

# DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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## Overview

The Doctor of Ministry is the most advanced degree for professionals working in ministry. The course work is often interdisciplinary in nature and usually involves applied exercises including integral research and writing. A significant portion of the program's requirements are met in the setting of the applicant's ministry rather than in residence. Presently, the Doctor of Ministry Program has two primary delivery systems: the Self-Directed Program and the Cohort-Based Fully Online Program.

For complete admission requirements for the Doctor of Ministry program, please refer to the "Doctor of Ministry (<https://catalog.bethel.edu/bethel-seminary/admission/doctor-of-ministry/>)" page under the Admissions section of this catalog.

## Program Goals

The Doctor of Ministry program is designed for Christian leaders and practitioners who long for theological and intellectual stimulation, a rigorous academic environment, experiential learning, and the professional networking that will:

- Think critically and creatively regarding the challenges facing the Church
- Address challenges facing the Church with robust and innovative social research
- Develop innovative, research-based approaches to address identified ministry and leadership challenges
- Create new knowledge and models for the practice of ministry that will glorify God by advancing the Kingdom of Christ throughout the world in culturally sensitive ways
- Produce personal integration of theology, leadership, and personal spiritual formation with the practice of ministry
- Demonstrate advanced professional competency

## Critical Issues

Bethel's Doctor of Ministry program emphasizes four issues critical to effective and satisfying ministry studies:

1. **Collegial Support.** Bethel's program emphasizes the relational dimension of learning through colleague groups and mentorship. Clusters of students with like concentrations and ministry interests interact with and support one another through the duration of the program.
2. **Current Technology.** Bethel provides computer software and guidance, enabling each student to participate in a system that ensures rapid transfer of information between student and advisor and among students. Students are required to use a computer to participate in the Doctor of Ministry program because of enhanced capability for research and communication.
3. **Academic Excellence.** Each student will receive instruction from Bethel faculty members and highly skilled ministry practitioners who have received doctoral degrees. Students will be stimulated to consider new ideas and ways of approaching ministry as a result of interacting with our excellent faculty and thesis advisors.
4. **Ministry Applications.** Employing an approach that integrates reflection and practice, Bethel's program places learning and growth in the context of ministry. Participants consistently draw upon their studies as they design and implement their ministry projects. The program structure requires students to remain in active ministry while they pursue their education.

## Doctor of Ministry Candidacy

Qualifications to become a candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree are: completion of 36 semester hours of coursework, completion of the thesis proposal foundations and thesis proposal workshop,

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and an approved thesis project proposal. Students are also required to complete the mid-career assessment process.

### **Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies**

The Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies is awarded to Doctor of Ministry students who enter formal Doctor of Ministry candidacy, but who are unable to successfully complete the thesis.

### **Delivery**

#### **Self-Directed (Intensive)**

Bethel Seminary's Self-Directed Doctor of Ministry program is dedicated to producing transformed, godly leaders ready for 21st-century ministry and is convenient, relevant, progressive, focused, and empathetic. In the self-directed program, students choose among the following concentrations: Biblical and Theological Engagement, Church Leadership, and Congregation and Family Care. Courses with onsite intensives are offered in the summer and winter on the St. Paul campus.

#### **Cohort-Based (Fully Online)**

Bethel Seminary's Doctor of Ministry Transformational Leadership Program is offered in a fully online course of study. Students participate in a cohort and stay together for the duration of their program. There are no electives, as the curriculum offerings are focused on helping students develop expertise in a specific area of study. The cohort-based program also makes use of distributive learning technologies. Students are exposed to a professor of record who is a proven scholar or practitioner in the subject being studied and who serves as the cohort's primary mentor.

## **Admission Requirements**

- A minimum of three years post-master's degree in some form of professional ministry
- An ATS-accredited Master of Divinity degree from an institutionally accredited school, with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a four-point scale.

Applicants who have not completed a Master of Divinity degree may be accepted if they have completed a master's degree in theology or a ministry-related field; in that case admitted applicants will need to complete, with a grade of B or higher, a 4-unit integrative seminar (e.g. GS 780) at the start of the Doctor of Ministry program. All other applicants who have completed a master's degree in some other field of study, may be admitted into the Master of Christian Thought program as a pathway into the Doctor of Ministry program.

Additional materials required with the application include:

- Undergraduate and graduate transcripts.
- A personal statement detailing the applicant's ministry experience (three to four pages).
- A statement of personal objectives for the Doctor of Ministry program (three to four pages).
- Specified recommendations.
- A recommendation of support for involvement in the program from the congregation and/or board of the institution in which the student ministers.
- A professional writing sample from previous master-level work.
- An admission interview may be required.

Complete information regarding application and admission requirements may be obtained through the Office of Admissions.

Persons interested in completing the program in less than the normal time may do so by transferring up to 12 semester credits into the program. These credits may be for doctoral-level work not applied to a completed degree program at other accredited seminaries or for special pastoral or congregational

development programs offered by agencies that have cooperative educational arrangements with Bethel.

Part-time visiting students from other ATS-accredited Doctor of Ministry programs may take up to 12 credits that may be transferred into their current programs.

## Degree Requirements

Earning the Doctor of Ministry degree requires completion of 36 semester credits and the completion of the Mid-Career Assessment Process.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Requirements		
GS 007	Graduate Research Seminar: Doctoral Level	0
GS 801	Integral Research and Writing	4
GS 901	Thesis Proposal Foundations	2
GS 902	Thesis Proposal Workshop	4
TL 005	Doctor of Ministry Assessments	0
Select a Concentration		16
Thesis Project Courses and Requirements		
GS 991	Thesis Project A	4
GS 992	Thesis Project B	4
GS 993	Thesis Project C	2
Oral Defense, Final Editorial Revisions, & Colloquium *		
Mid-Career Assessments		
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>36</b>

\* Fees apply

## Thesis Notes

The student must meet all of the thesis deadline submissions and requirements, as listed in the current version of the student manual (section 6). Students who want to work on their thesis longer than three terms can remain in extension status for up to a total of six years (18 terms) in the program. Students will be required to register for Thesis Project courses once they complete Thesis Proposal Workshop. They will also be required to register for thesis extension status each term between the time of completion of the three required Thesis Project courses (GS 991, GS 992, GS 993) and their actual thesis completion and graduation.

## Concentrations

These courses are the student's choice based on course offerings and personal interest. Students are encouraged, but not required, to take at least one fully distance online content course.

### Concentration in Biblical and Theological Engagement

The Self-Directed Doctor of Ministry in Biblical and Theological Engagement program is designed for pastors and ministry staff of churches as well as for those with other responsibilities in Christian organizations that focus on critical aspects of ministry practice from a place of thoughtful biblical and theological engagement. For persons in the program, it will develop personal and spiritual well-being for ministry effectiveness and satisfaction; increase capacities for understanding biblical, theological, and historical resources; and, provide opportunities to investigate the biblical and theological emphases that undergird relationships in Christian organizations and the people they serve.

Code	Title	Credits
ML 810	Personal Well-Being and Ministry Effectiveness	4
BTE Concentration Course		
BTE Concentration Course		4

Bible/Theology Course	4
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>16</b>

### Concentration in Congregation and Family Care

The Self-Directed Doctor of Ministry in Congregation and Family Care program is designed for pastors and ministry staff of churches as well as for those carrying specific responsibilities in the areas of pastoral care, counseling, and spiritual formation. Persons in the program will explore the most common spiritual, mental health, and relational issues encountered in ministry; plan appropriate strategies of care and guidance for those issues; attain insight into how their own spiritual, mental, emotional, theological, and cultural formation affects their ministries; and practice contextualization and theological reflection with regard to issues of human need and pastoral care.

Code	Title	Credits
ML 810	Personal Well-Being and Ministry Effectiveness	4
CFC Concentration Course		4
CFC Concentration Course		4
Bible/Theology Course		4
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>16</b>

### Concentration in Church Leadership

The Self-Directed Doctor of Ministry in Church Leadership is designed for pastors and ministry staff of churches as well as for those carrying leadership responsibilities in other Christian organizations. For persons in the program, it will develop personal and spiritual well-being for ministry effectiveness and satisfaction; increase capacities for understanding congregations and leading effectively in situations of change; and, provide opportunity for development of competencies and skills in one or more of the major strategic areas of ministry leadership.

Code	Title	Credits
ML 810	Personal Well-Being and Ministry Effectiveness	4
CL Concentration Course		4
CL Concentration Course		4
Bible/Theology Course		4
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>16</b>

### Concentration in Transformational Leadership

The Cohort-Based Doctor of Ministry in Transformational Leadership focuses on developing reflective leaders grounded in the theory and practice of transformational leadership. Leadership matters. The development of effective transformational leaders is vital as organizations seek to navigate the complex and changing realities in our world today. To partner with church leaders facing this challenge, Bethel Seminary is offering a unique and fully online cohort in its Doctor of Ministry program.

Code	Title	Credits
Select three courses from the following		12
ML 826	The Transformed and Transforming Leader	
ML 827	Transformational Ministry Leadership: Theory and Practice	
ML 923	Leading Transforming Organizations	
ML 924	Teams, Groups and the Transforming Leader	

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Elective	4
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>16</b>