

THE INTERN HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025



SMU Perkins School
of Theology

Intern Program

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Course Overview

Statement of Purpose

The Mission of Perkins School of Theology is to equip persons for faithful leadership and Christian ministry in a changing church and society; to educate those seeking a deeper understanding of the Christian faith; and to strengthen the church, academy, and world through service, scholarship, and advocacy.

The purpose of the Internship Course is to enable students to reflect upon themselves, their ministry experience and their contexts, and integrate them in a way to provide resourceful, faithful Christian leadership in the world. To achieve this, students are placed in a variety of supervised settings. Students will reflect theologically on ministry, the contexts of these experiences and their own leadership. The course forms an Internship Team that is designed to surround the intern with support, guidance, supervision, resources and accountability through the process.

This course seeks to assist students to develop several competencies that will be the foundation for effective ministry. These competencies are organized in three categories: Be Aware, Think Theologically, and Lead Faithfully. The following pages describe the Intern Course, its components and the framework of supporting documents that will be used throughout the year.

The Internship Team

The Internship Team consists of the Mentor, The On-Site Supervisor, The Consultant, The Teaching Committee, The Faculty Supervisor, The Teaching Congregation and The Cohort of Students. All these surround the Intern to create a supportive environment to maximize learning for the Intern.

The purpose of all conversations among the intern, mentor, teaching committee, consultant and faculty supervisor—that is, the internship team—is to foster the growth and learning of the intern in the intern’s pastoral identity. By their nature, such conversations are very personal and thus are most helpful when they take place in a setting in which all the persons involved trust each other. Therefore, the content of these conversations should not be shared with anyone who is not a member of this internship team. To do so would be a serious violation of trust.

The Mentor

The Mentor is a theologically trained professional who has teaching responsibilities to the intern. The mentor’s role is fundamental to an effective process in which productive learning can occur. The mentor holds supervisory sessions with the intern to process theological reflection papers with the intern, helps define roles and responsibilities of the intern, helps the intern craft their Learning Covenant and forms the Teaching Committee. The Mentor also will ensure the intern has a workstation and will introduce the intern to the congregation. Mentors attend the Mentor Pastor Colloquy offered in the Fall and Spring semester. If the Mentor has not mentored a Perkins student, the Mentor must attend the New Mentor Pastor Orientation. It is important that the Mentor becomes familiar with Perkins Sexual Harassment Policy.

The On-Site Supervisor

In placements where the intern is not placed in the context with the mentor, an on-site supervisor will be responsible for supervising the intern's day-to-day work and insuring the student is given the necessary opportunities to achieve the required competencies.

The on-site supervisor may select or aid in the selection of the members of the teaching committee and is responsible for attending the teaching committee orientation, all evaluation conferences, and two additional meetings of the teaching committee.

The Mental Health Consultant

The internship provides opportunities for non-therapeutic consultation with mental health professionals to students, mentors and the Intern faculty. These professionals, known in

the Intern Program as “Consultants,” are part of the internship supervisory team along with the mentor and/or on-site supervisor, the teaching committee, and the faculty. They provide non-therapeutic consultation on issues that arise throughout the internship such as, but not limited to, intrapersonal awareness, life changes/ stressors and conflict facilitation. The Intern Program will pay for and make available up to three private sessions per semester for each intern.

Consultants offer their professional skills to the internship in a variety of ways, such as:

- Leading seminar sessions at the discretion of the faculty.
- Providing 1-on-1 consultation to interns and mentors.
- Offering intern faculty consultation as needed.
- Guiding small group discussions in Mentor Colloquies.

The Faculty Supervisor

The Faculty Supervisor is the representative from Perkins who is assigned to the intern. Internship is a class that has formal requirements for grading. The Faculty Supervisor offers guidance throughout the internship, leads Internship Seminar and participates in the Nine Week Check-in, the Midpoint Evaluation and Final Evaluation.

The Internship Seminar is core to the internship experience. It introduces interns to practical tools and strategies for ministry, guides theological reflection on diverse internship experiences, and helps develop intrapersonal awareness and interpersonal relationship skills. A faculty supervisor will convene the Internship Seminar regularly during the fall and spring semesters. These seminars also include leadership by a mental health consultant. The intern's weekly requirement of work hours includes the time spent in the Internship Seminar.

The Cohort of Students

There are other students that are journeying through their internship. As peers, they provide an important learning environment for the intern as well. Comradery, support and trust are needed within this group.

The Teaching Congregation or Agency

Whether the placement is in a local church or agency, it becomes the teaching congregation or teaching agency for the intern. The financial and time commitments of the congregation or agency are spelled out in the placement agreement. Desirable

characteristics of a teaching congregation or agency include:

- Member involvement and participation in worship, education and program
- A commitment to the principles of openness and equal opportunity without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, sexuality, age or abilities
- A sense of mission, both locally and worldwide
- A positive attitude to the denomination as well as to the ecumenical community
- A record of fulfilling its financial responsibility to their denominational commitments
- The financial resources to fund the required minimum internship stipend. (Limited subsidies are available when necessary). In student pastor internships, salaries replace stipends.
- A willingness to invest time, resources, energies and self in the intern.

It is important that the congregation or agency be given an opportunity to celebrate the presence of the intern and to affirm its role as a teaching congregation.

This is appropriate even if the intern has already been employed in that setting prior to the internship. Typically, a good occasion for this is in a worship service. Mentors and teaching congregations are encouraged to develop their own liturgy for this time of welcome and celebration. At a minimum it will probably include:

- A brief word of introduction to the Perkins Intern Program and the congregation's designation as a teaching congregation
- The presentation or introduction of the intern either by the mentor or the chairperson of the teaching committee
- A response by the intern
- Word of welcome or reception by the entire congregation
- A prayer acknowledging gratitude toward and dependence upon God for this new ministry

A sample liturgy for the beginning of internship may be found in Intern Handbook Appendix B.

Learning Covenant

The Intern Program engages interns as adult learners, who are mature, capable and motivated persons whose effort and initiative directly contribute to the overall experience and quality of learning derived from the internship. This approach enables interns to maximize their creativity, build on their experience, and pursue vocational objectives based on the ministry opportunities their placement sites have to offer. For this reason, the first task interns are charged with is writing a document that functions as a road map called the Learning Covenant.

The **Learning Covenant** is a statement of the intern’s intentions in the various components of the internship. The intern faculty have developed Course Competencies (Appendix A) that assist interns to achieve unique learning outcomes based on their specific interests, vocation and context. Competencies are organized under three distinct yet overlapping learning areas: Be Aware, Think Theologically and Lead Faithfully.

During internship, interns can identify a desired set of skills, a leadership role, responsibility or spiritual practice. Interns are encouraged to write at least one Learning Outcome for each Course Competency. Each Learning Outcome should have at least two SMART Tasks. SMART Tasks are defined as Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (i.e., work responsibilities). By carrying out SMART Tasks, interns will be able to achieve the desired Learning Outcome, thereby making progress in that specific Competency.

SMART Tasks are developed in consultation with the mentor, teaching committee, and faculty supervisor. A successful internship is determined by how well an intern has completed the SMART Tasks as delineated in the Learning Covenant and whether one has fulfilled the formal and substantive requirements of the course (see page 15).

Sample Learning Covenant

| AREA I: BE AWARE | |
|--|---|
| LEARNING OUTCOMES | SMART TASKS |
| <p>1. Demonstrate the ability to implement regular practices, grounded in love of God, self, and neighbor, for a sustainable life of Christian service in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily spiritual disciplines • consistent self-care that addresses physical, emotional, and relational needs • ethical inter-personal boundaries | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pray and read scripture for 20-30 mins every morning 2. Fast from social media at least 3 days per month 3. Exercise for 30-45 mins three times per week 4. Visit doctor regularly 5. Schedule 1 date night with spouse 6. Write in journal often <p>Discuss boundary issues with Health Consultant</p> |

Writing the Original Learning Covenant

1. Intern receives overview from faculty supervisor in the Intern Orientation.
2. Intern communicates with mentor prior to the start of the internship to discuss potential roles and responsibilities and to receive guidance regarding ministry experiences (SMART Tasks).
3. Intern creates Learning Covenant.
4. Intern distributes Learning Covenant to the teaching committee and requests feedback.
5. Intern makes necessary edits to the Learning Covenant following the Teaching Committee Orientation by incorporating feedback from Internship Team.
6. Intern sends final version of Learning Covenant to mentor, on-site supervisor, and teaching committee chair.
7. Intern submits Learning Covenant to faculty supervisor by **Monday, October 7, 2024**.

Nine Week Check-in

The intern will draft the Learning Covenant and receive feedback from the mentor and Teaching Committee during the first eight weeks of internship. The completed Learning Covenant is due to the faculty supervisor by **Monday, October 7, 2024**.

The teaching committee and the mentor will meet separately with the intern in the ninth week of internship for a check-in of the student's progress and completion of SMART Tasks based on the Learning Covenant. The teaching committee and mentor will use a check-in form provided by the Intern Program (Appendix D) to guide the discussions with the intern. Immediately following the evaluation sessions, the committee chairperson and the mentor will send the evaluation form to the faculty supervisor.

The intern will review the evaluations from the teaching congregation/agency (the mentor and/or on-site supervisor, and the teaching committee) with the faculty supervisor. The mentor and intern will resume meeting for supervisory sessions for theological reflection upon completion of the faculty supervisor's conversation with the intern.

Midpoint Evaluation

The Midpoint Evaluation assesses the intern's overall growth and progress from the start of the internship, including the Nine Week Progress Report. The intern will write the Midpoint Self-Evaluation Paper using the questions in the template (Appendix D) and distribute it to the members of the teaching committee, the mentor, and the faculty supervisor five days prior to the Midpoint Evaluation meeting. The teaching committee and the mentor may be required to prepare a written assessment for this meeting. The intern may use the information gained at the Midpoint Evaluation to revise the Learning Covenant, if needed.

Do I have to revise my Learning Covenant? The short answer is no. If the original version is working fine, interns can keep using it or simply make minor modifications. Sometimes interns decide to expand, significantly alter, or even cut-down their original Learning Covenant after a few months. Our advice is for students to find ways to maximize the Learning Covenant by challenging themselves as time goes on. Usually, conversations with the Internship Team are instrumental in this regard.

Consider writing the original Learning Covenant with the Evaluations in mind. For instance, you may set out to accomplish a Learning Goal in the first eight weeks (by the Nine Week Check-in). After doing so, you could then replace the original Learning Goal with a new one, which you aim to complete by the Midpoint Evaluation. Similarly, you may leave a Learning Goal in-tact, but decide to replace the original SMART Tasks with ones that are more challenging or reasonable based on your context.

Theological Reflection Papers

Assignment Overview

The purpose of the Theological Reflection Paper is to guide the Intern to develop a lifelong discipline of reflecting theologically on the practice of ministry. Theological Reflection Papers are discussed with an experienced and theologically educated mentor in supervisory sessions.

This exercise is meant to help Interns approach ministry from a place of increased depth and clarity. The discipline of writing and discussing Theological Reflection Papers on a regular basis offers Interns the opportunity to develop the skills to become lifelong reflective practitioners that engages in the three-fold method of "reflection in action - reflection on action - reflection for action."¹

Supervisory Session

- The Intern and the mentor should schedule 60–90-minute supervisory sessions to discuss Theological Reflection Papers. These sessions should take place approximately once a month.
- Students **should not** wait until the end of the semester to write these papers. Doing so does not fulfill the requirements of this assignment.
- The Intern should submit the Theological Reflection Paper in advance to the mentor at a mutually agreed time, but no less than 48 hours before the scheduled session.
- The supervisory session should take place in a professional setting, preferably the mentor's office. Virtual meetings can be used if both parties agree. The mentor should aim to keep interruptions to a minimum.
- Interns should submit all Theological Reflection Papers to the mentor and the first two of the first semester to the faculty supervisor. Please note that the teaching committee should not receive Theological Reflection Papers.

Required Assignments

- Master of Divinity students are required to write a total of eight papers (four per semester).
- Master of Arts in Ministry students are required to write a total of six papers (three per semester).

¹ Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

* In place of one incident in the placement site, interns may use any of the following for a Theological Reflection Paper if it is discussed with mentor in a supervisor session (60-90 mins):

- i. Theology of Ministry (part of the Final Evaluation Paper)
- ii. Commissioning papers or theological essays required by the Board of Ordained Ministry or other ecclesial body for the purposes of ordination
- iii. Ministry Context Study Report (with Theological Analysis)
- iv. A theological assessment of a sermon preached during the Internship

Format and Length

Theological Reflection Papers should be 7-10 pages in length, including the Header and the Questions from the template. Papers should be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins and written in a standard 12-pt font (e.g., Garamond, Baskerville, or California FB). Refer to the Theological Reflection Paper Template (Appendix B) for further instructions.

Choosing an Incident

1. Choose an “incident” from your internship experience that pertains directly to at least one Course Competency. An incident can fall under, but is not limited to, one of the following areas:
 - pastoral conversation
 - teaching moment
 - positive or negative exchange with a staff or lay member
 - discussion that emerged from a committee meeting or a similar setting
 - event (e.g., worship, public theology or social advocacy)
 - spiritual or physical disciplines
2. The incident should stimulate focused reflection on the challenges that emerge in ministry performance, interpersonal relationships, and/or personal awareness.
3. The paper should critically reflect on your actions, reactions, thoughts, feelings, and leadership within the incident. In other words, the paper should focus on the intern.

Course Requirements

Successful completion of the internship is comprised of completing assignments from the Intern Seminar, SMART Tasks from the Learning Covenant and completing all Theological Reflection Papers. Grading will comprise of two types of requirements: formal and substantive. An Intern must fulfill both types in order to pass the course.

Internship Seminar

The Internship Seminar is core to the internship experience and comes with its own assignments. It introduces interns to practical tools and strategies for ministry, guides theological reflection on diverse internship experiences, helps develop intrapersonal awareness and interpersonal relationship skills. A faculty supervisor will convene the Internship Seminar regularly during the fall and spring semesters. These seminars also include leadership by a mental health consultant. The intern's weekly requirement of work hours includes the time spent in the Internship Seminar.

Formal Requirements

1. Consistent participation in the placement site for the duration of the internship (August 5, 2024 - May 5, 2025).
 - Master of Divinity full-time internship - minimum 35 hours per week
 - Master of Divinity part-time internship - minimum 25 hours per week
 - Master of Arts in Ministry internship - minimum 20 hours per week
2. Create a Learning Covenant that includes SMART Tasks to achieve the Course Competencies.
3. Attend and fully engage in the Internship Seminar sessions, including sessions with faculty supervisor and Mental Health Consultant. Participation in the Internship Seminar counts towards minimum hour requirement.
4. Submit all Theological Reflection Papers and other written assignments on time.
5. Meet with the mentor regularly to discuss Theological Reflection Papers (approximately once per month).
6. Meet with the teaching committee regularly according to the proposed schedule.
7. Prepare for and attend three Evaluation meetings (Nine Week Check-in, Midpoint and Final Evaluations).

Substantive Requirements

Substantive requirements pertain to a person's "gifts and graces" for ordained ministry. Gifts and graces include but are not limited to:

1. Fulfillment of the Competencies and Learning Outcomes under Lead Faithfully, by which the intern demonstrates **leadership** in identifying a need; creating a vision of ministry in the church/agency or community; defining a plan for the ministry; recruiting and training volunteers; participating in the ministry; expressing gratitude to the volunteers; and evaluating the ministry.
2. Evidence that the intern can **perform** the functions of a Christian minister, at least at a basic level of competence and reliability. This does not mean perfection. In fact, failure may be a valuable learning experience and actually enhance an intern's later performance. The intern, however, must exhibit self-awareness, pastoral sensibilities, an aptitude to think theologically, and the capacity to further the ministries of the church.
3. Demonstration of an increased **knowledge** of church operations and roles and responsibilities of a minister. This will depend upon how well the intern has utilized the resources and feedback from mentor, teaching committee, consultant, faculty supervisor, and other persons in the church and community.
4. Evidence that the intern can **reflect theologically** by relating ministry activities to expressed understanding of the Christian faith. This entails such things as the ability to articulate one's understanding of the church and its ministry and one's call to ordained ministry, and to critically reflect on any act of ministry from one's own faith perspective.
5. Demonstration that the intern has **personal characteristics** which will enable the intern to be a faithful and effective Christian ministry leader. This involves attention to:
 - Spirituality
 - i. Capable of giving an account of personal calling (i.e., reason for serving as a minister of the gospel)
 - ii. Sensitivity to personal need for prayer, meditation, devotional time
 - iii. Ability to effectively articulate experiences, resources, practices or disciplines as they pertain to the Christian faith

- Interpersonal Relationships
 - i. Ability to initiate and maintain healthy relationships with other persons
 - ii. Relates in a sincere, honest, caring, and respectful manner
 - iii. Ability to effectively navigate situations of disagreement or conflict
- Intrapersonal Awareness
 - i. Awareness of communication style and how it affects others
 - ii. Emotional acuity in forms of communication
 - iii. Understanding of personal identity as a minister (i.e., occupying a role of authority)

Evaluation

The Intern Program uses the word “evaluation” in a very specific sense. It does not imply a judgment about the “value” or “worth” of any person. It is also separate from any decisions regarding ordination by the church. An intern's performance is evaluated by how well the intern addresses the Learning Outcomes and whether the intern completes the SMART Tasks as outlined in the Learning Covenant. Members of the Internship Team will meet with the intern on three separate occasions to evaluate and provide feedback on the intern's performance. The teaching committee and mentor will, in effect, decide whether the intern has fulfilled the formal and substantive requirements of the course.

An intern's progress is assessed at the Nine Week Check-in, Midpoint and Final evaluation meetings. The intern must be present in every evaluation meeting. The faculty supervisor, in accordance with university policy, makes the final decision on whether or not the intern has satisfactorily completed (or passed) the course. The designations used in evaluation are:

- *Pass*: The faculty supervisor has determined that the intern has satisfactorily met the formal and substantive requirements of the course.
- *Incomplete*: The intern has not completed the requirements of the course. Unfinished work may be completed and/or reservations resolved if the intern completes or repeats some aspect of the program in a satisfactory manner.
- *No Credit*: The intern has demonstrated a lack of aptitude, interest, or willingness to fulfill the stated requirements of the course.

Nine Week Check-in

The teaching committee and mentor will meet separately with the intern in the Nine Week Check-in for an evaluation of the student's progress, focusing on whether the intern has successfully completed the Learning Covenant. The faculty supervisor will offer guidance in the use of the Evaluation Forms found on the Intern Program website.

Midpoint Evaluation

As preparation for the Midpoint Evaluation meeting, the intern will write a Midpoint Self-Evaluation Paper (see Appendix E) and distribute it to the teaching committee members, the mentor and the faculty supervisor at least five days prior to the meeting. The teaching committee and the mentor can choose to bring a written statement or a list of highlights that address the intern's performance.

The intern will use the insight gained at the Midpoint Evaluation meeting to revisit the Learning Covenant, if necessary. Any revision is due to the faculty supervisor by noon on **January 24, 2025**.

Final Evaluation

The Final Evaluation will assess the intern's overall growth and learning. The faculty supervisor oversees this process in order to submit the final grade. The faculty supervisor will collect documents from the intern, the teaching committee, and the mentor. The faculty supervisor offers guidance for all evaluations and will make adjustments to the guidelines below, as appropriate.

1. The intern will write the Final Self-Evaluation Paper based on a set of guiding questions (Appendix F) and will distribute it to the teaching committee members, the mentor and the faculty supervisor at least five days prior to the Final Evaluation meeting.
2. The mentor will provide verbal and/or written feedback on the intern's progress to the intern and faculty supervisor.
3. Each teaching committee member will provide verbal and/or written feedback on the intern's progress to the intern and faculty supervisor. The chairperson may provide a written summary of oral feedback to the faculty supervisor.

Intern Handbook

Appendices

Intern Handbook Appendix A: Course Competencies

Area I: Be Aware

1. Demonstrate the ability to implement regular holistic practices, grounded in the love of God and self, for a sustainable life of Christian service.
2. Demonstrate the ability to grow in forming authentic, respectful relationships and collaborate with teams, maintaining healthy boundaries, appropriate levels of confidentiality and personal integrity.
3. Demonstrate the ability to collaborate, receive and integrate constructive feedback and cultivate professional work habits that are necessary to thrive as a Christian leader.

Area II: Think Theologically

4. Demonstrate the capacity to describe and assess the theological rationale underlying ministry practices (SMART Tasks) in Theological Reflection Papers.
5. Demonstrate the ability to draw on the resources of the Christian tradition in the practice of ministerial responsibilities (i.e., preaching, teaching, worship, outreach, pastoral care).
6. Develop a comprehensive Theology of Ministry, as part of the Final Self-Evaluation, that integrates the Internship experience and seminary journey with their long-term vocational goals.

Area III: Lead Faithfully

7. Demonstrate the ability to conduct a focused Ministry Context Study (analyzing demographic data, conducting interviews or surveys, etc.) that can assist the placement site in its mission. Present the Study to the Teaching Committee or another relevant committee or board in your ministry setting. This Competency is not required for M.A.M. students.
8. Demonstrate the ability to recruit, organize and collaborate with a team to implement a new leadership project with clear goals and a robust theological vision. Examples of leadership projects include but are not limited to:
 - administrative, stewardship, fundraising, and/or financial leadership
 - educational ministries (discipleship, formation, new members classes)
 - social justice advocacy

- social entrepreneurship
- interfaith community engagement
- charitable ministries
- pastoral care (crisis or non-crisis situations)
- new church plant

Intern Handbook Appendix B:
Beginning the Internship:
A Possible Liturgy for the Installation of a Perkins Intern
(to be adapted as desired)

Introduction

The congregation of *(name of church)* has been invited into partnership with Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in its stated mission “to prepare women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry.” From *(beginning date of internship)* until *(closing date of internship)*, we will be the teaching congregation for *(intern’s full name)*, who will serve on our pastoral staff as part of the intern’s *(degree program: Master of Divinity or Master of Arts in Ministry)* studies. This internship follows several years of academic study of Bible, Theology, Church History, and Ministry. *(Intern’s first name)* will learn the skills of ministry and live the life of a minister under the supervision of the seminary and our church.

Covenant liturgy *(to be led by appropriate representative of teaching congregation):*
(to Mentor)

As Mentor, *(pastor’s name)*, will you covenant to share your ministry with *(intern’s first name)*, guide her in maturing faith, and teach her in theological reflection?

I will.

(Ask Teaching Committee to stand)

As the Teaching Committee for *(intern’s first name)*, will you covenant to pray for *(intern’s first name)*, to be attentive to her learning, to participate constructively in evaluating her growth, and to encourage her ministry with truth? **We will.**

(To the Intern)

As Intern, *(intern’s first name)*, will you covenant to share your calling to ministry in the life of *(name of church)*, to do all you can to learn from the family of God in this place, and to open yourself to grow in God’s grace?

I will.

Congregation

As the Teaching Congregation, will you covenant to accept the ministry of *(intern’s full name)*, to teach her from your lives, and to support her in every way as she grows in her calling?

We will.

Let us pray. *(Charles Wesley, United Methodist Hymnal 561)*

“Jesus, united by thy grace and each to each endeared,
with confidence we seek thy face and know our prayer is heard.
Help us to help each other, Lord, each other’s cross to bear;
let all their friendly aid afford, and feel each other’s care.
This is the bond of perfectness, thy spotless charity;
O let us, still we pray, possess the mind that was in thee.”
Amen.

**Intern Handbook Appendix C:
Learning Covenant SMART Task Template**

| AREA I: BE AWARE | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| LEARNING OUTCOMES | SMART TASKS |
| 2. | 1. 2. |
| 3. | 1. 2. |
| 4. | 1. 2. |
| AREA II: THINK THEOLOGICALLY | |
| LEARNING OUTCOMES | SMART TASKS |
| 5. | 1. 2. |
| 6. | 1. 2. |
| 7. | 1. 2. |
| AREA III: LEAD FAITHFULLY | |
| LEARNING OUTCOMES | SMART TASKS |
| 8. | 1. 2. |
| 9. | 1. 2. |
| 10. | 1. 2. |

**Intern Handbook Appendix D:
Learning Covenant SMART Task Sample**

| AREA I: BE AWARE | |
|--|--|
| LEARNING OUTCOMES | SMART TASKS |
| <p>11. Demonstrate the ability to implement regular practices, grounded in love of God, self, and neighbor, for a sustainable life of Christian service in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • daily spiritual disciplines • consistent self-care that addresses physical, emotional, and relational needs • ethical inter-personal boundaries | <p>7. Pray and read scripture for 20-30 mins every morning</p> <p>8. Fast from social media at least 3 days per month</p> <p>9. Exercise for 30-45 mins three times per week</p> <p>10. Visit doctor regularly</p> <p>11. Schedule 1 date night with spouse</p> <p>12. Write in journal often</p> <p>13. Discuss boundary issues with Health Consultant</p> |

Intern Handbook Appendix E: Theological Reflection Paper Template

Intern:

Paper Number:

Supervisory Session Date:

Mentor Pastor:

Faculty Supervisor:

A. Narrative Account

I. Introduction

The Introduction should provide relevant background information to help the reader understand the context and your experience. What is the time and place? What is the purpose of the meeting or conversation? Who are the people, and how do they know one another? Use pseudonyms to avoid identifying the persons by name (i.e., Ms. A).

II. Description

Write a narrative account that describes the dialogue between the persons involved. Retell exchanges and responses as accurately as possible using dialogue form. Feel free to summarize long exchanges. But make sure to use quotes to highlight important parts of the conversation (see example below).

Identify in your narrative account the salient non-verbal factors such as gestures, facial expressions, body language, insinuations, etc. Explain how these factors influenced your feelings, responses, and/or conclusions.

B. Guiding Questions

I. Be Aware

- i. Try to identify the underlying theological-ethical issue(s) of your narrative account. In a few words, how would you describe the main issue(s) at stake?
- ii. What was going on with you internally (what were you thinking and feeling) during this experience?

- iii. What assumptions were you making? How did you test your assumptions? How did your awareness of your assumptions affect your subsequent responses and reactions?
- iv. What power dynamics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, social status, leadership role, etc.) were at play in this incident?
- v. Did you learn anything new about yourself? For instance, did you learn something new about your ability to listen, your faith, your ministerial identity, your communication style, your approach to ministry, or your theological commitments.

II. Think Theologically

- i. How did you experience the presence and activity of the Divine? How did this experience help you to think differently about the Divine and how the Divine relates to us? Was your theological imagination—your views about God and Creation—challenged, expanded, or reinforced? Explain. Alternatively, if you did not experience the presence of the Divine, why do you think that is? Explain.
- ii. What doctrines (e.g., Christology, ecclesiology, salvation, creation, eschatology, etc.) were raised in the narrative account?
- iii. As you reflect on the main theological-ethical issue at stake in the narrative account, does it promote or oppose the Divine desire for creation? What gaps exist between that intention and the way of the world? Explain.
- iv. How did you rely on exegesis of Scripture to address the theological-ethical issue(s)? How did this exegesis help you act in a way consistent with your theological commitments while maintaining a pastoral relationship?
- v. As you consider your seminary education as a whole, what other coursework (besides biblical and theological studies) could you use to deepen your theological analysis of your narrative account? Explain.

III. Lead Faithfully

- i. What leadership qualities were you trying to embody (e.g., assertive, approachable, inclusive, authoritarian, etc.)? Explain.
- ii. How might others describe the leadership you displayed? What, if anything, interfered with your intended leadership?

- iii. What spiritual disciplines, if any, did you rely on to lead in this incident? Explain.
- iv. As you re-read your paper and think about this incident, did your leadership enable others to think about their understanding of the faith and their Christian witness in a different way? If so, describe how.
- v. What leadership qualities did you discover about yourself from this incident?

**Intern Handbook Appendix F:
Sample Theological Reflection Paper
Narrative Account**

A. Narrative Account

I. Introduction (approximately 250-400 words)

This paper will focus on an incident in which I was denied access to a church member when she was in the hospital this past summer. The church member, Mrs. C, was taken to the hospital on a Sunday morning, had open heart surgery the following Sunday, and then passed away shortly thereafter.

During her early hospital stay when she was coherent, I was denied access to visiting with her by her husband. His reason for this was justifiable since he felt that she needed her rest and did not need visitors. I did not see her until she was in intensive care just prior to her surgery. By that time, she was unconscious, and she was never again aware of my visits.

II. Description (approximately 500-750 words)

A parishioner went to the hospital by ambulance early on a Sunday morning. I was leading a church service that morning when I learned of the hospitalization. That afternoon I called the hospital to obtain the room number. My phone call was connected to the room and I talked with her husband, Mr. C. He told me, "Mrs. C needs her rest and I do not want the church members coming to the hospital to see her." Apparently, just in that short time there had already been several members who had visited and that it had caused his wife to be tired. He asked me to pass the word along to everyone that I talked to.

Since I am on staff, I assumed that this prohibition did not apply to me. I therefore told Mr. C that I would come to the hospital soon to see his wife. However, he responded, "I would prefer if you didn't come because she really needs her rest." Surprised by his response, I struggled to find the words to say. I simply reassured him that we would pray for Mrs. C and for him to call me if he needed me in any way. He thanked me and the conversation ended.

I checked on Mrs. C's condition via her family members during the week and learned that she would be transferred to intensive care. Mr. C had never let me know that her condition had worsened, and by the time I reached the hospital she was in the ICU and was unconscious. She never regained consciousness and died after her heart surgery. We held her funeral in our church two weeks later.

Mrs. C was loved by the church. She had been a longtime member and having been involved in many ministries which touched the lives of people. The congregation were never able to express their appreciation to her during her stay in the hospital and were very affected by her death. Her husband still attends the church regularly and has received support from the members.

**Intern Handbook Appendix G:
Nine Week Check-in Form
Report to the Faculty**

Name of Intern:

Date of the Meeting:

Name of Church or Agency:

Who is Submitting this form?

Choose one: Mentor On-Site Supervisor Teaching Committee Chair

Instructions:

- **Lay Teaching Committee Chairperson:**

Please write the summary statements below that were agreed upon by consensus at the Lay Teaching Committee meeting under *Part One, Part Two, and Part Three*.

- **Mentor Pastor and On-Site Supervisor:**

Please write down a summary of your conversation below with the Intern for *Part One, Part Two, and Part Three* from your one-on-one meeting with the Intern.

Part One: Learning Covenant Competencies

1. My observations of your progress in attaining the Learning Covenant's outcomes and tasks are these first few weeks are....
2. I observe that you received feedback on your learning outcomes in the following ways...
3. As you have fulfilled your Learning Covenant responsibilities, I have observed that you have strengths in the following abilities and skills...
4. The skills that you lack experience in and that I recommend that you focus on are....
5. The skills that I recommend you continue to improve are

Part Two: Personhood and Character

1. Based on my observations, I want to affirm the following gifts and personal qualities....
2. Your relationship with the staff, laity and/or program participants is best described as....
3. I would describe your communication style as

Part Three: Sending Forth

- I. My greatest hope for you as you move forward on Internship is
-

SEND TO: **The Intern and the Faculty Supervisor assigned to your Intern.**

Rachel Holmes rdwight@smu.edu

Intern Handbook Appendix H: Midpoint Self-Evaluation Paper

In preparation for the Midpoint Evaluation meeting, the intern should write a self-evaluation addressing the following questions. The Midpoint Self-Evaluation paper should be submitted to the lay teaching committee, mentor pastor, and faculty supervisor at least **five days** prior to the evaluation meeting. The paper should be between 3-5 pages in length and include the heading and guiding questions listed below.

Intern:

Title: Midpoint Self-Evaluation Paper

Meeting Date:

Placement Site:

Mentor / On-site Supervisor:

Teaching Committee Chair:

Faculty Supervisor:

Guiding Questions

1. How is your self-awareness increasing? What are you learning about yourself? Relate your response to the Competencies under Be Aware.
2. How are your theological convictions evolving? What have you learned about theological reflection from serving in your context? Relate your response to the Competencies under Think Theologically.
3. How is your understanding of leadership changing? What are you learning about leadership from serving in your context? Relate your response to the Competencies under Lead Faithfully.
4. Which Competencies were most fulfilling and why?
5. Which Competencies were most challenging and why?
6. Which Competencies will you carry over into the second half of internship and why?
7. Identify the Learning Outcomes and Tasks you adjusted and give the rationale.
8. Reference feedback from the faculty supervisor, your peers, the mentor pastor, the on-site supervisor (if applicable), and the laity.

9. Write a reflection on your deliberative theology in light of your ministry practices entitled “Ministry Practices in Conversation with Deliberative Theology.”

In preparation, please engage in the following three activities: First, reflect on your practice of ministry during internship; second, review your theological reflection papers and conversations with peers, laity, faculty supervisor and mentor pastor; and third, re-read your Credo or other assignments written for the course, “The Interpretation of the Christian Message.” The latter is your deliberative theology.

Include the following in your paper:

- What are the life and death questions facing our cities and world that have kept you up at night? How are these shaping your understanding of the vocation of the Christian leader?
 - As you re-read your Credo or other assignments of that course, discuss where these intersect with the questions arising from your ministry practices.
 - Identify and comment on the texts and metaphors (Biblical, cultural, social, etc.) that describes or inspires your practice of ministry.
 - Identify and comment on the resources from your coursework that support your theological vision of ministry.
10. What do you want to discuss, if anything, about your growth, learning, or plans not already covered in the questions above?

Distribute to Faculty and Mentor Pastor Only:

11. On a separate page, index your theological reflection papers. List the date of each paper and a phrase describing the subject matter. This index is submitted only to the faculty supervisor and mentor pastor.

Intern Handbook Appendix I: Final Self-Evaluation Paper

In preparation for the Final Evaluation meeting, the intern should write a self-evaluation addressing the following questions. The Final Self-Evaluation paper should be submitted to the lay teaching committee, mentor pastor, and faculty supervisor at least **five days** prior to the evaluation meeting. The paper should be between 12-15 pages in length and include the heading and guiding questions listed below.

Intern:

Title: Final Self-Evaluation Paper

Meeting Date:

Placement Site:

Mentor / On-site Supervisor:

Teaching Committee Chair:

Faculty Supervisor:

Guiding Questions

1. What has been your most formative experience during the internship? Explain.
2. As you receive feedback from the faculty supervisor, your peers, the mentor pastor, the on-site supervisor (if applicable), and the laity, what are you learning about yourself with regard to your identity as a Christian leader? (2-3 paragraphs)
3. For each area of your Learning Covenant (Be Aware, Think Theologically, and Lead Faithfully), respond to the questions below. Make sure to devote two paragraphs for each area.
 - What did you learn?
 - How did you adjust your Learning Outcomes and/or Tasks according to your performance or feedback along the way?
4. Take a moment to reflect on your fulfillment of the Competencies throughout the year. Write 3-4 paragraphs addressing the following questions.
 - Which Competencies were most challenging and why?

- Which Competencies were most fulfilling and why?
 - Which Competencies will be important outcomes for your learning beyond the internship?
5. Write a Theology of Ministry paper. A Theology of Ministry paper should articulate a theologically informed statement of the church's mission ("call to action") in light of the local and global challenges facing our world. To this end, write a paper responding to the following questions:
- What does the Christian faith have to offer the congregation and/or communities in your ministry context? In your view, what is the role of the church in this historic moment? Your answer should reflect an awareness of the ministerial challenges posed by broader social issues.

Your Theology of Ministry should:

- Discuss the role of the clergy (elder, deacon or other designation) as well as the role of the laity to enact the church's purpose.
 - Support your theological-ethical views with an exegesis of Scripture and by engaging theological sources (i.e., theologians, creeds, hymns, etc.)
 - Reference at least one experience that occurred during your internship (or a previous ministerial position) that has shaped your Theology of Ministry.
 - In order to situate yourself in the contemporary context, address one or at most two of the following issues 1) healthcare challenges, 2) impact of environmental disasters caused by climate crisis, 3) global refugee crisis that separates families, 4) history of racial violence, 5) domestic and sexual violence, or 6) social media and political extremism.
 - Discuss your theology of self-care and why it is important in ministry.
6. What do you want to discuss, if anything, about your growth and learning not already covered in the questions above?

Distribute to Faculty and Mentor Pastor Only:

7. On a separate page, index your theological reflection papers. List the date of each paper and a phrase describing the subject matter. This index is submitted only to the faculty supervisor and mentor pastor.

**Intern Handbook Appendix J:
Southern Methodist University's Statements
on Title IX, Disability Accommodations, Academic Policies and Student
Support Services**

A. Title IX and Disability Accommodations

I. Disability Accommodations

Students who need academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit smu.edu/DASS to begin the process. Once they are registered and approved, students then submit a DASS Accommodation Letter through the electronic portal, DASS Link, and then communicate directly with each of their instructors to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, but rather require advance notice in order to implement.

II. Sexual Harassment

All forms of sexual harassment, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking, are violations of SMU's Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy and may also violate Texas law. Students who wish to file a complaint or to receive more information about the grievance process may contact Samantha Thomas, SMU's Title IX Coordinator, at accessequity@smu.edu or 214-768-3601. Please note that faculty and staff are mandatory reporters. If students notify faculty or staff of sexual harassment, they must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. For more information about sexual harassment, including resources available to assist students, please visit smu.edu/sexualharassment.

III. Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX, students who are pregnant or parenting may request academic adjustments by contacting the Office of Student Advocacy and Support by calling 214-768-4564. Students seeking assistance must schedule an appointment with their professors as early as possible, present a letter from the Office of the Dean of Students, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that academic adjustments are not retroactive and, when feasible, require advance notice to implement.

B. Academic Policies

IV. Religious Observance

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing within the first two weeks of the semester and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. [Click here for a list of holidays.](#)

V. Medical-Related Absences

To ensure academic continuity and avoid any course penalties, students should follow procedures described by their instructors in order to be provided with appropriate modifications to assignments, deadlines, and exams.

VI. Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled university extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments that were missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements for make-up work with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examinations or other missed assignments. (See current [Catalog](#) under heading of "Academic Records/Excused Absences.")

VII. Final Exams

Final course examinations shall be given in all courses where appropriate, and some form of final assessment is essential. Final examinations and assessments must be administered as specified in the official examination schedule and cannot be administered or due during the last week of classes or during the Reading Period. Syllabi must clearly state the form of the final examination or assessment, and the due date and time must match the official SMU examination schedule. SMU policy states that all exceptions to the examination schedule may be made only upon written recommendation of the chair of the department sponsoring the course and with the concurrence of the dean of that school, who will allow exceptions only in accordance with guidelines from the Office of the Provost.

VIII. Academic Dishonesty

Students are expected to embrace and uphold the [SMU Honor Code](#). Violations of the Honor Code will be acted upon in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the [Mustang Student Handbook](#).

IX. Zoom Use Guidelines

SACSCOC and university policy require that all in-person classes be taught in person and not moved to Zoom or other technology-mediated modalities, except

for [extenuating circumstances as laid out here](#).

C. Student Support

X. Student Academic Success Programs

Students needing assistance with writing assignments for SMU courses may schedule an appointment with the Writing Center through Canvas. Students who would like support for subject-specific tutoring or success strategies should contact SASP, Loyd All Sports Center, Suite 202; 214-768-3648; smu.edu/sasp. Tutor schedules are available at smu.edu/tutorschedule.

XI. Caring Community Connections Program

CCC is a resource for anyone in the SMU community to refer students of concern to the Office of the Dean of Students. The online referral form can be found at smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc. After a referral form is submitted, students will be contacted to discuss the concern, strategize options, and be connected to appropriate resources. Anyone who is unclear about what steps to take if they have concerns about students should contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 214-768-4564.

XII. Mental Health Resources: Counseling Services & Teletherapy

Throughout the academic year, students may encounter different stressors or go through life experiences which impact their mental health and academic performance. Students who are in distress or have concerns about their mental health can schedule a same-day or next-day appointment to speak with a counselor by calling Counseling Services. Counselors are available at any time, day or night for students in crisis at this number: 214-768-2277 (then select option 2). They will be connected with a counselor immediately. Students seeking ongoing counseling should call the same number (214-768-2277, then select option 1) during normal business hours to schedule an initial appointment. SMU Teletherapy provides another free option for on-demand counseling and video appointments with a medical professional.