

# **Field Mentor Guide**

## Professional Doctoral Programs

### *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary*

#### **Introduction**

Welcome to the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) Professional Doctoral (ProDoc) Team. We are committed to helping students achieve a high level of excellence in the practice of ministry. You are part of a ministry effort that should be a rich and rewarding experience. The students are professionals with substantive experience committed to furthering their educational development and refining skills for ministry enhancement. You should experience a deep sense of fulfillment in Christian ministry as you work with one of these exceptional students. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

This guide should help you to understand the nature of the work and your role in the process.

#### **Role of the Field Mentor**

The Field Mentor serves as an important resource for the student during the project implementation and report. This person will provide guidance and support for the DMin or DEdMin student during the project implementation. The field mentor's goal is to help the student succeed in quality project completion. Field Mentors may not serve as expert evaluators.

#### **Qualifications of the Field Mentor**

The Field Mentor must be qualified to advise the student on the field during the process of the project. This person could be a specialist in a particular area (e.g., gerontology, youth ministry, chaplaincy, etc.) or a generalist in ministry (e.g., Director of Missions for an association, state convention staff member, a local pastor, etc.). Significant educational training (an earned doctorate) and/or specialized expertise in the area of the project also are required.

#### **Responsibilities of the Field Mentor**

- Learn the purpose and design of the project.
- Meet with the student on a regular basis. This includes a minimum of: once prior to implementation, twice during implementation, and once after implementation is completed.
- Hold the student accountable for personal spiritual development.
- Examine the content of the project for quality control.
- Review the project work completed.
- Assist in careful analysis of the data.
- Help the student to assess the theological implications.
- Guide the student through introspection of personal ministry implications.
- Communicate any concerns to the Project Mentor.
- Maintain a supportive role in the contract relationship.
- Submit completed Field Mentor Report and other documents, as required, to the ProDoc

- office before the student's Exit Interview.
- The Field Mentor is invited to participate in the student's Exit Interview in an ex officio capacity.

**Documentation needed for the Field Mentor to begin:**

The Field Mentor/Student Contract is an agreement between the student and Field Mentor to engage in regular meetings for the purposes of review, discussion, and guidance during the project implementation. In addition to the contract, the ProDoc office will need the Field Mentor's vita. The Associate Dean of ProDoc Programs will validate the proposed Field Mentor's eligibility upon receipt of the completed contract and vita. Copies of the contract will be sent to the Project Mentor, Field Mentor, and the student.

**Documentation needed from the Field Mentor before the Exit Interview:**

The Field Mentor will receive a stipend upon submission of his or her completed report to the ProDoc Office and the student's subsequent graduation.

The Field Mentor will submit the completed Field Mentor Report to the ProDoc office before the Exit Interview. You may email the report to [prodoc@nobts.edu](mailto:prodoc@nobts.edu) or mail it to the address below.

The NOBTS Business Office requires that we collect a completed W-9 form for their records. Though the W-9 is included in this introduction packet, it is not needed until the time of the student's Exit Interview. Nearer the time for the Exit Interview, you may email the W-9 to [prodoc@nobts.edu](mailto:prodoc@nobts.edu) or you may mail it to the address below:

Professional Doctoral Program Office  
3939 Gentilly Blvd., Box 406  
New Orleans, LA 70126

An overview and short description of the Project in Ministry, including the Final Project Proposal and Final Project Report, can be found in the following pages. For the full details about the Project in Ministry, please see the Project in Ministry Handbook located on the ProDoc website at <https://www.nobts.edu/cme/current-students/resources.html>. Templates for both the Final Project Proposal and the Final Project Report are linked in the handbook

## Overview of the Project in Ministry

### Purpose

The purpose of the Project in Ministry is to develop the student's ministry skills and to provide ministry benefit to the participating church, agency, or institution, and the larger Christian community.

### Goals

#### 1. Ministry Knowledge and Skills:

- To develop conceptual, analytical, and organizational knowledge and skills
- To develop critical theological reflection knowledge and skills
- To develop leadership knowledge and skills
- To develop evaluative knowledge and skills
- To demonstrate oral and written communication knowledge and skills

#### 2. Ministry Setting and Christian Community:

- To enhance a sense of ministry identity
- To provide a context-specific project which responds meaningfully to an acknowledged ministry need
- To provide the ministry setting with a skilled leader
- To contribute to the field of ministry by documenting goal validation and theological reflection in the project report

### Project Design

#### Models

The student will develop their project based on one of the five models described below. The student must obtain permission from ProDoc's associate dean to pursue a different project model.

1. **Equipping Program** - Equipping a small group of believers with the ministry skills needed for a specific task.
2. **Preaching Skills Enhancement** - Improving the preacher's skill—typically utilizing a particular form of preaching to convey a specific message.
3. **Strategy Planning** - Developing a strategy to address a specific ministry need.
4. **Community-Needs Assessment** - Assessing social needs in a community and developing specific recommendations to meet those needs.
5. **Ministry Research** - Researching a particular ministry need to develop a resource like a handbook to address the issue

## **Description of the Project**

### **Final Project Proposal**

#### **A. Description:**

The final project proposal (proposal) is a formal document submitted to the project mentor describing ministry project details. This ministry project blueprint answers the following questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How?

#### **B. Components:**

In addition to the traditional front matter (title page, abstract, table of contents), the proposal will include eight chapters. The chapters and page count are as follows:

Chapter 1: Description of the Ministry Setting and Need (3-4 pages)

Chapter 2: Project Proposal (2-3 pages)

Chapter 3: Project Director (2-3 pages)

Chapter 4: Doctrinal Foundations (8-10 pages)

Chapter 5: Review of Alternative Programs (2-3 pages)

Chapter 6: Ministry Resources (4-6 pages)

Chapter 7: Description of Project (4-5 pages)

Chapter 8: Project Evaluations (3-4 pages)

The Final Project Proposal will also include appendices and selected bibliography.

#### **C. Length:**

The proposal should be no more than 30-40 pages, exclusive of the appendices and selected bibliography. The total length should not exceed 80 pages, with a left margin of 1-1/2 inches throughout.

#### **D. Submission and Review Process:**

Students are encouraged to submit their proposals to the ProDoc office sixty days prior to their desired approval date. Email the proposal to [prodoproject@nobts.edu](mailto:prodoproject@nobts.edu) and copy your project mentor.

#### **E. Final Project Proposal Approval Process:**

Proposals recommended by project mentors are presented to the Professional Doctoral Oversight Committee (ProDOC) monthly for approval. The committee requires a final proposal copy a week before its scheduled meeting for review. The project coordinator will provide the committee with these proposal copies. Please note that ProDOC does not meet in the month of June.

The project mentor will evaluate a student's proposal, recommending to the Professional Doctoral Oversight Committee (ProDOC) one of the following decisions:

1. **Conditional Approval:** If the proposal document contains easily correctable conceptual and/stylistic problems, the project mentor may approve the proposal plan conditionally, requiring the student to address concerns identified in the evaluation. After the ProDOC committee authorizes this conditional approval, the student may proceed with project implementation while making the corrections suggested by the project mentor and/or style reader. The student is encouraged to finalize the proposal document as soon as possible, preferably within two weeks of the committee decision.
2. **Approval:** The project mentor may choose this action if he or she believes that the proposal constitutes a worthy project, authorizing you to proceed with project implementation.

Though the Project Mentor may recommend any of the above, the final decision of the proposal is up to the ProDOC committee. The committee may also **Reject** a proposal, when/as needed. If the proposal is rejected, the project mentor will work with the student for a resubmission, as directed by the committee.

## **Final Project Report**

### **A. Description:**

The project report (report) is the final document describing the ministry project and evaluating its results. The report is more than a mere recapitulation of the proposal. The report document includes insights learned in the project's implementation process.

### **B. Components:**

The front matter of the report will include: approval page, title page, copyright page, abstract, dedication, table of contents, list, acknowledgments, and list of abbreviations (as applicable).

The report will contain five chapters. The chapters and page count are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction (2-4 pages)

Chapter 2: Project Description (25-50 pages)

Chapter 3: Project Evaluation (8-10 pages)

Chapter 4: Project Analysis and Reflection (10-14 pages)

Chapter 5: Suggestion for Further Implementation (3-5pages)

The Final Project Report will also include appendices, selected bibliography, the student's vita, and the Final Project Proposal, as a supplement.

### **C. Length:**

The length of the report should range from 50-85 pages, exclusive of preliminary pages, appendices, selected bibliography, and supplement. The total length of the report should not exceed 250 pages.

#### **D. Before the Exit Interview**

The student will submit their Final Project Report to the Project Coordinator by August 15 for December graduation or January 15 for May graduation.

The Associate Dean for the Professional Doctoral Programs will assign readers to each graduation candidate. The time and date for the Exit Interview will be determined. The ProDoc Office will send the Teams/Calendar invite to the student, the Project Mentor, and the two readers. Upon notification from the student, the Field Mentor will be invited to participate in the Exit Interview in an ex-officio capacity.

Near the beginning of the Fall and Spring semesters, the ProDoc office will send an email to the graduation candidates with graduation information. The graduation email will ask the student to complete and submit Exit Interview Questions. The ProDoc office will email the student's responses to the Exit Interview Questions to the Project Mentor, the Field Mentor, and the readers. The email will also contain a reminder to submit the Field Mentor Report and the Field Mentor's W-9, as needed.

#### **E. Project Report Evaluation**

The Final Project will be evaluated by the Project Mentor and the two readers.

#### **F. The Exit Interview**

The Project Mentor will administer the Exit Interview in conjunction with assigned Project readers and/or Field Mentors.

#### **G. The Final Copy**

The student will work with the Project Mentor and the Project Coordinator to ready a final copy for the library and for TREN.

#### **Tips for guiding the student**

- Think "mentor," not "supervisor."
- Establish a good, friendly relationship with the student.
- Build a climate of trust, honesty, openness, and accountability.
- Find out exactly what the student expects to gain from the relationship with the mentor.
- Communicate clearly what you expect from the student.
- Affirm strengths and call attention to weaknesses discovered during the process.
- Guide the student to evaluate his or her competency and feelings.
- Offer theological reflection on the project.
- Assist the student in evaluation and critical reflection.
- As mentor you may function in the roles of instructor, trainer, model, consultant, and spiritual guide in keeping with the amount of time you have to offer.
- Encourage the student to take the initiative in deriving as much good as possible from the experience and your supervision through dialogue and questioning.

#### ***Special Thanks***

*Thank you for your willingness to help this student in such an important endeavor. The student has made a serious commitment in time, effort, and money to pursue this degree. Your*

*guidance is vital in the process. Your support is an important part of the student's journey and we want to express our deepest gratitude for your mentorship. While the financial compensation is small, the reward of mentoring the student to reach a new level of expertise in ministry is valuable. You will be making a difference in his or her life and the many others that this student will work with in the future. We applaud your willingness, commitment, and sacrifice. Once again, thank you!*