

Guidelines for Application Essays

Graduate Theological Paper

The Theological Paper is a document of 15 to 20 pages applicants submit for review by the admissions committee. The Theological Paper will be one of the main sources from which the committee can evaluate readiness for doctoral-level work in theology. It may include a paper written for a previous course or on a theological topic of your choosing. Among other things, the following should be considered when submitting the paper:

- A good style with attention to grammar, syntax, spelling, choice of words, development of argument, and felicity of expression
- Rich use of appropriate biblical passages and non-biblical theological authorities with careful documentation of all the sources; use of Chicago or another recognized style of writing for research papers
- Full demonstration of the complexity in theological debates and fairness in the presentation of divergent viewpoints
- Awareness of how the theological issue being examined might be applied to the complexities of contemporary ministry
- Clear and logical articulation of the applicant's own viewpoint

Applicants will want to give special attention to this task to make certain that the paper represents the best work of which they are capable.

Ministerial Experience and Program Expectations

The Ministerial Experience and Program Expectations is a narrative of approximately 1,500 words in which applicants review and reflect on their ministerial experience and articulate how the doctoral program will enhance their future ministry. This paper will be one of the main sources from which the committee can evaluate the quantity and quality of the applicant's experience and understanding of how the Doctor of Ministry program can enrich ministerial skills.

Among other things, the following should be included in the paper:

- A good style with attention to grammar, syntax, spelling, choice of words, development of argument, and felicity of expression
- A clear articulation of the applicant's vocation and a narration of the types of ministerial assignments that he or she has assumed, together with an assessment of how these assignments have matched the vocation
- An evaluation of how the applicant has fulfilled these ministerial assignments, including successes and failures, the skills that have been developed, and the possible weaknesses and lacunae in skills that need further attention
- Identification of how the D.Min. program will enhance future ministerial work
- An assessment of the challenges that participation in the D.Min. program will present to the applicant, such as guaranteeing adequate time for family and leisure, with a description of the support structures and plans in place to meet these challenges