



HARDING SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

BMIN 7510 INTRO TO D.MIN. RESEARCH, Fall 2023

Dr. Steve Cloer

Jessica Holland

Course description

This course introduces students to the purpose, methods, and skills of ministry research. It gives an overview of the D.Min. program and the D.Min. project. Students do personal reflection and ministry reflection for the purposes of missional vocation and calling. Methods for personal leadership development are explored.

The course contributes to the following degree outcomes:

- Demonstrate the ability to apply research tools to a particular ministry problem and effectively address the problem through managing resources available in a local ministry context.
- Exhibit the ability to think theologically about contemporary ministry challenges.
- Demonstrate effective skills in oral, written, or media performance that will increase one's communication and ministerial effectiveness appropriate to one's particular ministry context.

Additional course objectives

- Develop competence for D.Min. research and writing, as a first step in preparing for the dissertation project.
- Assess one's personal spiritual leadership formation and current ministry context.
- Cultivate a missional imagination for leadership in the local church.

Required textbooks

Nancy Jean Vyhmeister and Terry Dwain Robertson, *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020).

Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2022).

Tom Rath, *StrengthFinders 2.0* (Gallup Press, 2007).

Jim Herrington, Trisha Taylor, and R. Robert Creech, *The Leader's Journey: Accepting the Call to Personal and Congregational Transformation*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2020).

Michael W. Goheen and Timothy Sheridan, *Becoming a Missionary Congregation: Lesslie Newbigin and Contemporary Church Movements* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2022).

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018).

Recommended textbooks

Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carol S. Dudley, and William McKinney, eds.
Studying Congregations: A New Handbook (Nashville: Abington Press, 1998).

Textbooks can now be ordered through a link on the [HST website](#). The Textbooks tab can be viewed on the navigation bar on any page of the website. Check the book list provided under the Textbooks tab (<http://hst.edu/students/textbook-services/>) for correct ISBN's and editions to insure correct ordering. A link provided there will take you to Amazon where you will only need to enter the ISBN to order your books.

Additional required readings

George R. Hunsberger, "Missional Church and the Doctor of Ministry Degree," *The Journal of Christian Ministry* 5 (2013): 1-26. Accessed online here:
<https://journal.dmineducation.org/2013/05/01/missional-church-and-the-dmin/>

Robert Clinton, "Listen Up, Leaders!" *Barnabas Publishers Reprint* (1990), 1-24. Accessed online here: <http://www.cityvision.edu/courses/coursefiles/304/leaders.PDF>

Tim Sensing, "What in the World is Research?" *Discernment: Theology and Practice of Ministry* 8 (2022): 1-16. Accessed online here:
<https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/discernment/vol8/iss1/1/>

William R. Myers and Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, "Can One Be Faithful While Teaching Research Methods to D.Min. Students?" *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* 12 (1990): 15-29.

Craig Van Gelder, "How Missiology Can Help Inform the Conversation about the Missional Church in Context," in *The Missional Church and Context*, ed. Craig Van Gelder, 12-43.

Additional readings, course notes, a place to submit assignments, and grades are available on Canvas. To access the Canvas course page, go to <http://elearning.harding.edu>.

Accessibility

HST professors are accessible to local and distance students. Please use the following to arrange appointments with me (in person or by phone):

Email: secloer@harding.edu

Office Phone Number: 901-432-7724

Office: Ijams Administration Building 209

Course Format

The course format will be varied, including lecture, discussion, library engagement, Bible study, prayer, and written reflective activities. Students are expected to have read all required materials before the class on the HST campus and be prepared to lead or engage in focused conversations.

Additional time will be spent besides the face-to-face session with online class discussion through Zoom and posting assignments and offering responses to one another.

Requirements and grading

1. Reading of assigned texts and class participation (including Zooms and Responses) (10%)
 2. Why I Am Starting the D.Min. Essay (15%)
 3. My Leadership Journey Essay (15%)
 4. Conversation Team (10%)
 5. Intensive Week Library Assignments (10%)
 6. Course Project and Paper (40%)
- Grading scale: 100-90 (A), 89-80 (B), 79-75 (C), 74-70 (D), 69 and below (F)

Academic integrity

Academic dishonesty in all its forms is inconsistent with Christian faith and practice and will result in penalties which could include a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, dismissal from the course, and even dismissal from the school.

Credit hour workload

For every course credit hour, the typical student should expect to spend at least three clock hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work, including but not limited to time attending class, as well as out-of-class time spent reading, reviewing, organizing notes, preparing for upcoming quizzes/exams, problem solving, developing and completing projects, and other activities that enhance learning. Thus, for a three-hour course, a typical student should expect to spend at least nine hours per week dedicated to the course.

Students with disabilities

It is the policy of Harding University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact Steve McLeod, the Associate Dean, at 901-761-1353.

Library resources

If you have not taken 5990 (Advanced Theological Research) or took it more than a year ago, go to the HST Web site (www.hst.edu) for information concerning library services to students. Under the “library” tab you will find a link to and instructions for searching the HST online catalog. There are also instructions for using the following databases available through the library: OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCOhost, Infotrac, and Religious and Theological Abstracts. Contact the library for passwords to these databases. Also available are the research guides distributed in 5990. These annotated bibliographies list basic tools you will find helpful in your research.

Pre-Class Assignments

1. ***Introductory Zoom Session – Aug. 18 @ 1:00pm CST – 2:30pm CST.*** Everyone is required to attend. The professor will send out an invite. This will be a chance to introduce one another and review the syllabus and course expectations.
2. ***Why I am Starting the DMin Essay – Due September 1.*** Each student is to read Hunsberger's and Clinton's articles and then write an 6-8 page paper where they share what has led them to start the DMin program at HST. The paper should share a brief background of the student, the rationale for beginning the program, and key goals and dreams that the student hopes God will bring about through this program. The student should interact with the two articles as they share their perspectives.
 - a. ***Each student should offer a brief response to each student's paper (250 words) by Sept. 8.***
3. ***My Leadership Journey Essay – Due Sept. 22.*** Each student is to read Herrington, Taylor, and Creech (HTC) and then write an 8-10 page paper where they detail their own journey of leadership. The paper should recount the student's sense of call, their growth as a leader in ministry, and then offer an assessment of current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as a leader (include findings from StrengthsFinders). The student should interact with HTC as they recount their journey. The student should also include a family diagram (as an appendix) and a brief description of current rhythm of spiritual practices (as an appendix).
 - a. ***Each student should offer a brief response to each student's paper (250 words) by Sept. 29.***
4. ***Develop a Conversation Team and Conduct Initial Meeting Due Oct. 6.*** Each student is to gather a conversation team to assist in this course. The team should consist of 3-5 people who currently are a part of your context. Each member should be fairly engaged in the church and a mix of people should be included. The team is to be convened at least once before Oct. 6.
 - a. ***Each student is to post briefly about their Conversation Team (500 words). The post should introduce the members of the team and a report of the first meeting. This is due Oct. 6.***

Class schedule

The class will meet Monday-Friday (Oct. 9-13) from 8:00am-5:00pm with breaks throughout. Each morning and afternoon will begin with a time of silence, prayer, and dwelling in the Word. A more in-depth schedule will be sent before the residency week.

Oct. 9

Orientation to the DMin program (Sensing)

Oct. 10

Orientation to Library and DMin Research (Vhymeister/Robertson, Sensing, Myers/McLemore)

Oct. 11

DMin Research/Congregational Studies (Sensing/Ammerman)

Oct. 12

The Leadership Journey (Herrington/Taylor/Creech)
StrengthFinders

Oct. 13

The Missionary Congregation (Goheen/Sheridan, Van Gelder)

In-Class Library Assignments

1. ***DMin Dissertation Research*** – Each student will perform a brief assignment demonstrating competence in researching databases to access helpful and pertinent DMin dissertations.
2. ***DMin Dissertation Critique and Presentation*** – Each student will partner with another student to choose a recent HST DMin dissertation to read, review, and critique. Both students will jointly make a 15-minute in-class presentation, utilizing basic Powerpoint, to briefly discuss and analyze the dissertation’s research problem, methodology, theological framework, and results.

After Class Assignments

1. ***Brief Zoom Session – Nov. 10 @ 1:00pm CST-2:30pm CST.*** Everyone is required to attend. The professor will send out an invite. This will be a chance to check-in and receive an update on students’ projects and offer mutual encouragement.
2. ***Congregational Assessment Project and Paper – Due Dec. 4.*** Each student is to offer a detailed assessment, or “thick description” of their current ministry context.
 - a. Utilizing Ammerman and other resources, they are to examine their current ministry context from various angles.
 1. History
 - a. Background of Congregation
 - b. Timeline
 - c. Key Leaders
 2. Context
 - a. Neighborhood and City
 - b. Demographics
 3. Theology
 - a. Key Scriptures
 - b. Mission/Vision
 - c. Embedded theological ideas
 4. Culture
 - a. Key Activities of the Congregation
 - b. Key Rituals
 - c. Key Stories
 5. Process
 - a. How Leadership Functions
 - b. Planning, Decision-making, and Conflict
 6. Resources

- a. Membership and Attendance Trends
 - b. Giving and Budget
 - c. Facilities
 - d. Other
7. Directions for the future
- a. Key Opportunities
 - b. Key Weaknesses
- b. The student will engage the conversation team in this project, inviting them to share perspectives on the various components of the description and to offer feedback.
- c. The student will create this description through historical research, observation of current processes, and key conversations with stakeholders in the church.
- d. The student will create a final paper of 30 pages that details the thick description. The paper will include several components: Congregational History, Context, Theology, Culture, Process, Resources, and Future Directions. Appendices can be added that provide further documentation.
- e. Significant time during the residency will be spent focusing on the project and paper.
- f. Each student should offer a brief post in response to at least three persons' project papers (250 words). This is due Dec. 8.**

Recommended resources

1. DMin Research

- Blythe, Stuart, "DMin as Practical Theology," *Religions* 12 (2021): 12, 31.
- Branson, Mark Lau. *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry, Missional Engagement, and Congregational Change*, 2nd ed. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.
- Coghlan, David and Teresa Brannick. *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*. 5th ed. Los Angeles, Sage, 2019.
- Cresswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018.
- Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011.
- Elliston, Edgar J. *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*, William Carey Library, 2011.
- Greenwood, Davydd J. and Morten Levin. *Introduction to Action Research*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage, 2006.
- Hart, Christopher. *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1999.
- Keifert, Pat, ed. *Testing the Spirits: How Theology Informs the Study of Congregations*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Lincoln, Timothy. *Qualitative Research: A Field Manual for Ministry Students*. Chicago: ATLA Open Press, 2021.

- Rouse, Rick and Craig Van Gelder. *A Field Guide for the Missional Congregation: Embarking on a Journey of Transformation*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.
- Rubin, Herbert J. and Irene S. Rubin. *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012.
- Vincent, Kiernan. *Writing Your Dissertation with Microsoft Word: A Step-By-Step Guide*. Alexandria, VA: Mattily Publishing, 2005.

2. Leadership Development

- Barton, Ruth Haley. *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2018.
- Blackaby, Henry and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda*. Nashville: Broadman, 2001.
- Clinton, J. Robert *The Making of a Leader*, rev.ed. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2012.
- Cormode, Scott. *Making Spiritual Sense: Christian Leaders as Spiritual Interpreters*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006.
- McIntosh, Gary L. and Samuel D. Rima, *Overcoming the Dark Side of Leadership: The Paradox of Personal Dysfunction*. Baker, 1997.
- McNeal, Reggie. *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders*. Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Mulholland, M. Robert. *Invitation to a Journey—A Road Map for Spiritual Formation*. Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Books. 1993.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Eerdmans, 2000.
- Roxburgh, Alan and Fred Romanuk. *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World*, 2nd ed. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2020.
- Scazzero, Peter. *The Emotionally Healthy Leader: Moving from Shallow Christianity to Deep Transformation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015.
- Smith, Stephen. *Inside Job: Doing the Work Within the Work*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015.

3. Missional Theology

- Bosch, David Jacobus. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. American Society of Missiology Series, No. 16. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991.
- Franke, John. *Missional Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020.
- Guder, Darrell, ed. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Hagley, Scott. *Eat What is Set Before You: A Missiology of the Congregation in Context*. Skyforest, CA: Urban Loft Publishers, 2019.
- Hastings, Ross. *Missional God, Missional Church: Hope for Re-Evangelizing the West*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.
- Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

- Roxburgh, Alan J. *The Missionary Congregation, Leadership, & Liminality*. Christian Mission and Modern Culture. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.
- Van Gelder, Craig and Dwight Zscheile. *Participating in God's Mission: A Theological Missiology for the Church in America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018.
- _____, ed. *The Missional Church in Context: Helping Congregations Develop Contextual Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Van Gelder, Craig. *The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000.
- _____. *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.
- Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006.
- _____. *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

Use of technology

Canvas Online Learning System

In addition to the live video platform Zoom.us (see below), this course uses Harding's *Canvas Online Learning System*, which is accessed at <http://elearning.harding.edu>. If you have problems gaining access to Canvas, contact HU technical support (501) 279-4545. You will need your HST username and your password to log into Harding Pipeline. These are the same credentials you use to register for classes via Pipeline.

When you need to contact your professor via email, you may use the email system contained in the Canvas learning management system or email your professor directly at secloer@harding.edu.

Harding University gives each student an email address that also utilizes your user name. Many students use other email addresses as their preferred address. You can set your Harding G-mail account to forward messages to an alternative email address if you want; however, it is your responsibility to check your Harding email account regularly because this is the official Harding email address to which all Harding-related email will be sent.

HST Live Interactive Video Education (HST LIVE) via ZOOM

In addition to Canvas (see above), this HST-Live course is supported with the video platform Zoom.us. For new Zoom platform users, go to <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started> for helpful video tutorials about using this platform.

The HST LIVE/Zoom Meeting ID for this course can be found on Canvas.

Students new to HST LIVE should watch the HST LIVE orientation video before the first day of class. That video can be found at <https://hst.edu/students/canvas-online-learning/>.

Equipment Requirements for LIVE Sections:

- Internet access using a latest version of a web browser such as Firefox (preferred).
- Latest version of Zoom software. This changes periodically without notification. If you already have Zoom, use that account. Basic Zoom.us is available free.
- Laptop or tablet with camera or desktop computer with camera.
- Ear buds with microphone - Apple MD827LL/A EarPods with Remote and Mic work well. Order on Amazon.com, <https://goo.gl/jLYfBG>.
- Additional monitor – Live video conferencing is best facilitated with two monitors.