



**DOCTOR OF COUNSELING  
HANDBOOK**

*He shepherded them with a pure heart and guided them with his skillful hands.*

**PSALM 78:72, HCSB**

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## WELCOME!

The Doctor of Counseling (DCoun) degree offered through Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is for persons seeking a high level of competence in the practice of counseling. The Higher Learning Commission recognizes the Doctor of Counseling degree as a professional degree in counseling. The degree clearly delineates the difference between the practice of counseling in mental health settings and research in counseling in the academic environment. The DCoun Degree is equivalent in quality to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). It differs significantly from the PhD in that the PhD seeks primarily to understand the nature of things, with application in the clinical setting a secondary concern. The DCoun has a different focus; the application of evidence based research to the clinical setting. Therefore, the contribution is primarily to the practice of counseling. The counseling dissertation is research based. The structure conforms to normal research based dissertations in which there is a hypothesis, research design, and a metric to accept or reject the hypothesis. The dissertation is sufficient in scope and value to merit the conferring of a terminal degree.

Noteworthy academic achievement is necessary for admission into the Doctor of Counseling program. Consequently, only students who have demonstrated above average academic accomplishments in a Master of Counseling program are eligible for admission to the Doctor of Counseling program.

The intent of this handbook is to give you a big picture view of the Doctor of Counseling program with sufficient details to provide answers to your questions as you consider entering the program and as a guide through the program. When you complete your coursework, and enter the dissertation phase of your program, you will receive this handbook's companion, the "Doctoral Dissertation Guide." Both this handbook and the guide will be helpful as you make the journey. Note that this handbook provides helpful information about the dissertation phase for you to know from the very beginning of your doctoral journey. This

information will prompt you to think now about a topic you would like investigate. Allow each seminar you take to stimulate research topics you could use for your research and dissertation. As you write seminar papers, realize that they are practice opportunities for writing your dissertation. When you choose topics for your seminars, consider topics that will relate to your dissertation. While these papers will not become part of your dissertation, the research you do for these papers will assist you in determining the feasibility of your research topic.

Rest assured that those of us in the Doctoral Office are here to assist your throughout your doctoral work. We welcome your questions and requests for assistance. You will also find helpful MBTS web site information to use throughout the program including a frequently updated seminar calendar for you to use as you select seminars and enroll each semester. Let us keep the lines of communication open. Please know that we pray for you and your family and consider it a privilege to assist you on your doctoral journey.

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## SOUTHERN BAPTIST SEMINARIES PURPOSE STATEMENT

Southern Baptist theological seminaries exist to prepare God-called men and women for vocational service in Baptist churches and in other Christian ministries throughout the world through programs of spiritual development, theological studies, and practical preparation in ministry.

## **MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY MISSION STATEMENT**

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary serves the church by biblically educating God-called men and women to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

## **MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY CORE VALUES**

Veritas / Truth – “Know”

*We believe that the Bible is the inspired, authoritative, inerrant word of God, and thus it instructs, motivates, and guides us in all areas of ministry. We are committed to helping students to understand, communicate, practice, and defend Biblical truth.*

Pietas / Devotion – “Be”

*We seek to model and to instill in the lives of our students supreme devotion to the Lord. We seek to provide an atmosphere for students that cultivates consistent, disciplined, and balanced spiritual growth that validates their call to ministry. We strive to accomplish this through Biblically based teaching and by providing opportunities to develop a lifestyle of Christian love and integrity. We believe Christ-like relationships with God, family, church, community, and world are essential and should be cultivated.*

Missio / Evangelism – “Do”

*We believe it is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the Gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every Christian to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

*We believe in the primacy of the local church in the work of evangelism. We prepare students to worship God, evangelize the lost, edify believers, and establish biblically-based churches for the purpose of glorifying God.*

*We prepare students to be leaders who demonstrate commitment to ministerial calling, cultural*

*sensitivity, and doctrinal integrity from a Southern Baptist perspective. We seek to develop leaders who exemplify and communicate the Great Commission in their ministry settings.*

## **DOCTORAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

Persons admitted into one of the Professional Doctorates are expected to demonstrate:

1. The capacity to draw on the resources of the classical areas of theological study;
2. The capacity to analyze the needs of the community and to lead a group in developing program plans to meet those needs;
3. The capacity to organize and motivate others to carry out such program plans;
4. The capacity to do original research;
5. The capacity to function with a high level of competence in their field of ministry;
6. The capacity to move beyond routinely accepted techniques of ministry toward new dimensions, methods, and outreach.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the professional doctoral studies program is to develop Christian leaders through doctoral level research, instruction, exegesis, project development, reflection, and evaluation.

## **GOALS**

Students graduating from a professional doctoral studies program will:

1. Demonstrate competence in applying theological convictions to any ministry context to which they are called;
2. Interpret and apply biblical texts to life situations by demonstrating accurate, classically defined discipline in the handling of sacred Scriptures;
3. Ethically and effectively lead Christian organizations in pursuing Christ’s commission and commandments;
4. Apply findings from field research and exegesis to their ministry setting;
5. Demonstrate the ability to integrate the advanced development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes through development of a project and doctoral dissertation; and defend their findings through a process of oral defense of their dissertation.

## ADMISSION

### Admission Procedures for US Citizens:

United States citizens seeking admission to professional doctoral studies programs must:

1. Have a Master's Degree in Counseling that is equivalent to the MBTS MACO degree. Individuals lacking the theology component may take 6 hours in theology concurrently with doctoral seminars.
2. Request, complete, and submit an application for doctoral studies;
3. Request and submit official transcripts from all academic institutions previously attended;
4. Submit a personal essay of approximately ten (double-spaced) pages outlining the student's understanding of salvation and Christian ministry, identifying personal and professional goals, and explaining how entrance into the doctoral studies program will help the student accomplish these goals.
5. Satisfy the admissions standard of a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale. English program applicants whose GPA is 2.75-2.99 must also submit a Miller Analogies Test score and be interviewed via phone by the Doctoral Studies Committee member for consideration. Non-English program applicants whose GPA is 2.75-2.99, may submit, in lieu of the Miller Analogy Test, a 12-15 page research paper on a topic of MBTS choosing to be graded using a standardized grading rubric, along with a formal phone interview by the faculty member. The required testing fee is \$90.

### Admission Procedures for International Students:

1. Complete items 1-5 specified above for US citizens;
2. Submit TOEFL scores to the Doctoral Studies Committee (The minimum score for admission is 550 on the paper test and 213 on the computer test.);
3. Submit a completed International Student Certification of Finances form; and
4. Provide evidence of full compliance with all legal issues set forth in US law as applicable to degree-granting institutions.

### Admission Notification:

The Doctoral Studies Committee may grant admission under four different categories; unconditional, probationary, admission under special circumstances and non-degree seeking. Upon admission, the student will be enrolled in a no-credit "Doctoral Admitted" class that includes documents and other requirements. Billing for the program fee

will start at this time unless the student makes prior arrangements in writing with the doctoral office, and those arrangements approved by the Doctoral Studies Committee. At no time will a student be allowed to postpone enrollment more than 12 months.

**Unconditional Admission:** Unconditional admission is granted when the applicant has a Master's Degree in Counseling that is equivalent to the MBTS MACO degree.

**Probationary Admission:** Probationary admission may be granted when the applicant's GPA is 2.75-2.99 on a 4.0 scale (1.75-3.0 on a 3.0 scale) along with a Miller Analogies Test (MAT) score of 400 or above (or the academic indicator assigned by the Doctoral Studies Committee) is submitted with a written explanation identifying why the applicant's GPA is below 3.0. The successful completion of two seminars will remove the probationary admission.

**Conditional Admission:** Applicants wishing to pursue a Doctor of Counseling, who hold an MA or MS in Counseling but lack the theology requirement of the MBTS MACO, may satisfy the theology requirement by taking 12-hours of theology concurrently while taking DCoun seminars.

**Non-Degree Seeking:** Professional doctoral (DCoun) applicants who have completed an approved master's degree in a related discipline, have maintained a GPA of 3.0 or higher in their graduate studies, and are working on the MACO equivalency may enroll in one professional doctoral seminar per semester as a non-degree-seeking students while completing the MACO equivalency. Non-degree-seeking students desiring to complete more than 12 hours of seminars must obtain approval of the Doctoral Studies Committee prior to taking each additional seminar.

Completion of seminars as a non-degree-seeking student does not guarantee final admission into a professional doctoral program nor does it waive any other admissions requirements. Seminars taken as a non-degree-seeking student may be applied toward the DCoun program provided the seminars taken satisfy specific DCoun program requirements. The doctoral program fee at the time of final admission will be pro-rated by the fees paid for credit hours taken as a non-degree-seeking student by eliminating the final monthly payments to be made at the end of the payment process and working backward toward the first payments.

**Non-Degree Seeking Procedure:**

Completion of the Non-Degree Seeking Application and a \$25 non-refundable application fee will be required. Priority is given to degree-seeking students admitted to the doctoral studies program. Students will be allowed to enroll in seminars on a space available basis and only with the Director of Doctoral Studies approval.

Students seeking credit as non-degree seeking students will pay per credit-hour. Those seeking to take a class for credit must complete all of the course requirements as outlined in the course syllabus.

**Denial of Admission:** Applicants denied admission, and who wish to reapply, must wait at least one year before doing so. All requirements not previously met must be satisfied before admission is possible.

**Auditing for Doctor of Counseling:**

Students seeking to audit a course at the non-degree seeking status will be assessed a fee of \$125 per credit hour. Written permission to audit by the professor is required, and class discussions and activities of auditing students are at the discretion of the professor..

## ENROLLMENT

**Enrollment Requirements:**

The time for completing the Doctor of Counseling program is no fewer three years, mandatory completion within four years.

All DCoun students must successfully complete at least 9 hours per academic year. If a student cannot maintain this standard, the student must submit a notification and a written explanation to the Doctoral Studies Committee. Students not meeting this standard will be considered for Interrupted Status (first year) or Inactive Status (subsequent times) only for reasons of health, relocation, IMB/Missionary service or military service.

**Definition of Student Status for Doctor of Counseling Students**

For the purposes of Federal Student Financial Aid, the following student status' are used to determine eligibility for loans as well as to determine the cost of attendance for Doctor of Counseling students.

1. **Full-time Status.** For federal student aid purposes, Doctor of Counseling students are considered full-time when enrolled for 6 or more credit hours a semester.

2. **Half-time Status.** For federal student aid purposes Doctor of Counseling students are considered half-time when enrolled for 3 to 5 credit hours a semester.
3. **Less than Half-time Status.** By the very nature of the program, doctoral students cannot be less than half time.

**Interrupted Status:** Interrupted status is granted for one year (up to two semesters). A \$250.00 per semester fee is charged to the student's account if requested before the start of the term. The fee is \$500 if requested after the start of the term. No academic work may be done while the student is on interrupted status.

**Inactive Status:** Inactive status may be granted for up to three years (six semesters). A \$500.00 per year fee is charged to the student's account. No academic work may be done while the student is on inactive status.

All students in the research phase, regardless of status, must show satisfactory academic progress by submitting Research Phase Progress Reports which are due each semester (June 15 and December 15) while in the research phase. The Doctoral Studies Committee will consider students who fail to maintain contact for withdrawal from the program. Minimum contact is considered to be once a semester.

*Fees are subject to change by action of the Doctoral Studies Committee or Board of Trustees.*

## STUDENT PORTAL AND BLACKBOARD ACCOUNTS

The new login ID is formulated as follows: the first initial of the student's first name, last name, and the last five (5) digits of the student ID number (found on the back of a student ID). For example, student John Doe with a student ID of 1001 602 15394 would have a login ID of jdoe15394. This login ID will be used to access the student's account on the Student Portal:

[https://portal.mbts.edu/student\\_portal](https://portal.mbts.edu/student_portal)

and also provide access to the Blackboard system:

<http://online.mbts.edu>

The existing password for the Student Portal account will remain the same and will be migrated to the account in Blackboard.

**Student E-Mail accounts**

A student e-mail account will be created for each Midwestern student. The account will use the same

convention as the login ID. Using the John Doe example, the e-mail account would be:  
jdoe15394@student.mbts.edu

Student email accounts can be accessed at:  
<http://mail.student.mbts.edu>

Please note that ALL college, seminary, and course related e-mail correspondence uses the new student e-mail account. If a student desires to utilize a secondary e-mail address (i.e. an established personal e-mail account), simply login to the MBTS student e-mail account and forward correspondence to the appropriate account.

Additional benefits to having an educational institution e-mail account include the following:

- Microsoft Office Professional Academic 2010 and Windows 7 Professional :  
<http://www.microsoft.com/student/office/en-us/default.aspx>
- Amazon Student:  
<http://www.amazon.com/gp/student/signup/info>
- Sam's Club Collegiate Membership:  
<http://www.samsclub.com/sams/pagedetails/content.jsp?pageName=compareMembershipsBenefitsColl>

Many other vendors and retailers offer benefits to students with a valid educational institution e-mail address (.edu).

### **Student/Campus Wireless Internet Access (Wi-Fi)**

MBTS has modified the wireless connectivity on campus to provide a simpler, consistent way to connect to the internet. Access is provided via a WPA-secured network that allows users to save their settings, allowing access each time students are on-campus without providing credentials. The login information for the new student wireless is:

**SSID: StudentWireless**  
**Password/key: mbtswireless**

Placards are located throughout the campus with this information.

Additional information regarding all these services can be found in the Student Technology Services Guide available for viewing and download on the Current Students section of the MBTS website:  
[http://www.mbts.edu/current\\_students](http://www.mbts.edu/current_students).

Upon enrollment in the first course, students have access to the student portal. Students must pay close attention to login to the correct semester or enrollment appears to be incorrect. After login, follow the link at the lower left of the menu titled

“My Courses”. The syllabus and other resources for the course will be located under “Course Documents” as posted by the professor. Please note that the system defaults to the current term, so to find a January course, the viewer will need to change the parameters to the Spring term of the correct year.

If you have any further questions about the student portal, please contact the MBTS IT department at 816-414-3763 or [helpdesk@mbts.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mbts.edu).

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Reasons for placement on academic probation include, but are not limited to:

1. Students earning a grade of B-, C+, or C in any seminar;
2. Withdrawing from two seminars;
3. Falling one semester behind in financial obligations to the school;
4. First warning of minor or unintentional violation of the seminary statement on integrity;
5. There is a moral failure (fiscal, relationally or otherwise) unbecoming of a Christian minister.

Academic probation affects not only the status in the student database, but can also affect a student's ability to receive or qualify for financial aid.

## **TERMINATION**

Reasons for termination from doctoral studies include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to notify the Doctoral Studies Committee of any significant change in ministry status or location
2. Having an accumulated GPA in doctoral studies of less than 3.0
3. Earning a grade below B in two seminars
4. Immoral conduct; Significant or repeat violation of the seminary statement on integrity
5. Failure to enroll in and successfully complete at least two seminars per academic year
6. Falling two or more semesters behind, or failure to pay tuition and fees
7. Failure to apply for reactivation at the end of interrupted or inactive status
8. Failing any seminar (grade C- or lower)
9. Conduct unbecoming of a representative of the Gospel
10. Withdrawing from three seminars once enrolled
11. Plagiarism

Requests for appeal must be made in writing to the program director or Director of Doctoral Studies.

## TRANSFER OF CREDITS

Students may transfer doctoral level electives from other accredited institutions. Please note that transferring hours from another Doctor of Counseling or related program will not reduce the cost of the program, as it is based upon a “program fee” and not a per credit fee.

Requests for transfer are submitted in writing to the Director of Doctoral Studies, preferably within 6 months of application. The Doctoral Studies director and committee members evaluate all cases of transfer students from other accredited institutions individually. For this evaluation, the student will submit transcripts from all accredited institutions of higher education. As in accordance with the catalog, the following stipulations also apply:

Midwestern transfers a limited number of credit hours for work taken at other accredited institutions.

- (1) The student may transfer a maximum of six-hours of the credits required for the DCoun degree at Midwestern.
- (2) Seminars transferred must be equivalent in content and requirements to DCoun seminars in the Midwestern catalog.
- (3) Only seminars used to meet Midwestern degree requirements are transferrable and recorded on the student’s permanent record/transcript.
- (4) Only seminars where a grade of B or higher will transfer.

## DIRECTED STUDY

A student with a specialized skill, interest, or need in a specific area may submit a request to the Director of Doctor of Counseling program. The student will work with the Director of Doctor of Counseling program to develop the specific learning contract for the directed study.

Students completing an internship are required to complete the number of hours required for licensing in the state they are seeking licensure.

Students completing a seminar needed for licensing will comply with the following requirements for a directed study:

1. The directed study must be conducted at a doctoral level;
2. Requirements (contact hours and work load) must be commensurate with those of Midwestern’s

seminars, including a minimum of 500 pages per credit hour and a significant exit paper of no less than 20 pages;

3. Significant interaction with professionals in the area of study;
4. The syllabus and the name of a recommended professor-of-record must be submitted to the Director of Doctoral Studies by the student and the DCoun Program Director for his approval.

Additionally, the student is responsible for any costs incurred in completing the directed study including the directed study fee (\$500) billed to the student’s account in addition to the normal tuition. The period for completing a directed study is within the semester, or a period agreed to by the Director of the Doctor of Counseling program and the student. The student will be working closely with a Midwestern Professor of Record through the duration of the directed study, as appointed by the Director. A copy of all work related to the study must be sent to the Professor of Record and to the Doctoral Studies Office for the permanent file where it can be reviewed by the Director of Doctoral Studies upon completion.

## DOCTOR OF COUNSELING TUITION

*Current Doctor of Counseling tuition breakdowns are updated regularly on the website, [www.mbts.edu](http://www.mbts.edu)*

If a student changes status (such as SBC to non-SBC), the student will be liable for the difference or discount effective the semester following the change. Spouses enrolled in classes in the College or Seminary may qualify for a tuition reduction. Please contact the Doctoral Studies Office for details.

\*Students who have not completed the doctoral program within the prescribed timeframe will be assessed a \$1000.00 maintenance fee each subsequent semester.

## SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Midwestern Seminary offers a one-time Church Match Scholarship to new full time Seminary admits with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. The seminary will match \$250.00 for any student whose church donates \$500.00 toward their education. To receive the match, the church sends a cover letter identifying the student receiving the award along with a check

payable to MBTS, with the student's name in the memo line, to:

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
 Attn: Business Office  
 5001 North Oak Trafficway  
 Kansas City, MO 64118

Additional questions and clarifications regarding scholarships should be directed to the Financial Aid Office.

### GRADE SCALE

|               |             |             |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Grading Scale | A<br>97-100 | A-<br>96-94 |
| B+<br>90-93   | B<br>87-89  | B-<br>85-86 |
| C+<br>82-84   | C<br>78-81  | C-<br>76-77 |
| D+<br>73-75   | D<br>69-72  | D-<br>65-68 |

### SEMINAR STRUCTURE

To enroll in a seminar the student must register for the seminar by email, fax or letter prior to the published enrollment deadline. The student may enroll using the enrollment form or by sending an email message to the office of doctoral studies. Phone enrollment not accepted.

Registration after the first scheduled day of a seminar (the start date for pre-seminar work, not the first day on campus) up to the fourteenth day will incur a \$50 late registration fee.

Students withdrawing from or changing a seminar date once enrolled must do so by email or letter to the Doctoral Office. The following fee schedule will apply to each withdrawal request:

1. Withdrawal or Change request received 60 or more days prior to seminar: No fee
2. Withdrawal or Change request received after the end of the first day of classes through the first 50% of the class prior to seminar: \$150.00
3. Withdrawal or Change request received after the first 50% of the class through the first day of class instruction: \$250.00
4. Withdrawing after the first six class sessions will result in an F for the seminar and no withdrawal status.
5. When there is pre-class work required, students not completing pre-class work may be withdrawn from the course with the grade of F.

Students who withdraw from two seminars are placed on academic probation and students who withdraw from three seminars will be dropped from the program. Fees will be automatically billed to the student's business office account upon notification of withdrawal from a seminar.

<sup>1</sup> After meeting all the requirements, the student will be registered in DR40983 DCoun Dissertation – Ongoing Research for 1 credit hour each semester until the dissertation is completed. When the student is ready for the

### DEGREE PROGRAM

#### Doctor of Counseling

| Location            | Number               | Title  | Hrs       |
|---------------------|----------------------|--|-----------|
| Campus              | DR32020              | Orientation and Christian Worldview colloquium   | 1         |
| Campus              | DR32266              | Counselor Supervision & Health   | 3         |
| Online              | DR32274              | Advanced Marriage & Family Therapy   | 3         |
| Campus              | DR32268              | Practice Building  | 2         |
| Online              | DR32276              | Advanced Diagnosis & Treatment of Addiction Disorders  | 3         |
| Campus              | DR32260              | Advanced Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment  | 3         |
| Campus              | DR32270              | Advanced Diagnosis and Treatment Planning  | 3         |
| Online              | DR32272              | Advanced Psychotherapy & Treatment   | 3         |
| Online              | DR30262              | Advanced Biological Basis of Behavior  | 3         |
| Campus              | DR32090              | Dissertation Research Design & Statistics  | 3         |
| Oral Exam On Campus | DR40993 <sup>1</sup> | Dissertation: Independent research and data gathering for the dissertation and oral defense. | 0-3       |
| <b>TOTAL HOURS:</b> |                      |  | <b>30</b> |

### DISSERTATION OVERVIEW

dissertation defense, the student will be registered in DR 40993 Dissertation-DCoun for the remaining hours in order to receive a total of 3 credit hours.

The capstone of the Doctor of Counseling is the dissertation. This research advances the area of professional counseling. It contributes to the process of evidence-based treatment. Students will identify an area of interest, formulate a hypothesis, design a research strategy, collect and analyze data, and draw a conclusion.

The following information provides a brief chapter-by-chapter guide for writing a dissertation. Dissertation Research Design & Statistics, DR32090 is the on-campus course that explains the dissertation procedure in detail.

## **Chapter 1**

### **The Introduction**

The introduction is where you introduce your research topic. The introduction provides enough information so that scholars and more particularly someone unfamiliar with your field can read the dissertation and understand the importance of your work.

Chapter 1 serves two purposes. 1) It serves as an overview of what you are trying to accomplish in your dissertation and 2) it provides supportive information needed to understand your research. Your introduction should explain:

- What topic you'll be addressing,
- How your research fits within your field,
- Why your work is important, and
- What your research question is.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

The literature review provides the supportive background for your study and for those who read your dissertation. The literature review contains primary sources that depict the significant research done in your field of inquiry. In addition, the literature provides the platform that supports your research and how your research fits within the existing body of information. The literature review is not a listing of sources but carefully selected research that identifies theories, competing positions, and accepted methodology related to your work. DR32090 presents the several ways to organize the literature review.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

This chapter explains how you collected your data. It is in this chapter that you explain your reasoning

behind your methodology, why you selected a focus group, survey, and metric used to analyze the data. In addition, you explain how you arrived at your method of study and how you designed the study.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

Chapter 4 is the results section. This is where you present the result of your research, not analyze your data. Here you simply present the information you collected. In this chapter, you aggregate your data into tables or figures and present the results of any statistical analysis. There is no interpretation of data in Chapter 4.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

Chapter 5 is the capstone chapter of your dissertation. Here you discuss and interpret the data. It is here that you accept or reject your hypothesis. You present a convincing argument for your conclusion. Following the discussion and conclusion, you present limitations and problems concerning your research. Lastly, you make recommendations for future research.

You are encouraged to begin thinking about a research topic as you begin your course of study. Be alert in class for the birth of a research topic. You may discover a topic while treating patients or while talking with colleagues.

## **COUNSELING DISSERTATION SCHEDULE**

Before you begin the dissertation, you must complete all of the doctoral seminars. Only at this time has the student received the formal education needed to complete a dissertation. This requirement exists to prevent the student from the disappointment of false starts and backtracking.

The following information provides an overview of the dissertation phases with some steps in detail. Full details for each step are located in the "Doctoral Dissertation Guide."

## Research Phase Steps

- **Step 1: Looking for Challenges, Needs, and Opportunities**
  - A. Find clinical needs within your professional counseling.
  - B. Collect considerable evidence to substantiate the challenge, need, opportunity.
  - C. Propose a hypothesis to the challenge, need, and/or opportunity.
  
- **Step 2: Writing the Dissertation Worksheet**
  - A. During the Dissertation Preparation Seminar, the researcher completes the Project Worksheet (Appendix A: Dissertation Worksheet).
  - B. Researcher submits the Project Worksheet to the Dissertation Preparation Seminar professor for feedback.
  - C. The Dissertation Preparation Seminar professor provides feedback to the researcher.
  - D. The researcher makes revisions and submits the final Dissertation Worksheet to the Dissertation Preparation Seminar professor.
  - E. The Dissertation Preparation Seminar professor approves the worksheet and submits it to the Doctoral Studies Committee.
  - F. The Doctoral Studies Committee reviews the worksheet to determine a dissertation committee chair and second reader.
  - G. The Doctoral Studies Committee assigns a dissertation committee to the researcher.
  - H. The Doctoral Studies Office emails the Dissertation Worksheet to assigned members of the dissertation committee to ask them if they would be willing to serve on this committee.
  - I. When the dissertation committee is set, the Doctoral Studies Office emails the researcher contact information for the dissertation committee.
  - J. The dissertation committee chair initiates the work with the researcher and second reader to finalize the Project Worksheet.
  - K. When the dissertation committee approves the Dissertation Worksheet, the dissertation committee chair sends a letter or email to the researcher with a cc to the dissertation committee second reader, the Doctoral Studies Office, and the researcher to confirm the approval to proceed with preparing the Dissertation Proposal.

- **Step 3: Writing the Dissertation Proposal**

(Chapters 1-3)

- A. Writing the **Dissertation Proposal** and a must wait until the receipt of the Dissertation Worksheet approval letter or email from the dissertation committee.
  - B. The researcher submits a review draft of the Dissertation Proposal and a Dissertation Implementation Schedule to the dissertation committee for feedback and guidance.
  - C. The dissertation committee has sixty-(60) days to finalize the Dissertation Proposal with the researcher. Please note that no Dissertation started—or completed—before the dissertation committee approval will count toward the degree requirements.
  - D. The researcher has the Dissertation Proposal reviewed by a Turabian reader or proof readers.
- 
- **Step 4: Requesting Dissertation Proposal Approval**
    - A. Within the allotted sixty (60) days, the researcher must submit the official Dissertation Proposal and dissertation Implementation Schedule to the dissertation committee members. This submission needs to be done ten months or more prior to one's anticipated graduation.
    - B. With the approval of the dissertation committee, the chair sends the approved draft of the Dissertation Proposal with a letter or email to the Doctoral Studies Office, the Director of Doctoral Studies, and the researcher confirming that the dissertation committee has approved the Dissertation Proposal.
  
  - **Step 5: Implementing the Research**
    - A. Implementation begins as soon as the dissertation committee approves the Dissertation Proposal and documentation is filed with the Doctoral Studies Office.
    - B. The researcher follows the Implementation Schedule as planned with the Project Proposal.

## Dissertation Phase Steps

- **Step 1: Writing the Dissertation**
  - A. After gathering data, the researcher may write Chapters 4 and 5.
  - B. The researcher and the dissertation committee determine how often they will communicate during the writing process.

- C. Once written, the researcher's responsibility is to have the dissertation proofed and edited by trusted friends or a professional editor.
  - D. When deemed grammatically correct, the researcher is responsible to engage a Turabian expert to read the paper for style and formatting concerns. This expert needs to fill out the Turabian Certification form to submit with the dissertation.
  - E. Now is the time to request a Graduation Checklist from the Doctoral Studies Office.
  - F. The following tasks take place by February 15 or September 15 of the semester in which one intends to graduate.
    - 1) Send two hard copies and one electronic copy of the completed dissertation (must be postmarked no later than February 15 or September 15) to the Doctoral Studies Office.
    - 2) The Application for Graduation is due to the Doctoral Studies Office.
  - G. Within three (3) working days, the Doctoral Studies Office will send the two hard copies to the dissertation committee members.
- binding with an additional \$15 binding and \$8 shipping charge per book. The additional copies are not required to be on cotton rag paper.
  - (b) Cotton rag paper must be at least 20 pound weight with 50% (or greater) cotton content. Look for "fine business paper" or "resume stationary."
- B. The researcher also needs to pay all fees by May 1 or December 1 to the Doctoral Studies Office.
    - 1. Binding and microfilming fee: \$75.00 (Due the Doctoral Studies Office)
    - 2. Graduation Fee: \$150.00
      - (a) Billed directly to your MBTS account
      - (b) This fee includes the cap, gown, and hood rental
  - C. Check with the Doctoral Studies Office to make sure your MBTS account is paid in full so that you can receive your degree.

### **Dissertation Topics**

- **Step 2: Defending the Dissertation**
  - A. Upon receipt of the dissertation, the dissertation committee will have thirty-(30) days to evaluate the dissertation by using the Professional Doctorate Dissertation Rubric.
  - B. The dissertation committee chair schedules the oral defense with the second reader and the researcher. The Doctoral Studies Office is available to assist with reserving a meeting room on campus.
  - C. The oral defense must take place before April 1<sup>st</sup> or November 1<sup>st</sup> of the semester in which one intends to graduate.

- **Step 3: Submitting the Final Dissertation**
  - A. Once approved, the dissertation committee, the researcher submits four hard copies and one electronic copy as follows to the Doctoral Studies Office no later than May 1 or December 1 of the semester of graduation. When received after May 1 or December 1, the researcher will pay shipping fees.
    - 1. PDF copy for microfilm
    - 2. One hard copy on cotton rag paper for binding your copy
    - 3. Three hard copies on cotton rag paper for binding copies for the Doctoral Studies Office and the MBTS library.
      - (a) It is acceptable at this time to requesting additional copies for

The context for the DCoun dissertation is anything related to the practice of Professional Counseling. How to improve the mental health services to patients are a viable research topic. The goal is to contribute scientific evidence to support treatments for patients. Here are some thoughts for selecting your research topic.

1. Think about creating rather than finding a topic. You may have discovered a practice while treating patients that seems productive. This is the time to discover evidence that supports or rejects your theory.
2. Is there a topic that your mind gravitates to at idle times? When you think about the topic, do you feel excited? Do you think your theory could translate into practice?
3. Is there a study you would like to replicate? Sometimes reexamining a study using technology reveals additional insights useful for treating patients.
4. Review the professional counseling literature to find research suggestions from professionals in the mental health field.

It is important to select a topic that excites you since you will work with the topic for a long time. Most importantly, the topic should advance or contribute to the counseling profession and provide evidence for helping patients.

**MIDWESTERN BAPTIST  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
A STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY  
IN SEMINARY STUDIES**

The fundamental purpose of the Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is to assist the development of Christian ministers who are equipped to make responsible and relevant witness to the redeeming gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of the vastly complex and rapidly changing modern culture in which God has granted us the grace of life. In accordance with this purpose, therefore, the Seminary dearly cherishes and earnestly seeks to foster among all its students the qualities of spiritual dedication, creative imagination, and personal integrity. Consequently, the administration and faculty of the Seminary expect, as a minimum requirement, that each student shall do his *own work*. That is to say, the student is to let every test and examination reflect *only* the best results of his own disciplined study. Likewise, every term paper and written report must represent the student's own original approach to the task assigned; and it should not contain either direct quotations or paraphrases of any part of any other writer's book or paper, published or unpublished, for which due credit is not given to the original author. *Such credit should be acknowledged by proper citation (in text, footnotes, and bibliography) of the sources employed.*

Unless otherwise instructed by the professor under whose direction the paper is prepared, *Turabian's Manual for Writers* (with such supplements as may be prepared by the faculty) will serve as a guide to correct form in citing all sources.

It cannot be exaggerated how strongly the Seminary deplores plagiarism in all its forms. Dishonesty is incompatible with the very purpose for which a student avails himself of its ministries. It is to be desired that one remain without a degree rather than to obtain it by dishonest means, for Christianity cannot countenance conduct that contradicts its basic tenets.\*

It is further to be hoped that each individual will recognize a responsibility for his brother as well as for himself in all such matters.

Adopted by the Faculty  
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
October 5, 1961

\*The Doctoral Studies Committee adopted the following addendum on September 29, 2003 for inclusion in the Manual for Doctoral Studies.

Because plagiarism runs counter to the purpose of higher learning, due to the increased temptation to plagiarize presented by the Internet, and due to an increase in cases of plagiarism, proven intentional plagiarism on the part of any doctoral student will result in a failing grade for the course and automatic dismissal from the program.

## **APPENDIX A: Dissertation Worksheet**

**The following information serves as an overview for the dissertation worksheet. The Dissertation Preparation Course provides detailed information for developing the worksheet.**

### **Title for the Dissertation:**

**Dissertation titles are often cumbersome and confusing. The reader of your dissertation title should not labor to understand the nature of your dissertation. With just a few words, the title has to highlight the purpose of the study, which often includes its context, outcomes, and important aspects of the research strategy adopted. During the Dissertation Preparation Course, we will discuss how to formulate an effective dissertation title.**

### **Problem Statement:**

**The following are excerpts from, Simon, M. K. (2011). Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success (2011 ed.). Lexington, KY: Dissertation Success, LLC Edits by L Cornine.**

**The problem statement is the most important component of your study. Carefully formulating the problem statement is important because it guides or anchors the rest of your work. Constantly referring to the statement allows you to test thoughts and decisions relevant to your work. In addition, it paints a clear picture for the reader of your work. After reading your problem statement, the reader will understand why you are researching what your topic and convinced of the importance of what you are researching. Your problem statement convinces the reader that this study is critical and contributes to the mental health profession.**

**The problem statement also explains paradigm and methodology for your study. The problem statement is 100 to 175 words. Dissertation Research Design & Statistics provides a greater explanation of paradigm and methodology.**

### **Purpose Statement:**

**The following are excerpts from, Simon, M. K. (2011). Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success (2011 ed.). Lexington, KY: Dissertation Success, LLC Edits by L Cornine.**

**The problem statement is the heart of the study, but the purpose statement is the brains of the study. The purpose statement tells your reader what the primary goal of the research is (was). In addition to**

stating the objective of the research, the purpose statement informs the reader of the method of research, population under investigation, the setting, and includes the phenomena or variables studied.

The purpose statement explains “what” your study will accomplish. The purpose statement succinctly creates direction, scope, and the means of data collection. You formulate your purpose in a way that assures the reader that the objectives and goals can be obtained, and once these are accomplished, the problem will be solved. A purpose statement is usually 1-3 paragraphs.

#### **Developing the Research Question:**

The following are excerpts from, Simon, M. K. (2011). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success* (2011 ed.). Lexington, KY: Dissertation Success, LLC Edits by L Cornine.

Your research should be guided by a central research question (or a series of closely connected questions). You need to make the question explicit early in your investigation (although you may refine your question(s) as your understanding deepens). Your research questions will help you to stay on target and to avoid being distracted by interesting (but irrelevant) digressions.

Research Design & Statistics provides a greater explanation qualitative and quantitative research questions.

#### **Hypothesis:**

The following are excerpts from, Simon, M. K. (2011). *Dissertation and scholarly research: Recipes for success* (2011 ed.). Lexington, KY: Dissertation Success, LLC Edits by L Cornine.

A hypothesis is a logical supposition, a reasonable guess, or an educated conjecture. We often hypothesize in everyday life. When we choose to see a movie or go to a new place for dinner, we hypothesize that these will be enjoyable and worthwhile experiences. When we claim that an educational program or a treatment for a disease is more efficacious than an existing program or treatment, this, too, involves making a hypothesis. Humans reason on a relational basis, and have a natural tendency to try to account for the cause of an event by constructing a series of reasonable guesses or hypotheses.