

# THE TEACHING COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025



**SMU** Perkins School  
of Theology

**Intern Program**

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So I'm on this Teaching Committee...

# **What Have I Gotten Myself Into?**

Chapter 1:  
The Ministry of Supervision

## **Welcome to the Ministry of Supervision!**

You are perhaps wondering about your invitation to serve in this important role. Why was I chosen? Am I qualified? Do I bring the appropriate knowledge to the table to be of any assistance to this seminary-trained theologian?

You have been chosen for this work because you can offer this intern insights into ministry from the perspective of the laity. You will give feedback on how sermons and teachings are heard and received. You will share what you see as the growing edges of ministry for the intern. You will help the intern develop the practice of thinking things through in a way that considers not only what is said and done, but also how those things are experienced and perceived by the folks in the pew or the people they work with through the agency they serve.

Be assured that you were chosen because your pastor has seen in your life a baptism that has been both “lived out of” and “lived into.” You have been chosen because you are in ministry already. You have much to offer this student!

The mission of Perkins School of Theology is to “prepare women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry.” As a lay member of a congregation, you hold valuable insight into what healthy and effective Christian ministry looks like and feels like. The agenda of your work on this Perkins School of Theology Internship Teaching Committee is singular: to assist this particular intern to achieve her or his learning outcomes for ministry competencies. You—along with the faculty supervisor, the mentor and the mental health consultant—are a vital part of the internship.

Your work may be likened to ripples created when a pebble is dropped onto the calm surface of a pond. Sometimes the ripples are short-lived. At other times the ripples seem to move out an amazing distance and to last an amazing length of time. Your work will produce ripples in this world long after the end of the internship. These ripples will continue across this student’s life and ministry, which means that they will make their way across every congregation and/or agency the student will serve.

Be surprised at what you will learn and at how you will grow through your participation in this process. Be excited about how God will be at work in your congregation during the internship. Embrace this opportunity to invest in the education and formation of one who will be in leadership in the Church well into the future. Be expectant! Have some fun! Enjoy the adventure!

# The Internship Course

## Statement of Purpose

The aims of the Internship Course are based on an understanding of the Gospel, the Church and the mission of Perkins School of Theology.

*The Gospel*, testified to by the various voices of Scripture and Tradition, is the proclamation that God has created this world and continues to bless it with life and well-being.<sup>1</sup> God's blessing is peace and justice and human flourishing.<sup>2</sup> God continues to overcome everything that distorts and destroys life and wholeness.<sup>3</sup> This Gospel, decisively embodied in Jesus Christ, embraces the totality of creation: the personal and the social, the spiritual and the secular, the present and the future.

*The Church* is called by God to be the community of those who commit themselves in the name of Jesus to embodying God's life-giving Gospel in their own lives and to advocating the divine blessing/justice for the whole creation in a way that confronts the concrete issues of power, economics, class, gender, and race.<sup>4</sup>

*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 participate in and reflect upon ministry experiences and their contexts so as to provide resourceful, faithful Christian leadership in the world. To achieve this, students are placed in a variety of supervised settings. Students will receive various forms of supervision on the performance of ministry in fulfillment of learning outcomes and on their personal reflections.

This course seeks to realize this purpose by assisting students to develop several competencies. These competencies are organized in three categories: *Be Aware*, *Think Theologically*, and *Lead Faithfully*. The complete description of all the required competencies is contained in this curriculum guide.

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. 1:28; 12:1-3; John 10:10

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 85:10-13; Amos 5:24; Luke 4:16-21

<sup>3</sup> Isa. 61:8; Amos 5; John 1:1-5; Rev. 21:3-4

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 25:31-46

So I'm on this Teaching Committee...

# **Who Else Is In This With Me?**

Chapter 1:  
The Supervisory Circle



## **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 their 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 Appendix C.***

## **The Teaching Committee**

### ***The Composition of the Teaching Committee***

The teaching committee comprises six to eight persons committed to the congregation or agency and the mutual learning process of an internship. The members should reflect the composition of the congregation or agency.

In church or agency staff internships, the mentor (or on-site supervisor, if the mentor is not at the placement site) usually selects the persons to serve on the teaching committee, with input from the student if he or she is already on staff. Student pastors who are appointed as sole pastor of a student charge select the members of the committee from their congregation(s). If the internship is a dual placement in which the intern will serve two entities, approximately half of the committee members should be drawn from each. Together they represent a single committee.

Those choosing the committee members should remember that the teaching committee does not serve the same function as the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or Personnel Committee and should not be identical to that body. Clergy should not serve on the teaching committee.

Persons who will work most effectively on this committee are persons who:

- Know and are committed to the church and its mission in the local congregation/ agency, the community, the denomination, and the world
- Have a sense of their own baptismal call to ministry in the church and the world and of their own distinctive gifts for fulfilling that ministry
- Recognize the importance of accountability in the church—their own and that of others
- Are able and willing to invest the necessary time and energy in helping the intern to learn and grow
- Can be open to the uniqueness of the intern—the intern's gifts for ministry, vision of the church, ways of doing things
- Appreciate the importance of mutual trust in personal relations and conversations

## ***Responsibilities of the Teaching Committee***

There are four primary areas of responsibility for the teaching committee.

### A. Support

- By praying regularly for the intern
- By working to be sensitive to the intern's several "worlds": pastoral responsibilities, academic requirements, professional relationships, and family life
- By demonstrating concern for the intern's family and/or important relationships
- By interpreting for the congregation and staff the purpose of the internship and the student's role and responsibilities within it
- By making the intern feel welcome to share their faith story with the committee

### B. Participate

- By finding time and situations to observe the intern engaged in ministry
- By participating in some aspects of the intern's ministry
- By reading carefully all written reports provided by the intern
- By supporting the intern's ministry in the congregation
- By assisting the intern in the formulation of the Learning Covenant including any revisions

### C. Feedback

- By attending the regularly scheduled meetings of the teaching committee
- By preparing for these meetings by reflecting on their experiences with and observation of the intern and reviewing any written material prior to the meetings
- By sharing with the intern their honest, constructive opinions on the intern's work in fulfillment of the required competencies
- By assuring the intern that feedback conversations are privileged communication and will not be shared with anyone outside the internship team

#### D. Evaluation

- By attending all evaluation sessions, normally the Nine Week Check-In, the Midpoint Evaluation Conference and the Final Evaluation Conference
- By sharing with the intern and the faculty supervisor their frank assessment of the intern's strengths and areas of need
- By responding in writing to evaluation material provided by the faculty supervisor

### ***The Chairperson of the Teaching Committee***

#### A. Selecting the chairperson

The chairperson of the teaching committee is selected from the committee members. If the mentor has named those members, he or she may also request a particular individual to serve as chair. When this is not possible, the chairperson is chosen by the committee after the Perkins intern faculty supervisor has conducted the teaching committee orientation early in the internship. A chairperson must be named by no later than the second meeting and must be among the members who attended the orientation.

In some cases, a congregation may have recently been a teaching partner in the Perkins intern program and will have some members on the committee who are familiar with the process. Even if the chairperson is chosen from this more experienced group, he or she is still required to attend the orientation led by the Perkins intern faculty.

In full-time student pastor internships in which the members of the committee are drawn from both the student's ministry setting and the mentor's ministry setting, the chair of the committee is normally a member of the student's ministry setting. The chair of the committee does not have to be a member of a major administrative entity or supervisory board, as these serve a different function than the teaching committee.

#### B. Qualities of an effective chairperson

An effective chairperson is one who exemplifies the qualities desirable in all the committee members as described earlier. In addition, the chairperson should be one who:

- Respects differing opinions

- Understands small group dynamics
- Possesses good organizational and communication skills
- Supports the learning structures of the Perkins Intern Program and the seminary and is willing to invest the time and energy to learn the intern program process
- Appreciates the importance of mutual trust in personal relations and conversations and keeps that value before the committee
- Understands the importance of the committee's honest and constructive feedback to the intern's learning

#### C. Responsibilities of the chairperson

In addition to sharing in the four primary areas of responsibilities of the committee (support, involvement, feedback, and evaluation) already described, the chairperson's specific responsibilities include:

- Scheduling and attending all committee meetings
- Learning about the internship process and becoming familiar with the Course Competencies
- Assisting the intern in the formulation of the intern's learning covenant
- Reading the intern's learning covenant and offering feedback
- Being available to meet with the intern between meetings, if necessary
- Working with the intern to create the teaching committee's agenda for each meeting
- Guiding the discussion at the committee meetings around the required competencies and/or ministry experiences
- Observing the intern in different ministries and encouraging others to do the same
- Participating in all evaluation sessions
- Sharing in any community ritual of receiving and/or sending forth of the intern

## **A Typical Teaching Committee Agenda**

1. Prayer or devotional (led by committee member, NOT the Intern)
2. Check-In
3. Review of feedback from last meeting, if needed (5 min.)
4. Feedback Session
  - a. Intern offers self-assessment of the ministry experiences and competency achievements.
  - b. Teaching committee members offer feedback on the same ministry experiences and competency achievements.
5. Concluding questions to intern
  - What have you heard?
  - How do you feel?
  - What ministries and competencies will we focus on for the next meeting?
6. Confirmation of next meeting date, time, and place
7. Sending forth with prayer (led by committee member, NOT the Intern)

*A typical teaching committee meeting will last 60 to 90 minutes.*



## **Guide For Setting Teaching Committee Agendas**

### WEEK ONE

***The Teaching Committee Orientation***, led by the faculty supervisor(s): The committee receives and/or reviews the Intern's Learning Covenant.

### WEEKS THREE AND SIX

*Focus:*

The Intern's Learning Covenant

*Preparation:*

- 1) Receive and read the Learning Covenant.
- 2) Observe the Intern's work in the congregation and/or agency whenever possible.
- 3) Converse with the Intern regarding the Learning Covenant's tasks, goals and competencies.

*Meeting Agenda:*

Feedback Session

- 1) Intern offers self-assessment of the ministry experiences and competency achievements.
- 2) Teaching committee members offer feedback on the same ministry experiences and competency achievements.

### WEEK NINE

*Focus:*

The Nine Week Check-in

*Preparation:*

The teaching committee members will read the Perkins Intern Evaluation Form found in Appendix B and will come prepared to share feedback with the Intern.

*Meeting Agenda*

- 1) The teaching committee chairperson will guide the feedback session using the Perkins Intern Evaluation Form.
- 2) The teaching committee chairperson will appoint a recorder for the feedback session who will take notes.
- 3) The chairperson will submit this form to the faculty supervisor.

## WEEK 13 AND FOLLOWING...

The Teaching Committee will meet **every four weeks beginning in Week 13** until the end of the internship.

*Focus:*

Feedback Session

- 1) Intern offers self-assessment of the ministry experiences and competency achievements.
- 2) Teaching committee members offer feedback on the same ministry experiences and competency achievements.

The **Midpoint and Final Evaluations** will be guided by the faculty supervisor and the Final Evaluation will be guided by the intern. All members of the teaching committee participate in these important evaluations.

# The Internship Team

Teaching Congregation / Agency

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Teaching Committee

*Chairperson:*

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Mentor

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*On-Site Supervisor  
(if Mentor is not at the internship  
site)*

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Intern

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Consultant / Internship Seminar  
Group

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Faculty Supervisor

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Each member of the Internship Team plays an essential role in assisting the intern to achieve their learning outcomes. Nevertheless:

**The intern is responsible for their own learning during the internship.**

So I'm on this Teaching Committee...

# **What Do You Mean By “Supervision”?**

Chapter 3:  
Supervision in Action

## **Our Theological Understanding of Vision Sharing**

The Perkins Intern Program is a program of supervised learning. While each intern is ultimately responsible for their own learning, the quality of that learning is directly influenced by the quality of supervision that a student receives during the internship.

But what do we mean by supervision? There are many ways to understand it, but one way of thinking about it is to focus on the key element of “vision,” of vision in the sense of seeing, perhaps for the first time, as seeing more fully or deeply, vision in the sense of discerning and understanding something important. **Supervision can be understood as a process whereby people help each other to greater vision, that is, to seeing more fully and more deeply.**

The teaching committee’s role is to **share its vision** of ministry with the intern through support, feedback, involvement and evaluation. Each of us has a vision of God or Christ, of what it means to be a Christian, of what the church is and ought to be, of the kind of world God desires, and of what it means to be an ordained minister. Everyone’s vision is partial and requires the vision of every other member of the Body of Christ.

Jesus practiced supervision with his disciples. The Gospels report how Jesus called persons to follow him into ministry (Mt. 4: 18-22; 9:9), authorized and trusted them to do ministry (Mt. 10:1-42), instructed (Mt. 11:1), criticized and corrected (Mk. 9:1-29), interpreted and rejoiced in what was happening in ministry (Lk. 10:17-20) and prayed with them (Jn. 17:6-19). Jesus promised not to abandon them (Mt. 28:20). Jesus’ vision was complete. It is the super-vision of Jesus that judges and blesses the church.

The intern brings to internship their vision of the church and its ministry. The other members of the internship team are asked to share their vision of the church and its ministry with the intern in order that the intern’s own vision can expand and become clearer, more complete, and thus empower the intern for better service to God and God’s people.

***Vision Sharing is sharing—not imposing—our own vision of ministry from our own experience and perspective with the intern.***

## **Trust and the Feedback Process**

The feedback process requires healthy trust among and between all parties. This process has two facets that are equally important. The first is clearly defined parameters of confidentiality among all parties. The second is a commitment to **regular attendance** at meetings designed to foster trust and relationships.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST**

**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 their pastoral identity. Such conversations are by their nature very personal and are thus most helpful when they take place in a setting in which all of 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.**

**In certain exceptional cases a member of the team may conclude that in order to avert harm—whether to the intern, some other member of the internship team, or other persons in the church or community—s/he must share something that was said or learned in such conversations with someone who is outside the team. This should only be done after a great deal of thought, prayer and consultation. Such a decision should be discussed both with the intern and the faculty supervisor and/or the consultant in order to ensure that communication with persons outside the circle of trust is done in the most responsible and helpful way.**

## **The Importance of Teaching Committee Meetings**

The teaching committee provides the intern with feedback in many individual and informal ways as its members experience the intern performing ministry in the congregation. Each member is encouraged to observe the student progressing through the Learning Covenant competencies.

The committee's formal supervision occurs primarily in its regularly scheduled meetings with the intern. In order to discuss all necessary areas of ministry during the period of the internship and to be good stewards of the committee's time, the chairperson and intern should confer in advance of each meeting to work out an agenda.

Trust is fostered by a constant and dependable flow of information between the intern and committee members. This is known as a feedback system. A useful way to understand feedback is to think of it as a mirror which reflects back to the person an image of how they are being experienced by others.

Giving feedback is a skill that can be learned and developed. For feedback to be received it is important that it be heard and that it be understood. The following pages offer some guidance in giving constructive feedback.

## Some Tips for Giving Feedback

Often we hesitate to say to another person what we are thinking and feeling. There are various reasons why we keep our thoughts to ourselves, some of them justifiable and wise, but other times not so justifiable and wise. When you think about sharing your own thoughts and feelings with the intern, perhaps the following ideas can help.

### **WHEN YOU WONDER**

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*Why should I share my thoughts and feelings?*

*How do I know what to share?*

*How should I say it?*

*What shall I comment on?*

*Will I hurt the intern's feelings?*

### **THINK ABOUT**

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How truth can set one free.

How your sharing is a form of service to God and the church

How the intern can't read minds and is depending on you for information s/he can't get anywhere else.

Your own experience is unique and important.

No one sees things just exactly like you do.

Whether or not it is important to anyone else, if it is important to you, it is important for the intern to know.

Not being harsh or judgmental — but saying “My experience of you is ...” or “From my point of view ...”

One can speak the truth in love.

What you liked or found helpful.

What bothered you in something the intern said or did.

Comment on specifics, not generalities.  
Anything that occurs repeatedly.

Anything everyone else seems to be missing or ignoring or trying to avoid.

Trusting the intern to be an adult and interested in learning even from mistakes.

How the intern may be hurt by not hearing what you have to say.



Take a few minutes and share with one another how you would complete the following three sentences.

1. I have the hardest time giving a constructive criticism when...

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2. The last time I had occasion to share some important feedback with someone I...

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3. I best receive criticism when...

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**Another common hesitation by some teaching committee members is summarized in this one sentence: “As a layperson, what can I possibly tell a seminary student?” Or: “As a layperson, what do I possibly have to tell my pastor?”**

**The answer is: PLENTY!**

## **The Ten Commandments for Feedback**

**Whether one is giving or receiving feedback, its value is enhanced when...**

1. ...it is one part of a caring relationship. An atmosphere of trust makes it easier to speak candidly and hear clearly. Feedback is more effective when given in the context of life together: worship, work, study, discussion, play and prayer.
2. ...it includes affirmation as well as criticism. We learn and grow from positive as well as critical feedback.
3. ...it focuses on behavior. It is seldom helpful to criticize the intentions or motives of other people, as they are the only ones who know these things. Nor are they likely to respond well to what they perceive as attacks on them personally. Thus it is important to focus feedback on what a person actually does or how s/he behaves.
4. ...it is specific. It is important that the person receiving feedback be able to recall the specific act or behavior under discussion in order to be able to look at it and reflect on it in light of what is being said. Talking about generalities or hypothetical situations is less helpful.
5. ...it is non-judgmental. Persons tend to become defensive and close up when they feel judged. Feedback is most helpful when given in an objective and factual manner without labels such as “good” or “bad,” “wise” or “dumb,” etc. Sincere and objective feedback encourages sincere and objective reception of it.
6. ...it is “owned” by the person giving it. Though there is a place for sharing what we hear other people saying, the most helpful feedback is that which we are willing to offer as our own experience. “I experienced” and “I felt” carry great authority for someone engaged in learning to minister to human beings.
7. ...it is shared in a group. Others can share or correct our perceptions of another person’s acts or behavior. Moreover, when a learner hears similar things from various members of a group, it is more difficult to dismiss or avoid what is being said. Various perspectives contribute to the objectivity of the feedback.
8. ...it is timely. The nearer the feedback can be to the incident being discussed, the better. When weeks or months pass before feedback is offered, it may be more difficult for a person to recall clearly what actually happened or what was said. Meetings for feedback should be frequent and regular.

9. ...it is free from “hidden agenda.” It is rarely helpful to communicate information or feelings not immediately and directly related to the specific incident under discussion. To clothe anger about one thing in the language of feedback about something else confuses everyone and can hinder learning. The same is true when we attempt to criticize one person by evaluating the behavior of a different one, e.g., criticizing the performance of a pastor by criticizing the work of their intern.
10. ...it is received and used. The person receiving the feedback is responsible for hearing and making use of the feedback, and the quality of the reception and use will eventually affect the quality of the feedback offered. Sincere and rigorous appreciation will encourage continued and improved feedback.

So I'm on this Teaching Committee...

# **Okay, So What Exactly Will I Supervise?**

Chapter 4:  
The Intern's Work and Learning

## The Learning Covenant

The Course Competencies will guide the interns to develop Learning Outcomes and the corresponding tasks they will perform during internship. A successful internship is measured by how well interns have addressed each of the competencies based on their own Learning Outcomes and how they have fulfilled the minimum requirements of the course.

The interns will write a Learning Covenant to guide their work throughout the internship and will have opportunities to make revisions to it. A revision may be written after the Nine Week Check-in of the intern’s work and learning, another revision may be written after the Midpoint Evaluation. The revisions allow interns to redirect their activities as they reframe goals to help them achieve a successful internship.

The Learning Covenant has three interrelated components—Course Competencies, Learning Outcomes and SMART (Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic and Timely) Tasks. The Course Competencies (Appendix A) are organized under three subheadings: Be Aware, Think Theologically and Lead Faithfully. In order to fulfill the requirements of the course, interns are asked to demonstrate how well they have addressed each of the competencies.

The specific Learning Outcomes will help interns achieve the Course Competencies and will have corresponding SMART Tasks related to them. The SMART Tasks are the work and responsibilities interns will implement during the nine-month internship relating to each Learning Outcome and Course Competency. These are identified in consultation with the teaching congregation.

### Sample Learning Covenant

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

## **Writing the Learning Covenant**

1. Students meet with the mentor (and on-site supervisor, if applicable) on or before the first day of internship and receive recommended ministry activities for the internship.
2. At the Intern Orientation in August, students will bring the ministry activities recommended by the mentor and write the Learning Covenant in consultation with faculty.
3. The intern will collect signatures from the intern faculty and mentor approving the Learning Covenant and will distribute copies to the teaching committee.
4. The teaching committee will meet with the intern every three weeks up to the Nine week of the internship at which time they will offer the intern written feedback and submit this to the faculty supervisor. The schedule will be as follows:

**Week 1:** Teaching Committee Orientation

**Week 3:** Teaching committee meeting

**Week 6:** Teaching committee meeting

**Week 9:** Teaching committee Nine Week Check-In meeting for first formal feedback and written evaluation

**After Week 9:** Monthly teaching committee meetings with the intern until the end of the internship to review progress in the activities and goals set out in the Learning Covenant. Dates for the Midpoint and Final Evaluations will be scheduled in consultation with the Perkins faculty supervisor.

The teaching committee and mentor will meet separately with the intern in the ninth week of internship for the Nine Week-Check-in. The teaching committee and mentor will use the evaluation forms provided by the Perkins Intern Program to guide their discussions with the intern. Immediately following the evaluation sessions, the committee chairperson and the mentor will send the completed evaluation forms to the faculty supervisor.

The intern may revise the Learning Covenant after receiving feedback during the first eight weeks of internship. The Learning Covenant is due to the faculty supervisor with signatures from the mentor and the teaching committee chairperson between the ninth and eleventh week of internship.

A revised copy of the Learning Covenant is due to the faculty supervisor no later than the eleventh week of internship. The faculty supervisor will set the exact date that the revised Learning Covenant is due.

If needed, the intern will use information gained at the Midpoint Evaluation to revise the Learning Covenant. This version of the Learning Covenant is due to the faculty supervisor with signatures from the mentor and the teaching committee chairperson at the end of the first week of January. The faculty supervisor will set the exact date that revised Learning Covenants will be due.

So I'm on this Teaching Committee...

# **How Will It All End?**

Chapter 5:  
Evaluating and  
Closing the Internship



## Internship Evaluation

The word “evaluation” is used in this course in a very specific sense. Obviously, it never implies a judgment about the “value” or “worth” of any person. It is separate from any decisions regarding ordination by the church. A successful internship is measured by how well interns have addressed each of the competencies based on their own learning outcomes and how they have fulfilled the minimum requirements of the course. In this course there are ninth week, midpoint and final evaluations. The intern is always present for teaching committee meetings and formal evaluation sessions.

The designations used in evaluation are:

- *Pass*: The faculty supervisor has determined the intern has satisfactorily met the 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.

The faculty supervisor, in accordance with University policy, makes the final decision on whether or not the intern has satisfactorily completed the course.

## **Internship Evaluation Conferences**

The faculty supervisor guides all internship evaluations and will make adjustments to the guidelines listed below, as appropriate.

### **The Nine Week Check-in**

The teaching committee and mentor will meet separately with the intern in the ninth week of internship for an evaluation of the student's activities and achievement of competencies based on the Learning Covenant. The faculty supervisor will offer guidance in the use of the Perkins Internship Evaluation Form (Appendix B).

### **The Midpoint Evaluation**

In preparation, the intern will write a self-evaluation paper based on a set of guiding questions in the Intern Handbook and distribute it to the teaching committee members, the mentor and the faculty supervisor at least five days prior to the Midpoint Evaluation. The teaching committee and the mentor may be required to prepare a written assessment for this meeting.

The intern will use the information gained at the Midpoint Evaluation to write a revision of the Learning Covenant, if needed. These revisions integrate the feedback and also add new Learning Outcomes and SMART Tasks corresponding to the Course Competencies. It also includes any Learning Outcome the intern desires to continue to address. This revision is due to the faculty supervisor, with signatures from the mentor and the teaching committee chairperson, on a date agreed upon in consultation with the faculty supervisor.

This second revision is due to the faculty supervisor with signatures from the mentor and the teaching committee chairperson on a date agreed upon in consultation with the faculty supervisor.

### **The Final Evaluation**

The Final Evaluation will assess the intern's overall growth and learning during the internship. The faculty supervisor guides this process in order to submit the final grade. The faculty supervisor will collect documents from the intern, the teaching committee, and the mentor.

1. The intern will write the Final Self-Evaluation Paper based on a set of guiding questions in the Intern Handbook and will distribute it to the teaching committee members, the mentor and the faculty supervisor *at least five days prior to the Final Evaluation*.

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.

## **Closing the Internship**

We have talked about getting started, working the process month by month, and evaluating the student during the internship. We have now come to the end of our journey together. As the internship nears its closing date, it is time to think about how to mark the conclusion of this experience for the teaching committee, the intern, and the teaching congregation. If your student is moving on to another congregation or agency or heading back to campus to finish other course work, it is healthy to celebrate the place she or he has held in the life of your ministry. You will have shared a lot of living over the course of the internship. Relationships have been forged and experiences shared. There is much to mark and celebrate. Even if the student remains on staff with you, his or her role will change from an intentional, educational process that is all about the intern's learning to a role of leadership and service that is evaluated and supervised in different ways. This transition too should be noted.

The committee might want to mark the conclusion of the internship with an informal dinner or a party. (This is most appropriate at some time following the formal evaluation conference but before the intern's contracted closing date.) Some committees have asked if they might give the student a farewell gift, and that is perfectly acceptable. You will definitely want to find a way to recognize the conclusion of the internship in worship. Just follow your heart. You will know what 'fits' your life together.

Thank you for your service to Christ and the Church. Thank you for investing your life in this student. And thank you for partnering with Perkins School of Theology in its mission to "prepare women and men for faithful leadership in Christian ministry."

**Suggestions for both formal and informal closings for internship may be found in Appendix C.**

# **Teaching Committee Appendices**

## **Teaching Committee 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

**Teaching Committee Appendix B:  
Internship Evaluation Forms**

**Perkins Internship Evaluation Form (B-1)**

**A Listener's Guide for Sermons (B-2)**





## **Part Two: Personhood and Character**

1. Based on my observations, I want to affirm the following gifts and personal qualities:
2. The theological or biblical theme(s) that I perceive coming through in your ministry (preaching, teaching, organizing, conversations) is/are ....
3. Your relationship with the staff, laity and/or program participants is best described as....
4. I would describe your leadership style as ....
5. I have observed that when tensions arise, you ....
6. I would describe your communication style as ....

### **Part Three: Sending Forth**

1. The skills that you lack experience in and that I recommend that you focus on are....
2. A growing edge that I want to see you work on concerning your personal characteristics for ministry is ....
3. An act of ministry that you contributed that I will remember is ....
4. My greatest hope for you as you move forward in Christian leadership is ....

**Teaching Committee Appendix B-2**  
**“A Listener’s Guide for Sermons”**

Intern Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Sermon \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Passage(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Beginning of Sermon:**      What was helpful? What was not helpful?

**Body of Sermon:**

1. In a sentence or two, state what you heard as the central message of the sermon.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How well was the central message related to the scripture passage?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How well were you able to follow the preacher? What helped or distracted?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. At which points did the sermon address real issues, both those with which you struggle and issues in the community and world?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What illustrative material did the sermon use? What images, metaphors, stories did the sermon offer?

**Conclusion of Sermon:**      What was the good news? How was the good news celebrated?

**Delivery:**

1. As you look at the preacher, describe your most prominent impression.
2. How did the delivery (voice, body language, style) enhance and detract from the message of the sermon?
3. How would you describe the preacher's own feelings about the sermon?
4. How did the sermon gain and maintain your attention?
5. How did the sermon engage your emotions?

**Response:**

1. How did your own opinions and beliefs fit or not fit with this sermon?
2. What did the sermon challenge you to do?

**Summary:**

1. Share what you especially appreciated about this sermon.
2. Share suggestions you would give to the preacher for strengthening the intern's preaching.

**Teaching Committee Appendix C:  
Sample Liturgies**

**Beginning the Internship (C-1)**

**Formal Liturgical Closing for Internship (C-2)**

**Informal Liturgical Closing for Internship (C-3)**

**Teaching Committee Appendix C-1**  
**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 her *(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.**



**Teaching Committee Appendix C-2**  
**Formal Liturgical Closing for Internship**  
*(to be adapted as necessary)*

**Introduction**

For the past (# months) we of (name of church) have been a teaching congregation in partnership with Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. Intern (intern name) has served under the supervision of mentor (MP name) and Perkins faculty supervisor (FS name). Our congregation has been represented by a Teaching Committee chaired by (TC name). (Intern name) has learned the skills of ministry and lived the life of a minister in our church.

*Mentor*

As your Mentor I have shared ministry with you, guided you in maturing faith, and taught you in theological reflection.

I thank God for your ministry here and pray Christ to guide you.

*Congregation*

**Thanks be to God for ministry shared.**

*Teaching Committee*

As Teaching Committee we have accepted your ministry and spoken the truth in love as you grew in God's calling for you in word, sacrament, order, and service. We thank God for your ministry here and pray the Holy Spirit to inspire you.

*Congregation*

**Thanks be to God for covenants kept.**

*Intern*

As Intern I have offered myself  
as one called and committed to ministry in the church.

Your teaching and truth offered in love  
are parts of my ministry through all of my days.

I thank God for the grace to grow here and to go forth.

*Congregation*

**Thanks be to God for grace to grow.**

**As Teaching Congregation**

**we have offered you our heritage of faith and seen in you  
the promise of the gospel shared in years to come.**

**God bless, protect and use you today, tomorrow, and forever more. Amen.**

*Suggested hymns:*

Blest Be the Dear Uniting Love

Blest Be the Tie that Binds

God Be with You Till We Meet Again

Go Forth for God

## **Teaching Committee Appendix C-3 Informal Closing for Internship**

*Informal closing in stories and blessings for worship or fellowship gatherings.*

*Mentor:*

I thank for God's grace growing (intern name) in ministry,  
I remember your growth in . . .  
I offer my blessing for your ministry . . .

*Teaching Committee Chairperson:*

The laity give thanks for God's grace growing (intern) in ministry,  
We remember your growth in . . . .  
We offer our blessing for your ministry . . . .

*Intern:*

I give thanks for the ministry of (church) and (mentor) supervising my growth in ministry.  
I grew when . . . .  
I offer my blessing for your ministry . . . .

*Mentor:*

Let us pray:

“Eternal God, whose steadfast love for us is from everlasting to everlasting, we give you  
    thanks for cherished memories  
    and commend one another into your care as we move in new directions.  
Keep us one in your love forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”  
*(United Methodist Book of Worship, p. 599)*

*The mentor or congregation may want to add words of recognition of the intern's family.*

**Teaching Committee Appendix D:  
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 goals 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

## **Teaching Committee Appendix E: 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 SMART 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.

## **Teaching Committee Appendix F: 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 SMART 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 goals 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.



# **Teaching Committee Appendix G: 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://smu.edu/sasp). Tutor schedules are available at [smu.edu/tutorschedule](http://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](http://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.