

Role of the Advisor and Second Reader

Advisor and Second Reader Appointment Procedures

Following a collaboration between the student and the DMin Director, a dissertation Advisor and Second Reader will be approved to advise and evaluate the student with respect to the approved dissertation topic based on the student's Topic Approval Form received and approved by the DMin Studies Committee. The Advisor and Second Reader will confirm an agreement of their service by email to the DMin Director. This constitutes a contractual agreement between the DMin Studies Committee and the student.

The Advisor and Second Reader must hold an appropriate Doctoral degree (exceptions must be approved by the Dean of Academic Administration) to be authorized to serve as advisers of doctoral dissertations. In addition, he or she must be in agreement with the basic doctrines of the seminary.

Criteria for serving as an Advisor/Reader is agreement with Dallas Theological Seminary's doctoral statement as follows:

- the Trinity
- the full deity and humanity of Christ
- the spiritual lostness of the human race
- the substitutionary atonement and bodily resurrection of Christ
- salvation by faith alone in Christ alone
- the physical return of Christ
- the authority and inerrancy of Scripture

The agreement to serve as Advisors and Second Readers does not guarantee the successful completion of a dissertation. The sole responsibility for choosing the topic, researching, and writing the dissertation, remains that of the student. The student must be the one to take initiative at each step of the process. The function of the Advisor and Second Reader is to respond to the student's initiative with evaluation, advice and guidance.

Role of the Advisor and Second Reader

Advisor

The Advisor is the first reader of a dissertation charged with the primary task of supervising and directing the dissertation. The Advisor offers guidance in the process of research and writing through regular interaction with the student in order to review the student's progress and provide appropriate help. The Advisor's role begins with his or her approval by the DMin Committee. This role continues during the process of project research and preparation. The student reports to the Advisor on the progress of his or her research and consults with the Advisor on the research problem, research question, hypotheses, organization, and structure of the dissertation.

Once the student has researched the dissertation topic and has discussed the general content of the dissertation with the Advisor, he or she should prepare the Project Proposal and present it for approval to the Advisor and Second Reader. After approval by the readers, the student will then send an electronic copy of the proposal to the DMin Director.

The proposal will be sent initially to the ***Advisor electronically and the evaluation will be made electronically according to the following procedures:***

Please use the review menu of MSWord. For those using the 2003 version of MSWord, click on "view" on the main toolbar, then go to "toolbar," find "reviewing" and click on the box beside this word. A new "comments" toolbar will appear. Each time you want to add a comment in the document go to the "comments" toolbar and click on the manila square button, the insert comment button.

After the student has viewed the comments, he or she can remove these comments from view when through with them by clicking on the "Final Showing Markup" and choosing "Final."

For those with MSWord 2007 to 2017, the procedure is the same except for one aspect. The "review" button is on the main toolbar so that everything appears when this button is clicked.

If an advisor or reader asks to use a paper copy for review, the student will

provide such a copy upon request. The DMin Office requests all readers try the electronic review process since it is simple and effective.

Role of the Advisor and Second Reader

Advisor Continued

The Advisor will review the Project Proposal and provide comments both to the Second Reader and the student regarding the Project Proposal and the status of the dissertation. The Advisor may require the student to do further research or to revise the Project Proposal before approving progression to the next stage of his or her dissertation.

After the Project Proposal has been approved by the Advisor and Second Reader, the student will then submit this document to the DMin Office and begin working on the first two chapters of the dissertation. The Advisor will provide comments on all aspects of the dissertation including research, structure, argument, and style. The Advisor will consult with the Second Reader throughout this process. Also, the Advisor will assist the student in understanding and implementing the suggestions made by the Advisor and Second Reader.

Please refer to the Dissertation Workflow Chart as published in the current DMin Handbook (www.dts.edu/dminhandbook) for the preferred process for transfer of work among the student and readers. This chart also shows the deadlines for each portion of the dissertation. Readers should return the edited drafts to the student within 2-4 weeks of receipt from the student.

Following approval of the first two chapters, the student will then submit this document to the DMin Office. Next the student will write and submit a first draft of the entire dissertation to their Advisor and Second Reader. The Advisor will again provide comments on all aspects of the dissertation including research, structure, argument, and style. The Advisor will continue to consult with the Second Reader throughout this process as well. He or she will assist the student in understanding and implementing the suggestions made by the Advisor and Second Reader.

Once the Advisor and Second Reader find the dissertation to be acceptable, the Advisor will notify the Director of DMin Studies to arrange for an exit interview to discuss the dissertation. If the Advisor and Second Reader find the written dissertation unacceptable, the Advisor will discuss with the student the necessary revisions of the work. The Advisor is under no obligation to edit work that has been carelessly prepared with inadequate attention to detail. This unacceptable work may instead be returned unread to the student for revision

and resubmission. The student may consult with the DMin Office concerning the use of a paid, dissertation proof reader.

Role of the Advisor and Second Reader

Second Reader

The Second Reader of the dissertation will participate in interactions with the Advisor to discuss the dissertation topic, the project proposal, the first two chapters, the dissertation draft, final dissertation, and the exit interview and oral defense of the dissertation. He or she will provide professional evaluation and suggestions related to the overall direction, research, content and method of the dissertation. The Second Reader will also be available to consult with the Advisor and to participate in any other meetings that are called at the discretion of the Advisor. He or she will evaluate the Project Proposal and provide comments to the Advisor.

The Second Reader will evaluate the first two chapters of the dissertation and the entire written dissertation after these have been formally submitted. Normally the Second Reader has two weeks to complete their evaluation. This evaluation covers all aspects of the work: structure, argument, supporting research, and style. However, the Second Reader is not expected to undertake the role of advising the student. Rather, the Second Reader will submit to the Advisor comments on the acceptability of the dissertation and explanation of required improvements. If the dissertation is deemed acceptable, the Advisor and Second Reader will prepare to interact in the exit interview for discussion of the dissertation. However, it should be noted that the Second Reader is under no obligation to accept a work that is poorly written, poorly argued, or weak in supporting research.

Role of the Advisor and Second Reader

Conflict Resolution

Students may request their Advisor convene a meeting with the Second Reader to discuss aspects of the work at any time during the dissertation process up to the submission of the dissertation to the DMin Office. This discussion may be done by phone. The Advisor will decide whether such a meeting is necessary.

Students who are dissatisfied with the direction of the dissertation process, may request a meeting with the Director of Doctor of Ministry Studies to reconcile this problem by choosing a different dissertation topic, selecting a different Advisor, or reconstituting the Advisor/Second Reader team. Topic, title, Advisor, or Second Reader changes must be approved by the DMin Studies Committee. The Doctor of Ministry Studies Director will seek to resolve the problem in the best interests of both the student and the institution. At the discretion of the Doctor of Ministry Studies Director or the student, the matter may be appealed for a hearing by the DMin Committee. If any parties in the discussion are dissatisfied with the decision of the Doctor of Ministry Committee, the final appeal may be made to the Academic Dean.

If a reader becomes unable to complete or needs to withdraw from the process before the student submits a final draft, another reader must be approved to take over. In this event, the reader is responsible to report the need to withdraw to the DMin director in ample time for a replacement to be approved.

Remuneration for Services

A stipend is provided for DMin Dissertation Advisors and Readers. Please contact the DMin Office for more information. If a reader is not a DTS employee, a remuneration payment will be mailed after the reader has supplied his or her social security number and mailing address so that the DTS Business Office can process payment.