Master of Divinity: Small Group & Discipleship Ministries Specialization

The Small Group & Discipleship Ministries specialization is designed to equip individuals with the foundational skills and knowledge to serve in the local church or as an assistant or associate pastor of a focused or specialized ministry area, such as small groups or discipleship.

MIN-630 Small Group Ministries 3 credits

The design of this class is to give the pastor an understanding of group dynamics, to develop small groups in church ministry and to develop leadership skills in the congregation.

MIN-643 Educational Ministries for Adults 3 credits

The course engages students in readings, critical reflection, on-line discussion, and reflective and critical writing in areas foundational to adult religious education. Consideration is given to the nature of knowing, adult learning theory, learner-centered teaching, diverse learning styles, and methods of instruction that facilitate adult learning. The course culminates for the student in the development of a written philosophy of adult religious education.

MIN-685 Ministry Residency I 2 credits

The first course of four designed for the MR (ministry residency). The student will get acquainted with their specific ministry culture. Through the student’s ministry, interaction with their mentor, contact with other MR residents, and their own personal reflection, the student will lay a foundation for their journey in a ministry context while gaining feedback that will help them in preparation for ministry. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to articulate goals for personal growth and ministry competency; track and evaluate their time management; establish the discipline of journaling and reflection; apply regular feedback and guidance given from their mentor; and be relationally connected with their ministry context as they invest time and relational energy, establishing relationships and rapport.
MIN-686 Ministry Residency II 2 credits

The second course of four designed for the MR (ministry residency). This course builds upon the competency goals defined in MIN-686 and begins to explore ministry topics that pertain to small group dynamics, working with elders/boards, pastoral duties (leading communion), strategic planning and staff meetings. Upon successful completion of this course students will gain experience leading/facilitating a small group; become familiar with leading communion/a communion service; establish a ministry initiative and strategic plan for implementation; grow in interacting with staff members; and gain experience attending board/elders meetings.

MIN-781 Ministry Residency III 2 credits

The third course of four designed for the MR (ministry residency). This course builds upon the competency goals of the previous two courses and attempts to extend ministry experience into areas of classroom teaching, board/elders meetings, pastoral duties (weddings), implementing a ministry initiative, leadership and pastoral counseling. Upon successful completion of this semester of residency, students will become familiar with preparing for and officiating a wedding; implementing a ministry initiative and strategic plan; learn to recruit, shepherd, and lead a team of volunteers serving their ministry initiative, and navigate pastoral counseling concepts and strategies.

MIN-782 Ministry Residency IV 2 credits

The fourth course of four designed for the MR (ministry residency). This course builds upon the competency goals of the MIN-781 and brings completion to the student’s residency experience. The student’s final semester as a MR resident will focus in areas of personal solitude (through a one-day retreat), preaching, pastoral duties (funerals, dedications/baptisms), assessing and leading a developed ministry initiative, leadership development, “on call” counseling and referrals, gift assessment and strength finder, and summary evaluation of one’s calling and next steps beyond formal ministry training. Upon successful completion of this course, the student will gain experience through preaching opportunities and receive feedback; prepare for and, if the occasion arises, lead a funeral service; prepare for and lead a baptism/dedication service; evaluate their ministry initiative and strategic plan and determine its next steps; evaluate and assess their spiritual gifts and leadership strengths; and intentionally schedule, plan and implement a personal, one-day retreat.
And one of the following:

**MIN-534 Evangelism and Discipleship Ministry** 3 credits

This class is designed to develop the ministry leader’s knowledge and skill in evangelism and discipleship ministries. The course will examine personal as well as corporate models of evangelism and discipleship.

**MIN-554 Theology of Women in Ministry** 3 credits

This course provides an in-depth opportunity for critical reflection about the roles of women in the church, home and community informed and governed by the text of scripture. Substantial attention is given to examining and defining issues related to gender, understanding the impact of culture on identity development and seeking what God intends for women in ministry. Further emphasis is placed on understanding a historical context that reflects the experiences of women throughout the ages beginning with studying the women of the Bible. This course is available in-residence and by distance education.

**MIN-567 Missional Church: Church and Culture — Past and Present** 3 credits

This course is designed to provide a historical overview of the church’s engagement with culture including and leading up to the recent cultural shift from modernity to postmodernity. as well as a historical perspective on the church and culture, the centerpiece of the course is a close-up look at the emerging cultural shifts and their influence on how the church should live out her mission.

**COU-532 Counseling Women through the Life Cycle** 3 credits

This course is designed to help students learn the concepts and skills necessary to counsel women of all ages effectively. Counseling philosophy, theory and ethical standards are studied. The content includes a developmental framework exploring the various dimensions of a woman involving her cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual health. Students will learn to be equipped to intervene with issues related to life adjustment and crisis situations.

**COU-612 Group Counseling Techniques** 3 credits

This course will focus on techniques of group counseling. A variety of group types and styles will be reviewed. Applications of the material are designed for use in a variety of group counseling settings. Group leadership skills will also be emphasized.