DMin Statement of Interest and Thesis timeline

Composing the Statement of Interest (SOI) is the first step in writing the DMin thesis. The purpose of the SOI is to give the DMin director and the DMin Oversight Committee a sketch of the student’s initial research interests so that they may link the student with members of the faculty whose areas of expertise best compliment the student’s research interests.

The SOI should be between 400-500 words (not including bibliography). It has three parts.

1. The SOI should state the general question or problem that the student would like to explore in the thesis. An example: how a robust theology of realized eschatology might shape a congregation’s ministry to the poor of their community. Another example: how leadership roles of laywomen have changed in the years since women have been ordained. This portion should go on to give an account of why this is an area of interest or potentially important for the student’s ministry.

2. The SOI should specify the approach or angle the thesis will take in its exploration of the general question. Example: the thesis will examine the realized eschatologies of the Gospel of John, Gregory of Nyssa, and Dorothy Day to provide a model for thinking about our ministry among the poor. Another example: the thesis will compare the changing roles of the United Methodist Women in local congregations and conferences in the Southeastern Jurisdiction and those in the Northeastern Jurisdiction. The SOI’s description of this approach should be informed by research in the secondary scholarship on the topic. It also should explain why this approach might be a fruitful angle and why it will help address concerns important to the student’s ministry.

3. The SOI should have a bibliography of no fewer than 5 references (books and articles, preferably from scholarly publications).

Due Date: The last Monday in November (of the cohort’s second year, ordinarily around November 27). A copy of the SOI should be submitted electronically to Ashley Lunn in the Academic Programs Office (academics@div.duke.edu).

By December 25, the DMin Oversight Committee will contact students with the name of faculty members who have agreed to be their faculty advisor and second reader. During the January term, students should be in touch with their advisor to discuss the SOI and how best to proceed with research.

DMin Thesis Timeline

1. Meet with thesis supervisor during January intensive week of second year to establish a timeline and expectations for completing the thesis.

2. Establish a communication plan (e.g. one time a month) by phone, skype, facetime, etc. with the thesis supervisor to ensure clear expectations and communication through the thesis writing period.
3. Complete the thesis proposal by end of spring term (second year) with the input of the thesis supervisor. The student and thesis supervisor can move this deadline as appropriate based on their work together. Only the thesis supervisor needs to approve the thesis proposal.

4. Determine the semester in which the student plans to graduate and establish a writing and revising schedule based on the dates outlined in the Graduation deadlines by semester document found on the Forms and Paradigms section of the DDS website. For a May graduate, the deadline to submit the final draft of the thesis to the supervisor is the first Friday in March. Therefore, the timeline for writing and editing should extend backward for at least 6 months.

5. Submit the final draft of the thesis to the supervisor by the deadline for the semester in which the student plans to graduate.

6. Make revisions as needed with the input of the thesis supervisor.