

## OUTLINE FOR D.MIN. / D.ED.MIN. PROJECT PROPOSAL 80600 Project Methodology Seminar

ATS standards require that the Doctor of Ministry/Doctor of Educational ministry programs conclude with “the design and completion of a written doctoral-level project that addresses both the nature and the practice of ministry. The project should be of sufficient quality that it contributes to the practice of ministry as judged by professional standards and has the potential for application in other contexts of ministry.” The project should “demonstrate the candidate’s ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, to organize an effective research model, to use appropriate resources, and to evaluate the results, and should reflect the candidate’s depth of theological insight in relation to ministry.” The project includes an oral presentation and evaluation.

To meet this requirement, SBTS professional doctoral students complete a project proposal and written report following this outline:

- I. You will need to submit your work with all “front matter” included such as title page, copyright page, table of contents, etc (see style guide for details).
- II. Title (follow formatting guidelines in *The Southern Seminary Manual of Style*)  
The title must clearly and concisely describe the project. Include the church’s name and location; e.g., “Developing Personal Evangelists at First Baptist Church, Ohio City, Kentucky.”
- III. Purpose (first actual heading for your project proposal)  
Be specific. You should include the target group, what you hope to accomplish and where. The purpose statement should be a single sentence.
- IV. Goals  
State three to five goals. These should answer the question, “What do I want to accomplish at the end of this project?” They will usually take the form of: (1) knowledge goals, (2) change of attitude goals, (3) skills goals. Note: You must specify how each goal will be measured. E.g., “This goal will be measured by...”
- V. Context of the Ministry Project (about 3-5 pages)  
This section should be primarily focused upon issues and descriptors which relate to the purpose of the project. The student may need to provide some basic description of the church, its leadership, demographics, growth patterns, etc but ultimately this section needs to revolve around the purpose of the project. For example, if the purpose of the project has to do with assimilating new members, then this section should include a description and evaluation of the current assimilation process, related statistics, etc.

In other words, this section flows from the purpose/goals and leads the reader to understand the rationale for the study.

## VI. Rationale for the Project

This section is the answer to why you want to do this project. What is the need? Why do you think you should do this now? What benefit do you expect from this project? Convince the reader that this is a very important ministry to this church.

## VII. Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

You will need to define terms that may be ambiguous or unclear, as well as state if you are using a special definition of a term. You will also need to identify and explain your limitations and delimitations. A limitation is something that limits you in your research that is beyond your control (like the fifteen-week duration of the project). A delimitation is a “fence” you put around the research to limit the size of the data pool, scope of intention, etc. (such as choosing to work with only a certain group of people, like senior adults).

## VIII. Research Methodology

State in some detail the process you will follow in securing input, data, and feedback from project participants. Will you do a pre-project survey? Post-project survey? Focus groups? Interviews? Be as specific as possible. What statistics will you use to evaluate whether your “intervention” (your project) made any statistically significant difference? If you are using pre- and post-surveys, it is normally best to match a participant’s pre- and post-survey so that you can determine the statistical change [if this is the case, then you will want to use a t-test for dependent samples].

## IX. Outline of Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

The project should be 80-125 pages in length. Unless otherwise agreed upon, the chapter content should be:

- Chapter 1: Introduction (10-12 pages)
- Chapter 2: Biblical and theological support (20-25 pages)
- Chapter 3: Theoretical/sociological, etc., support (20-25 pages)
- Chapter 4: Details of the project (15 pages)
- Chapter 5: Evaluation of the project (15-20 pages)

**Chapter 2**—List 4-5 major texts that you will cover in an attempt to answer the question, “What does the Bible say about my topic?” Explain your use of each text in a brief sentence. Use sub-points. Be sure to consider Old Testament texts as well as New Testament texts. Be as thorough as you can at this point. Do not leave much to our imagination. This chapter should take on the form of exegeting and applying the text. This will require the use of the most scholarly commentaries—DO NOT USE WEAK commentaries!

In your outline for the proposal, you will need to write an initial “chapter thesis” and then allow your outline to flow from it, demonstrating how you will argue your thesis statement. Your thesis statement will be the central claim of your chapter. The following is an example of a clear chapter thesis statement: “The thesis of this chapter is that Scripture presents parents as the primary disciple makers of their children.”<sup>1</sup> If this were your thesis statement,

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<sup>1</sup>For specific information on developing and constructing thesis statements, See Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 48–61;

the rest of your chapter would flow out from it and demonstrate its validity. After doing this, you will need to list in your outline (not only in the bibliography) the commentaries/resources you plan on using in your writing. A sample portion of a chapter 2 outline is noted below.

## **Chapter 2: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Parents as Primary Disciple Makers<sup>2</sup>**

- I. The thesis of this chapter is that Scripture presents parents as the primary disciple makers of their children.
  - A. Deut 6:1-8 provides some of the clearest evidence of parents as the primary disciple makers. In this passage, parents are called upon to teach the laws and commandments to their children so that they may grow up to fear the Lord. Such a perspective from this passage substantiates the claim that the burden of training children is on their parents.
    1. Christensen, Duane L. *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word Books, 2001.
    2. Craigie, Peter. *The Book of Deuteronomy*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.
    3. Tigay, Jeffrey. *Deuteronomy*. The JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: JPS Society, 2003.
    4. Weinfeld, Moshe. *Deuteronomy 1-11*. Anchor Bible Series. New York: Doubleday, 1991.

Note that the sample outline above begins with a thesis and is followed by the explanation of a verse that demonstrates the validity of the thesis. After doing so, a brief list of 4-5 scholarly commentaries that will be employed in this section are listed below subpoint A. But of course your outline would not stop at here. You would have several other subpoints that you would employ to validate your thesis—each of them also following the pattern noted above.

**Chapter 3**—The goal of this chapter (which is often the most difficult chapter to outline) is to answer the question, “What else do I need to study to complete this project?” The materials often come from secular sources, though it is not mandatory that they do so. Provide a clear outline indicating the material you study to complete this chapter. You should be able to write your chapter simply by filling in the details of the outline you provide. As with the chapter 2 outline, you will list your chapter thesis, followed by the

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Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 127–50.

<sup>2</sup>Much of the creative inspiration for this sample outline comes from from Michael Paul Rodriguez’s project proposal draft, *Discipling Parents to Be Primary Disciple Makers at First Baptist Church, Andalusia, AL*.

subpoints that will validate it. After doing this, you will list 4-5 sources that you will employ in this section. The difference in the chapter 3 outline is that the subpoints will not revolve around biblical verses but theoretical/sociological propositions, and your sources will not necessarily be biblical/theological in nature but theoretical/sociological. In short, the format of the chapter 3 outline will follow that of the chapter 2 outline—the main difference being that the chapter 3 outline is theoretical/sociological in essence not biblical/theological.

**Chapter 4**—Describe your project in detail. Your goal should be to provide enough information that someone could take your chapter and duplicate your project in his church. The outline should clearly indicate what will take place during each of the fifteen weeks of the project.

**Chapter 5**—Evaluate your project by answering *at least* the following questions:

- Did the project fulfill its purpose?
  - Were the goals met?
  - What were the strengths of the project?
  - What were the weaknesses of the project?
  - What would you do differently if you were to do the project again?
  - What did you learn about God, His church, His Word, etc., through this project (theological reflection)?
  - What did you learn about yourself as a minister (personal reflection)?
- The outline (read: headings) for Chapter 5 should look as follows:

- I. Introduction appropriate
- II. Evaluation of the project's purpose
- III. Evaluation of the project's goals
- IV. Strengths of the project
- V. Weaknesses of the project
- VI. What I would do differently
- VII. Theological reflections
- VIII. Personal reflections
- IX. Conclusion

#### X. Calendar

Include the following dates:

1. Date you expect to receive approval of the proposal (be reasonable and include time for the full process to take place—usually between six weeks to two months).
2. Date your plan to start chapter 2.
3. Date your plan to finish chapter 2 and submit it to your faculty supervisor.
4. Date you plan to start chapter 3.
5. Date you plan to finish chapter 3 and submit it to your faculty supervisor.
6. Date you plan to start chapter 4.
7. Date you plan to finish chapter 4 and submit it to your faculty supervisor.
8. Date you plan to start chapter 5.

9. Date you plan to finish chapter 5 and submit it to your faculty supervisor.
10. Date you plan to graduate.

You will also be required to submit a detailed writing plan for chapter 2 with allotted hours and self-imposed writing deadlines (an example will be provided).

XI. Research Instruments

Include all research instruments (e.g., surveys, focus group questions, etc.) that you propose to use in the project. Be aware that all instruments must be approved by your faculty supervisor and the SBTS Research Ethics Committee prior to their use.

XII. Bibliography (at least 50-75 entries)

Include books, periodical articles, dissertations, other projects, and any other material you think is germane to the project. List the bibliography by chapters. Include at least three commentaries for each book of the Bible used in the chapter. Be sure your commentaries are academic. You may choose your own theological position, but be informed of others.

XIII. List of Appendices (if necessary)

XIV. Vita Sheet (follow the guidelines on p. 18 of *The Southern Seminary Manual of Style*).