

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY (D.Min.)

at Abilene Christian University



33

Number of credit hours

36

Months average time to completion



Complete classes through intensive courses

Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.)

The Doctor of Ministry is an advanced professional degree oriented toward ministerial leadership. Distinguished from academic research programs such as the Ph.D. or Th.D., the primary emphasis of the D.Min. degree is on excellence in the practice of ministry.

The program curriculum is designed to focus on multiple dimensions of ministry: leadership, mission, formation, preaching, theology and worship.

Skills emphasized include integrative theological reflection informed by advanced synthesis of biblical and theological foundations; reading, assessing and interpreting varied cultural contexts of ministry; leadership skills for missional renewal and transformation; and maturation in professional development, self-care and spiritual formation.

The purpose of the D.Min. is to enhance the practice of ministry for persons who hold the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree or its educational equivalent and are engaged in ministerial leadership in missions, non-profits, congregations, and other Christian-oriented contexts.

The D.Min. at ACU offers three specific tracks from which students may choose: Christian Spiritual Formation, Leadership for Missional Renewal, and Preaching for Community Transformation. Alternatively, students may customize their course selections to meet their specific ministerial needs and interests.

Why a Doctor of Ministry?

The Doctor of Ministry is an advanced degree program that enhances the practice of ministerial leadership through intentional theological reflection, peer-learning, and skills-acquisition. More than just continuing education, the D.Min. offers a structured learning context that will develop

the integrative tools that will serve the leader through a lifetime of ministerial leadership. Additionally, the Doctor of Ministry provides the opportunity for persons to make a contribution to applied learning through the completion of a doctoral-level project.

Why the Doctor of Ministry at ACU?

- ACU is committed to offering a D.Min. program that partners with ministerial leaders to nurture the deep spiritual formation necessary to sustain a God-shaped ministry in the diverse cultural contexts where they practice.
- The program provides the dynamics necessary to develop leadership skills, the capacity to read contexts and cultures, and to deepen theological reflection that heightens the capacity of the minister to participate in God's mission in the world.
- Learning opportunities take advantage of world-class faculty who are active in both scholarship and ministry. ACU's D.Min. also leverages the power of peer-learning through the collegial relationships with other ministerial leaders.

Degree Process

The format of the D.Min. is built around a series of intensive courses taken in residence on ACU's main campus or other designated learning sites. Although the program requires residency periods, the majority of ACU's D.Min. students live around the world and simply travel to Abilene once or twice a year.

Each 3-hour course consists of pre- and post-class assignments in addition to a one-week residency. Some courses utilize a hybrid format, incorporating online and face-to-face learning and assignments. No courses are offered in a fully online format. A minimum of three years and a maximum of six years are allowed for the completion of the degree.

Degree Requirements

- D.Min. Orientation
- Theological Foundations for the Practice of Ministry
- Project/Thesis Seminar I
- Project/Thesis Seminar II
- D.Min. Project/Thesis
- Electives (18 hours; or if pursuing a track, 12 hours of track courses plus 6 hours of electives)
- Two spiritual formation retreats
- Mentoring

Prerequisites

- The applicant must have an M.Div. degree or its educational equivalent from an accredited institution. More information about M.Div. equivalency can be found at acu.edu/dmin.
- The applicant must currently be involved in full-time ministry, and must have been involved in full-time ministry for at least three years following the completion of his or her first theological master's degree.
- The applicant must have earned a minimum grade point average of 3.2 (on a 4.0 scale) in prior graduate work.

Admission Requirements

1. A completed application form and application fee.
2. Official transcripts from all colleges attended. All transcripts from outside the United States must be accompanied by a course-by-course credential evaluation from an approved company (contact the GST office for more information).
3. A Documentation of Ministry Employment form and accompanying letter from the applicant's elders or supervisors.
4. Recommendation forms from four persons knowledgeable of the applicant's personal character and performance in ministry. At least one recommendation should provide an academic reference.
5. A five- to nine-page admission essay (see the website for more details).
6. An interview with the D.Min. director may be required.

To apply, visit gradapply.acu.edu. Application materials should be completed by Jan. 31.

Upon the completion of the above requirements, the D.Min. director will review the applicant's file for official action. Applicants will be informed of their admission status as soon as possible after a decision is reached.

Upon admission to the program, new students will complete a series of psychological assessments. A fee for this testing is assessed.

Coursework in the program begins in June of each year. If an applicant does not enter the program at the first June residency period after being accepted, the admission will be honored for one additional year.

Affordability and Financial Aid

The D.Min. program assesses a flat program fee rather than tuition per credit hour. A monthly payment plan is available for each student. Contact the D.Min. office for pricing information.

A limited number of scholarships are available to students. Scholarship applications are submitted after admission to the program and can be obtained from the D.Min. office.

Accreditation

Abilene Christian University's Graduate School of Theology is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada to award its master's and doctoral degrees. Contact the Commission on Accrediting at 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15275 or call 412-788-6505 for questions about the accreditation of ACU's Graduate School of Theology.



Program Advisor

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