experiences of the supervisor are very important for the student. In fact, both supervisor and student are learners. Each can give to the other. Neither has all the answers.
14. These sessions serve the student as an opportunity to “pick the brain” and experiences of the supervisor regarding any and all phases of the ministry. But this too, need not take time away from the evaluation of the work of the student from week to week.
15. If problems or tensions arise in the supervisor-student relationship or in the work of the student, try to arrive at some goals for improvement together. It is a shared process and responsibility, as well as a good experience in problem-solving.
16. Enjoy these hours together. The supervisor functions as an extended faculty member of the Divinity School. The reflection-interaction sessions are a very important part of the whole field experience and are part of its required program. Don’t let busy schedules push them aside.
17. Students are required to read the following texts at the designated times. It would be helpful if the Field Supervisors read them as well.

Fall Semester

All* students will read:

Anthony B. Robinson, *What’s Theology Got to Do With It? Convictions, Vitality, and the Church* (Herndon, Va: Alban Institute, 2006). ISBN 978-1566993203.

Numerous used copies of this book are available through Amazon.

* Robinson’s book is well-suited for a student in a Trinitarian denominational setting (whether the student is himself Trinitarian or not). ***Students in other denominational or religious traditions*** should consult with the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry as soon as possible to find an appropriate volume that suits their traditions.

All students will also select a second book from among the following:

Patrick S. Cheng, *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* (New York: Seabury Books, 2001). ISBN 978-1596271326.

M. Shawn Copeland, *Knowing Christ Crucified: The Witness of African American Religious Experience* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018). ISBN 978-1626982987.

** Hayim Herring and Terri Martinson Elton, *Leading Congregations and Nonprofits in a Connected World: Platforms, People, and Purpose* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017). ISBN 978-1566997690.

Emma Percy, *What Clergy Do: Especially When It Looks Like Nothing* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2013). ISBN 978-0281070244.

** Some students in *non-parish settings* may be best served by reading the book by Herring and Martinson Elton. The Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry is available for consultation if desired.

Spring Semester

Students will pick two additional books from the list found above.

Section V

The Lay or Peer Training Committee

THE LAY OR PEER TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Lay or Peer Training Committee is a group of three to seven representative members of the church congregation or agency who **meet with the student for about two hours each month (September through April)**. These persons generally develop a one-to-one relationship with the student which is honest, open, caring, challenging and supportive.

The purpose of the Lay Training Committee is to enter into genuine dialogue with the student so that the student may better understand and incorporate in the ongoing preparation for ministry the lay person's view of:

- (1) The Christian ministry today, and
- (2) The student as a person preparing for that ministry.

The Lay Training Committee's task is a part of the larger whole, but it is a unique and important educational task. Lay Committee members are appropriate educators of students for at least three reasons:

First, the church is by biblical definition the laity of God, the people of God. The New Testament word *laos*, or laity, means "people," and it refers to all of the people of God, lay and ordained. Baptism is the event which sets all of us apart for ministry. Since ordination sets some baptized persons apart for the ministry within the whole church, it is not only appropriate, but essential that the whole people of God share in the education of the ordained person.

Second, lay people bring a unique perspective to theological education; they see things "from the pew." They also live out most of their ministry in God's world, not in the institutional church. This is a perspective that neither the pastoral supervisor nor the faculty member has to offer. Lay people uniquely have this particular perspective to offer the student.

Third, ministry for Christians is again being seen as mutual ministry. Students will discover through genuine and open dialogue with lay people that all ministry is of Christ and we all, lay and ordained alike, mutually share in it.

THE MONTHLY LAY TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING

Items for consideration, methodology, and a suggested agenda is provided in the orientation session for Lay Training Committees at the beginning of each year. However, a unique agenda will arise for every committee in relation to its individual student. It is important to remember that establishing trust and confidentiality among the members and with the student is critical. Every committee will develop its own unique mode and style. The following are important considerations for the committee to function effectively:

- Set a beginning and ending time, and a regular time and place. Try to conclude each session with a summary of accomplishments in the meeting. A pleasant setting will help.
- Allow time for both the student and committee to express concerns and identify issues for discussion.
- Hold the first meeting in early September, even before the training session, if it is more convenient. Meet at least once each month, September through April.
- Establish ground rules for confidentiality and be faithful to them.
- Understand that the committee may meet without the supervising pastor and/or student depending upon the need of the agenda.

SOME THINGS LAY COMMITTEES DO

Listening. To listen is to respond to the student's comments in a way that seeks clarity, mutual understanding and greater depth. Active listening is the ability to get beneath the surface words to the level of meaning, feeling and value the words carry. To help one speak straight-forwardly, to hear another clearly and to handle the feelings involved in the interchange is essential to good ministry.

Reflection. The model of learning used in the Supervised Year is action-reflection. The Lay Training Committee should ask the student to reflect on his or her act of ministry. Experience may not be the best teacher; reflecting on the experience usually is!

Feedback. We all send out signals (words, actions, the way we laugh, dress, etc.) and if we are to be "on target" with our lives, we need to have these signals return in a manageable way so that we can redirect our words, actions, dress, etc. to reach our goals. Feedback, or the return of the signals to the person, is best done by people whom one trusts and respects. The best kind of feedback is descriptive rather than judgmental. Feedback is not necessarily negative, but members of the committee should not hesitate to give negative feedback when it will be most helpful. The person giving and the person receiving feedback are advised to check it out with others in the Lay Training Committee. No student's words and actions are always on target, nor are all comments by way of feedback universal for everyone in a group. So check it out. In giving feedback the issue is not "right" or "wrong" but rather, "This is my honest perception."

Support. Support is the outcome of good listening, reflection and feedback. It is not superficial "pats on the back." It does include affirmation for work well done. It requires accepting the person even though the behavior may be unacceptable! It is the business of "being accepting, accountable, loving and supporting, thus providing an ever-growing experience for all people involved."

ORGANIZING THE LAY COMMITTEE

Although each setting will have its own particular way of getting groups organized, the following suggestions are supported by the experience of Brite Divinity School:

1. The pastoral supervisor is responsible to the Divinity School to see that three to seven persons are recruited in the summer from a diverse, representative group of the congregation/agency. Seek to develop a microcosm of the total setting membership. A convener (chair of the committee) shall be named. The student should share in the selection of the committee members and convener.
2. The convener's name, mailing address and phone number(s) are submitted to the Office of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.

An online submission form has been provided and is the office's preferred method of receiving this information. Contact the office for more information.

THE LAY TRAINING COMMITTEE CONVENER

The duty of the lay training committee convener are:

To send adequate notice of time and place of meeting to the student and all members.

To convene the meeting, chair it or share the chairing of it with other members, and end the meeting on time.

To discuss agenda for meeting with the student.

To consult with the pastoral supervisor from time to time about the progress of the group.

To send a written evaluation of the seminarian to the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry by each assigned date. The evaluation is to reflect the thinking of the entire group.

Section VI

The Theological Reflection Group

THE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION GROUP

Each student will become a member of a Theological Reflection Group (TRG) for the Supervised Year. Registration for PRTH 65013 and PRTH 65023 is accomplished by choosing one of the sections listed for Supervised Ministry. The section chosen by the student upon enrollment in the class is to remain constant throughout the academic year, which is to say, for both semesters. Particular care should be exercised in choosing a section for Supervised Ministry, since this choice will preclude registration for any conflicting course in the Divinity School for the spring semester.

The TRG Group is usually comprised of no more than seven peers and a TRG Leader. When there are two groups per section, selection of which group one will be assigned to is the decision of the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry. The make-up of the groups is done in a random fashion from the list of those who register for the section.

TRG Leaders are nominated by the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry to the Faculty Committee of Brite Divinity School. Upon ratification, a candidate for TRG Leadership is called to fill a leadership post for one of the groups for the year. The Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry is the supervisor for all TRG Leaders.

The qualifications for TRG Leaders are spelled out in the section of this Manual dealing with the design of the program. In brief, a TRG Leader must be an ordained person whose accomplishments in ministry and whose gifts as a small group leader are evident to the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry and to the Faculty Committee. The term of service for a TRG Leader is subject to an annual review.

The TRG Leader may assign readings and tasks to the group as they may see fit. Assignments such as verbatims, case studies, critical incident reports and precis of readings are often made. The TRG Leader is given latitude to guide the group in the way they deem most fruitful.

If a student is aware of an impending absence from the TRG Group, the student should get in touch with the TRG Leader as soon as possible. Attendance at TRG sessions is mandatory. Excessive absences for unexcused reasons will be called to the attention of the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.

Because of the integrity of the group, a covenant of confidentiality should be made among the membership for the duration of the year. **Switching groups after the fall semester has commenced is rarely approved, if ever.** The group depends on the regular participation of all of its members in a bond of trust built over the course of the Supervised Year.

Nominations for TRG Leadership may be made to the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry.

Section VII

Evaluation in Field Education

EVALUATION IN FIELD EDUCATION

Every minister is being constantly evaluated. It may be harsh judgment not based on a thorough understanding of the event or act being evaluated, or it may be an assessment of growth or progress. In field education, the criteria for evaluation is the Covenant for Learning which spells out the previously determined goals and objectives held by the student.

The reason for evaluation is for the profit of the student and their self-understanding. Where evaluation is used for something other than the learning process itself, there will understandably be resistance and little openness.

Evaluation and Grading

In field education it is necessary to make a distinction between evaluation and grading. Both are done periodically, but both are quite different processes, serving different purposes.

Evaluation of a student's work is done by the student, the pastoral supervisor, the Lay Committee, and the Theological Reflection Group leader. Such evaluations are both formal and informal, verbal and written. Their purpose is to help the student grow in ability and improve performance, and they do not become a part of the student's academic record. **Evaluations do, however, aid the Director of Field Education in assigning a grade.** Evaluations are a part of the total process.

STEPS IN EVALUATION

The evaluation process involves several steps:

- (1) The supervisor and student complete the evaluation of each other separately.
- (2) In a regularly scheduled supervisory conference, they review their evaluations and add any additional comments stimulated by the conference. The pastoral supervisor may attach the Lay Committee evaluation or draw on it in making comments.
- (3) The supervisor and student have the option of turning in the separate evaluations or of constructing a joint evaluation based on the discussion of the individual evaluations.

Since both semesters of Supervised Ministry (PRTH 65013 and PRTH 65023) are held in tandem for grading purposes, no grade for either semester will be awarded until the entire year is complete. At that time, grades will be awarded. These grades reflect the judgment of the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry, based on evaluations received. The grade for the Supervised Year is a combination of field experience and the Theological Reflection Group, written assignments, conferences and initiative shown by the student. Failure to complete either PRTH 65013 or PRTH 65023 will result in the necessity to do the entire Supervised Year over

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MARKING EVALUATION FORMS

Evaluation in theological education presupposes certain goals and objectives with assigned tasks for this achievement. “Evaluation is a vehicle for growth which emerges out of caring relationships and is not an instrument for judgment.”²

We realize that no form is completely adequate. We would certainly not make that claim. Our concern is to assist your Minister-in-Training in better self-understanding and future educational plans based upon your perceptions of the student this semester. Please share your most honest perceptions as candidly as you can express them.

DEFINITIONS OF PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Performance of the minister in the supervised year is to be rated in relation to the goals and objectives of the year, the student’s learning covenant and standards outlined for the responsibilities assigned to the student in the setting. There is both a mid-term and a final evaluation each semester.

The purpose of your evaluation is to help the student see his or her functioning in ministry as related to the stated goals and objectives. The purpose is to help the student be aware of his/her strengths as well as areas that need special attention. This is a learning time for the student. Learning tends to take place where events are not only experienced but reflected upon and then carried out again.

RATINGS WILL BE INTERPRETED ON THE FOLLOWING BASIS:

- (1) Outstanding— consistently superior competence
- (2) Very Good— significant competence
- (3) Satisfactory— more often effective than ineffective
- (4) Unsatisfactory— little demonstrated competence
- (5) Unacceptable— deficient; needs attention

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION:

Forms requiring signatures must be submitted by the supervisor (or, in one case, TRG leader) after all other signatures have been obtained. Digital signatures or a clear chain of emails are acceptable.

Forms without all required signatures will be returned to the student.

All assignments (the Covenant for Learning, Short Papers, Theology of Ministry, and Evaluations) must be submitted electronically to supervisedministry@tcu.edu using these instructions:

One item per email. In other words, please be sure your supervisor doesn't attach four forms to a single email or I will have to send them back and they will not be marked "received." Said in yet another way: each supervisor will send me four separate emails.

Rename each file before attaching it by using this template:

Student-Last-Name, Student-First-Name, [student/supervisor/LTC/progress report].pdf.

Example: Shelton, Andy, supervisor.pdf

The **subject line** of each email should match the name of the file (see examples above).

² George I. Hunter, Theological Field Education, p. 64

BOOK REQUIRED DURING THE SUPERVISED YEAR

In the fall semester of the Supervised Year, each student will read two volumes from the following books which have been chosen to assist in writing the Theology of Ministry paper.

- (1) All* students will read:

Anthony B. Robinson, *What's Theology Got to Do With It? Convictions, Vitality, and the Church* (Herndon, Va: Alban Institute, 2006). ISBN 978-1566993203.

Numerous used copies of this book are available through Amazon.

* Robinson's book is well-suited for a student in a Trinitarian denominational setting (whether the student is himself Trinitarian or not). ***Students in other denominational or religious traditions*** should consult with the Director of Field Education and Supervised Ministry as soon as possible to find an appropriate volume that suits their traditions.

- (2) All students will also select a second book from among the following:

Patrick S. Cheng, *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* (New York: Seabury Books, 2001). ISBN 978-1596271326.

M. Shawn Copeland, *Knowing Christ Crucified: The Witness of African American Religious Experience* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018). ISBN 978-1626982987.

** Hayim Herring and Terri Martinson Elton, *Leading Congregations and Nonprofits in a Connected World: Platforms, People, and Purpose* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017). ISBN 978-1566997690.

Emma Percy, *What Clergy Do: Especially When It Looks Like Nothing* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2013). ISBN 978-0281070244.

** Some students in ***non-parish settings*** may be best served by reading the book by Herring and Martinson Elton. Rev. Shelton is available for consultation if desired.

In the spring semester, students will pick two additional books from the list found above.

SEE PAGE 42 FOR OTHER SUBMISSION DETAILS PERTAINING TO SHORT PAPERS