DOCTOR OF MINISTRY PROGRAM

PROJECT HANDBOOK

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Contents

Overview of the Applied Research Project Modules

What is the Project All About?

The applied research project integrates the knowledge and skills learned in the DMin coursework with the analysis of a specific program, problem, or case in the student's ministry. It provides the student with the opportunity to make a professional contribution to missional praxis in the student's chosen context. The term "applied research project" refers to the entire DMin project as described in the models below. The term "dissertation" refers to the actual written document.

The DMin vs. the PhD

The DMin project is a professional paper that has an applied or field-based component, hence the name "applied research" project. The research for a DMin project focuses on scholarly and professional literature relevant to the project's topic and goals. The dissertation (or project report) discusses the biblical, theological, theoretical, and contextual issues related to the project and reflects the student's mastery of selected viewpoints concerning the issues being discussed. The dissertation concludes with recommendations to other ministry leaders that result from the research.

In contrast, the PhD dissertation is a theoretical study that focuses on specific research questions, hypotheses, and data collection. The research for a PhD project focuses on what is known and not known about the topic and establishes the significance of the study. The dissertation discusses the theory, the research methods, and implications of the findings to further research, rather than practical implications and meanings for ministry settings.

Educational Assumptions

- Self-reliant learners: DMin education is best done by self-reliant learners within the context of active ministry. In keeping with this conviction, the program has both on-campus and off-campus components, with great stress placed on the initiative of the student as a self-starter in the learning process.

- Action-reflection approach to learning: DMin education is built on the action-reflection approach to learning. In keeping with this, the program de- emphasizes in-sequence classroom learning, characteristic of the methods traditionally associated with the MDiv degree sequence.

- Contextual learning: Learning is best achieved in the student's active context of ministry. in keeping with this, every effort is made to keep studies related throughout the program to the individual needs and ethno-cultural setting of the student.

- Communal context of learning: Learning is a communal process. In line with this, students are required to develop peer support and advisory groups in addition to the regular participation of the DMin faculty in the learning process. The congregation or supporting agency of the student is also asked to commit themselves to the program, at its initiation, as much as feasible. Depending on the nature of the DMin project, student may also be encouraged to take course work in universities or seminaries to supplement their research.

Educational assumptions related particularly to the DMin applied research project build on the above educational assumptions with the following additions:

- Self-Designed learning approach: The applied research project is a self-designed project, with the faculty functioning in a consultative role.

- Integrative approach: The applied research project integrates the student's studies in the DMin courses with a very specific area of study in the student's ministry context. The completion of the DMin applied research dissertation is structured around the project and the studies – theological, biblical, socio-anthropological, personal, and pastoral – that feed specifically into it.

Purposes of the Project

- To strengthen students' professional ministerial skills.
- To strengthen the mission of the church through reflective praxis in the student's context.
- To enlarge students' understanding of how ministry can be strategically analyzed and improved.
- To contribute students' knowledge and understanding of a specific area of ministry to other ministry professionals.

General Criteria for an Acceptable Applied Research Project

While each track will establish specific criteria for the applied research project, below is a list of general criteria common to all DMin projects completed at BTS:

- Addresses a clearly defined program, problem, or case in the student's ministry.
- Is sufficiently focused to allow depth of analysis, detailed conclusions, and specific recommendations for the ministry and other settings.
- Demonstrates the student's knowledge of the exegetical, theological, and theoretical issues related to the topic.
- Demonstrates the student's skills in describing, analyzing, and strategically addressing a program, problem, or case in his or her ministry setting.
- Demonstrates the student's ability to honestly evaluate the process and results of the project based on well- defined criteria and valid evaluative procedures.
- Equips others for ministry and suggests ways in which they might minister more effectively.
- Employs research methods that are academically acceptable and in which the student is sufficiently competent.
- Is submitted in the form of a dissertation that is written in clear standard English and consistent formatting.

Components of the Applied Research Project

- **It is an actual ministry project.**

  The applied research project is not a PhD thesis or dissertation which consists of only an expositional or critical component. The term "project" highlights the intention that the project reflects the student's "hands-on" application or exploration of a topic. The real needs of people and churches are to be addressed and met by the student. The project cannot be the writing up of what the student has done in the past. Nor is the project merely the writing of a book. A project is the proposing, the doing, and the recording of a ground-breaking ministry in which the student is currently engaged. It is applied research.

This means that much of the research for the DMin project will be field research, surveying and collecting data on needs and previous efforts in the chosen field of ministry. It seeks to identify an opportunity, problem or issues in the student's ministry context and to discover appropriate resources for understanding those issues and to develop a method for implementing a resolution to the issue. This does not mean, however, that the theoretical or conceptual element is totally missing. It is there but only in service to the more significant, applied dimension. Scholarship in the project is not an end in itself.

- **The project is done in a specific, unexplored area.**

The project is to have a strong creative component. It is to contribute materially to what the church knows about the chosen field. The area of focus must be specific and narrow enough so that the student can treat it with some depth within the time limitations of the program. But it must be unexplored enough that the doing of the project will provide fresh insight in the area studied. To understand this more clearly, the student should spend time early in the program examining completed DMin projects in BTS's library.

- **The project has a carefully laid biblical-theological base.**

J.R. Nichols sums up the intention in this area. He says, "Neither pure program development nor pure theological speculation alone gets the peculiar combination of a DMin project. The operative question is: how do needs for ministry on the one hand and theological commitments and values on the other mutually inform, enlighten, and nurture each other in the particular area or task of interest?"[1]

This is a critical balance to strike. But the project must reflect the ability to integrate biblical-theological insights with the practice of ministry. Actual ministry must be continuously subjected to explicit theological analysis. The student must ask constantly whether the theological framework developed for the study is fully adequate, that is, fully biblical. This requires that the student do sound and insightful exegesis and theological reflection.

- **The project makes use of related secular disciplines.**

In research for the project, the student is expected to be fully conversant with relevant thinking, experience, and research literature from other sources, both Christian and secular. For example, many areas of urban and/or intercultural ministry correspond with a related secular discipline, such as urban anthropology and urban demographics. Training ministries and curricula have their related secular disciplines, such as educational assessment and learning theory. Some of these are addressed in other sections of this handbook and in the field research tutorial. Others await exploration by the student. These could include such fields as management theory and practice, communication theory, the study of religions, etc.

[1] "DMin Projects: The Horrifying End." *Theological Education*, Vol. 12, No. 4 [1976], p. 266.

The student is expected to become familiar with the information in those areas that touch the project's area of interest. In addition, all related literature and experience by Christian and evangelicals in the area of interest must be taken into account. In order to achieve this kind of familiarity with these fields, the student must do a significant amount of reading, study (such as possible course work in other institutions), etc.

- **The project must evaluate the effectiveness of the designed ministry.**

  The student must devise a way of evaluating the effectiveness of the actual project. To do this, careful goals and Objectives must be formulated from the start and specific evaluation processes must be built into the ministry project at its conclusion. It is not necessary for the program be a "success" for the project to be accepted. Insightful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the project, along with suggestions for future modification, should be included as the final chapter of the project.

The following questions reflect these five goals. The student should be able to answer them at the conclusion of his or her study.

1. Does the project genuinely flow out of my total ministry as an integral part of my learning?
2. Will the project contribute to an advanced stage of my learning and ministry?
3. Does the project make a significant and original contribution to the larger church's ministry?
4. How does the project require a process of inquiry and critical reflection in a ministry area?
5. Is the project design sufficiently narrow to provide both depth and manageability?
6. What evaluation apparatus has been built into the process?

The Project Learning Proposal

Project learning Proposal: The project learning proposal is developed in the first project module (DM926 or DM931) and must meet the approval of the DMin director before the student can proceed to the next module. The project learning proposal is the student's plan and covenant for progressing through the program with particular attention to the project modules, research, and dissertation writing.

The applied research project learning proposal is a binding agreement between the student and the seminary for a particular project as proposed by the student and approved by the DMin director. A student who wants to change his or her proposal after it is approved must submit a variance form requesting the change. Changes are not automatically granted. If a change is granted, the student must retake the first project module and pay the current tuition for the module.

Project Advisor, Reader, and Resource Team

Project advisor: The project advisor is appointed by the DMin director during the first project module. The project advisor's role is to advise and provide guidance to the student during the applied research project and writing the dissertation. It is the student's responsibility to contact his or her advisor on a periodic basis and provide opportunities for the advisor to review his or her work and provide feedback and guidance. The project advisor approves the student's pre-final dissertation before it is submitted to the DMin director and attends the student's oral review.

Project reader: a project reader is appointed by the DMin director once the student's dissertation is complete. The project reader is looking at the overall quality of the dissertation.

Resource team: At the time of the writing of the project learning proposal, the student selects an advisory team of two or three people who serve as a support team and as professionals who have expertise to contribute to the student's project. They should be available to the student in person or via email or phone, and thus be able to be a resource to the student. In some cases, the advisory team or a member of the advisory team, may observe the student conducting the project's field work and give feedback, as appropriate to the project. The advisory team members should be peers of the student who, because of their expertise, are qualified to assist the student in evaluating his or her progress. Their essential role is a supportive one to the student.

Pre-final Dissertation

Pre-final Dissertation: The pre-final dissertation is the dissertation that is approved by the student's project advisor and submitted to the DMin director prior to the oral review. The pre-final dissertation is a professional quality document that is called "pre-final" because the DMin director may require changes to the pre-final dissertation before it approves the student for graduation. The student then revises the pre-final dissertation and resubmits it to the DMin director prior to the oral review.

The DMin director requires that the pre-final dissertation be submitted on or before April 1 for June graduation and October 1 for December graduation. Pre-final dissertations must be pre-approved by the advisor prior to submission. Pre-final dissertations that are incomplete or require extensive editing will not be accepted. To avoid this situation, students are strongly encouraged to secure editorial expertise.

The Oral Review

The oral review is intended to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned through the process of completing their DMin project and dissertation.

- When and who: The review takes place after the pre-final dissertation has been approved by the DMin director. It is held at the seminary or the seminary's extension site in Philadelphia. The review panel includes the student's project advisor, reader, the DMin director (or other designee), and occasionally others, such as a faculty member or an academic office representative. Participants may attend the oral review via teleconference or conference call, if necessary. The student may also invite anyone he or she chooses to observe the process.

- Moderator, length, and tone: The oral review is moderated by the DMin director or designee. The oral review lasts approximately ninety minutes. Each member of the review panel will come prepared to ask questions about the student's project. The oral review is conducted in a collegial and non-adversarial manner. It is intended to emphasize the student's learning from the project and recognize the significant accomplishment of the student.

- Scheduling the oral review: students schedule their oral review with the academic office at least two months prior to submitting his/her pre-final dissertation. The student is responsible to invite his or her advisor and reader and to make sure that they are able to attend on the established date either in person or via teleconference or conference call.

- Materials to bring to the oral review: students should make sure that each participant has an electronic copy of the pre-final dissertation well in advance of the oral review. Students should bring four copies of their dissertation signature page on acid-free paper to the oral review. Hard copies of the pre-final dissertation are provided by the student to the academic office as indicated in the final project syllabus.

- Possible Outcomes of the Oral Review

  The review Panel will make one of the following recommendations:

  - Recommended: we recommend the reception of the project as written and as fulfillment of the DMin program requirements.

  - Recommended with stipulations: we recommend the reception of the project with the following stipulations for revision. Upon successful completion of these revisions, we recommend acceptance of the project as fulfillment of the DMin program requirements. (The DMin committee will be responsible for assuring compliance with stipulations.)

  - Not recommended: we do not recommend the reception of the project. (Should this recommendation be necessary, the student will be given three months to revise the project and submit to a new oral review administered by the DMin director.)

The Oral Review Meeting

The oral review will proceed as follows: The oral review begins with introductions and prayer. The student gives a 20 minute presentation. The student may use a PowerPoint presentation and should request use of equipment for this purpose. The panel takes turns asking the student questions for 40 minutes, moderated by the DMin director. The student responds. Clarifying or follow-up questions are permitted. When the time for questions has expired, the student is excused from the room while the committee deliberates. When the student returns, the student is apprised of the panel's recommendation. The meeting is closed with prayer.

Final Dissertation and Bound Copies

The final dissertation on acid free paper is due in the library after the successful completion of the oral review and should satisfactorily address any changes required as a result of the oral review. The student should contact the library and ask for the library checklist for final dissertations. The library checklist provides the steps to follow. If the student does not have signed signature pages, it is the student's responsibility to circulate the pages to the appropriate people before turning in his or her dissertation copies for binding.

Description of the First Project Module

DM926 and DM931
The purpose of the first module is to familiarize students with the applied research project and to provide a starting point for choosing their topic, planning their project, writing their proposal, and identifying resources. Students develop and complete their project proposal in this module (a

description of how to complete the project proposal is here).

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Describe the applied research project process and requirements.
2. Refine their project topic and consider its contribution to others doing missional ministry.
3. Complete their project proposal and submit it to the DMin director with proper formatting and using the style of their choice.
4. Complete an annotated bibliography related to their project topic.

Grading

Students must earn a grade of B or better on the required assignments in order to enroll in the next course or module (see section 1). Qualifying students typically work on their project during the spring and summer as laid out in their learning proposal and enroll in DM927 or DM931 the following fall semester.

Completing the Project Learning Proposal

Overview

The central assignment of the first project module is the completion and approval of the project learning proposal. The learning proposal outlines in detail the rationale, goals, process, and schedule in terms of which the project will be accomplished. Once approved, this project learning proposal becomes the working basis for the entire program with a focus on the applied research project and the writing of the dissertation. A sample proposal may be available on the E-campus course site or distributed in class.

In preparation for the first project module (Dm926 or Dm931), students should complete their project learning proposal in draft form. This learning proposal will be refined through dialog with other students, the student's resource team, and the module instructor(s).

In the process of drafting their learning proposals, students are expected to define and develop their plans for progressing through the DMin program. This includes setting research and study goals, when they plan to take courses and project modules, and a timetable for accomplishing their plans during the ensuing years. It will speed up the work on the preparation and approval of the project learning proposal if students are prepared for their first project module with a very clear, specific idea of exactly what the project will be. The more general the idea, the longer it will take for approval.

Guidelines for Choosing a Topic

- It must be based on opportunities in the student's present situation.
- It must be conducive, not detrimental, to the student's present ministry.
- It must be realistic in terms of the 3 to 4 year time frame for completion of the program.
- Its evaluation must be possible within that time frame.
- It must be a new topic.
- It must be new to the student, so that it is skill- producing in the student.

Format for the Project Proposal

The following project learning proposal format should be adhered to with few exceptions:

Part 1 Purpose statement
Part 2 Methods and procedure
Part 3 Project outline
Part 4 Schedule
Part 5 Signatures

Part 1—Purpose Statement

The purpose statement will answer the question of why the student has selected this project as his or her focus of ministry and academic work in the DMin program. In drawing up the purpose statement, the student is seeking to provide a rationale for the project. Why is this project important? How will this work make a real contribution to the church in its ministry?

The purpose statement should include the title of the project, a problem statement, the major question to be addressed by the project, and the goals of the project.

Title: The title of the project should be explicit and specific, and should begin the proposal.

Problem statement: The proposal begins with an indication of the origin and development of the student's interest in the subject. The focus of this, however, should be on why the project is significant to the candidate and the candidate's constituency. What is the problem of ministry around which the project will direct its attention? The learning proposal description should be full and clear enough for the module instructor(s) and the DMin advancement committee to understand why the project was undertaken.

Major Question: The major question is a clear and concise definition of the area of study to be explored. What is the basic inquiry that will be answered by the student's research and ministry? How will the student seek to make some contribution to the resolution of the problem you have set out?

Goals of the Project: The student should, as succinctly as possible, write out the goals of his or her project, that is, what does the student hope to achieve through the project. A typical project has one or two central goals that flow from the problem statement and major question.

Part 2—Methods and Procedures

The methods and procedures section answers the question of how the student will process his or her work and what resources are to be used for the completion of the project. This section should be based on the student's project goals and should include.

Resource team: This should include two or three people with expertise in the area of the student's research who will act as resources to assist the student in accomplishing his or her task.

Description of the elements necessary for the student's research: At this point the student will need a detailed statement of each of the approaches to be used to reach the listed goals. The student will design a program of study and research that will prepare and qualify him or her to carry out the project effectively. A wide variety of methods is applicable to the DMin project and described in two chapters in this handbook: Conducting General Research Studies and Guide to Specific Research Methods.

As fully as possible, the student should elaborate those steps in his or her research that will best achieve the goals of the ministry project undertaken. Such steps will likely include at least the following:

- Personal studies and training in areas foundational to the project. This might consist of attending seminars/courses at other schools or institutions. It may include reading courses and papers in certain areas, supervised by Biblical seminary faculty members or other authorities in the designated field.

- Preparation of questionnaires, surveys, or oral interviews with a selected group related to the project.

- Exegesis and biblical-theological study of relevant biblical materials foundational to the project.

- Literature review.

Evaluation tools: finally, you must include provision for evaluation. This is a measurement of the success of the project against the goals that were established. What changes were actually achieved? What needs were actually met? Did it work? This evaluation process could be done through various methods— questionnaires, personal interviews, pre-testing and post-testing for knowledge, attitude and behavioral changes. See later sections of this handbook for a helpful overview of these steps.

Part 3—Project Outline

The project outline will answer the question of what your project will look like. This section should include the description of the project, e.g., will it be a training manual or some other functional tool for ministry? It should also include a listing of the chapters that will together comprise the final project report. As a student does research and understands his or her project better, it may be necessary to reorder the outline. If this happens, the student will not be required to redo the proposal or request a variance.

Identifying and planning the chapters: The student must take two factors into consideration: (1) what areas he or she thinks are important to cover, and (2) the overall requirements of the DMin track program the student has chosen. With these factors in mind, the project should be divided into chapters. The student should include all topics as shown later in this handbook.

Each chapter should focus on one specific phase of the research. For example, one chapter could deal with the biblical theological foundation of the research. One chapter could focus on a detailed demographic analysis of the community in which the student is planning on implementing the project. The final chapter should usually be a conclusion and evaluation of the goals, with recommendations for other ministry leaders.

Chapter worksheet: After the student has determined what chapters are necessary, he or she needs to look at each chapter one at a time. This is accomplished by answering a set of questions for each chapter (see next page for sample chapter worksheet). The questions are designed to help organize the chapters and aid in determining the content of each chapter. Obviously, no one chapter can completely answer the major research question of the project. But it can answer one piece of the major question.

The student should ask: what is this chapter supposed to do? What question is this chapter supposed to answer? This chapter question fulfills two purposes: (1) it guides the research and writing of the chapter and (2) it ties the chapter into the overall major question by saying how the chapter fits into the overall research (which is also important in introducing the chapter in the writing stage).

Once a chapter's research question has been hammered out: The student should ask: what kind of data does this chapter need to be able to answer the question addressed in that chapter? Then the student can determine how to plan to get the data. Does he or she need to read books on a particular subject? Interview particular people? Visit another ministry? Examine census data?

As one can tell, the chapter question determines the methods. If the student goes through this for all chapters, he or she can compile a list of all methods needed to fulfill the project proposal. <u>These methods can then be listed in the project proposal.</u>

Sample Chapter Worksheet – one worksheet for each chapter

1. What question is this chapter supposed to answer?

2. What research do I need to do in order to answer the question?

3. How am I going to get the data?

   For example:

   - What books, journals, and other publications would provide theory and background? How do I find these resources?
   - Who do I need to interview or survey?
   - Do I need to visit another country?
   - Do I need to observe one or more ministries?
   - Are census data needed?

Part 4—Schedule

This section should answer the question of when the student will complete each part of the academic requirements. It is a detailed time schedule for the project. Specific deadlines for the accomplishment of the procedures and research related to the project should be thought through and identified as much as possible. This schedule should include the dates for the completion of the first project module, the core courses and track courses, and the timetable showing each step of implementing, writing, and completion of the project and dissertation.

Part 5—Proposal Signatures

The proposal must be signed during the first project module. For official approval, the project must be signed (in order) by the student, the project module instructor, the project advisor (optional), and the DMin director.

Sample Learning Proposal

A sample project learning proposal is available on the E-campus course site for DM926 or DM931.

Doctor of Ministry Dissertation Template

This template was created as a tool to help you format your DMin pre-final (and final) dissertation. Its use is optional -- but highly recommended. It does not specify a particular style guide. The DMin program prefers Turabian, but any style guide is acceptable when used accurately and consistently.

The dissertation template is posted on DM926 and DM931 E-campus course sites.

Getting Started

- Save the template to a folder.
- Using Microsoft word, create your file by saving your version of the template: <save as>“Pre-finalDissertationyour lastname (.doc or .docx) file”
- or <save as> “finalDissertationyourlastname (.doc or .docx) file”
- Complete the template.
- Replace Blue text with Black text. Delete items that are not applicable to your dissertation, e.g., list of table or list of figures, if you have no tables or figures in your chapters.

Directions for the Dissertation Pages and Sections

Preliminary Pages

Title page – when you are ready to submit your dissertation, the date should be the date of your graduation.

Copyright page - optional, but encouraged. If you choose to copyright, follow the format of the copyright page in the template and contact the librarian for information about applying for formal copyright after your dissertation is accepted by the DMin committee after the oral review.

Acknowledgement and/or dedication page – this page is optional.

Abstract – maximum of 100 words for the dissertation only. Include keywords that summarize major concepts, review research procedures, and discuss results and conclusions.

Table of Contents – be consistent with the formatting of headings at all levels (within and across chapters) to ensure that the contents parallel the titles and hierarchy of headings and subheadings in the text (table of contents for the proposal should list the preliminary and supplementary pages found in the proposal and all chapters).

List of tables – required if tables are included in the text

List of figures – required if tables are included in the text.

Chapters

Formatting for chapters will consist of paragraphs and subject headings.

Supplementary Pages

Appendices – include as many as are needed for your project; omit if not needed. No appendix should be included if it is not referenced in the text. The order of the appendices should be the same as the order in which they are referenced in the text.

Bibliography – this last section of the dissertation must list all resources cited in the text. You are encouraged to include any other resources that have significantly impacted your project.

Church Research: Methods and Models

The material in this section was excerpted from urban church research: methods and models written by the late Dr. Harvie M. Conn, late professor emeritus and missiologist at Westminster Theological Seminary.

What is Research?

“Research,” says Engel, “is the gathering of information for use in decision making.”[2] A glance out the window to see if I need to carry an umbrella is research. A telephone call to see if a classmate is home so that I may borrow some lecture notes is research. A survey of those evangelistic methods that have been most useful in bringing Mayan Indians in the Yucatan to Christ is research.

Most particularly, our research is applied research. It is research already thinking about application in the cultural world to which we have attached ourselves. How will a study of the history of Protestant church planting in Acapulco help us in developing a current strategy for church growth? How will an analysis of the conversion process among the Pakistani help us in correcting incorrect or inadequate methods of sharing Christ with them now?

The Necessity of Research

Demanded by the Nature of Evangelism as Gospel Communication

Traditional methods of learning in a theological school oriented to the white west focuses heavy attention on the character of the message. There is considerably less attention to the nature of the communicator (c) and almost no attention to the receptor (r) of the message. This ignores the fact that communication is not simply message-oriented. It is deeply receptor-oriented. Study shows that unwanted messages can be crystal clear and faithful to the text being transmitted and still not heard. They can be avoided entirely by r (selective attention). They can be miscomprehended (selective distortion). Or they can be forgotten (selective retention). In short, our message does not scratch where people itch.

Research can minimize the distortions on the r level. It aims at finding out how people filter out and then correct communication. Don Richardson and the Sawi people are good examples of this. His study of proverbs became the research instrument that broke through. Message becomes meaning when it is tied to the felt needs of the r by the Holy Spirit.

Demanded By Orientation of Missions to People

Ethnography is the work of describing a culture. The central aim of ethnography is to understand another way of life from the native point of view (the *emic* point of view). Ethnography does not however study people. Ethnography learns from people.[3]

That ethnographic orientation to people parallels the biblical concerns. Bavinck points out that the gospel approach is structured around certain factors: (1) To whom am I bringing the gospel? Paul

[2] James Engel, How Can I Get Them To Listen? (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977), 13.
[3] James P. Spradley, Participant Observation, (Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980), 3.

addressed himself differently to Festus than to the crowd at Lystra. The very nature of biblical theology as the history of special revelation underlines God's concern for who receives the Word. (2) Who is doing the preaching is another factor.

Elijah is different from Elisha. Matthew's gospel message is structured differently than that of mark. And part of the difference lies in the authors themselves and the focus of their interest. (3) The time of the encounter is significant. At the feast of Tabernacles a central place was given to praying for rain. In that context, Jesus spoke of the streams of living water (John 7:38). It is part of preaching the word and being instant in season (2 Tim. 4:1). (4) The place makes a difference. John preached at the Jordan. Jesus willingly sought people in their houses.[4] Research then is simply these questions translated into understanding the *kairos* of a culture. In communication theory it is referred to as "environmental description."[5]

Demanded by Mission Concern for Cultural Sensitivity

Research seeks to minimize that cultural obstacle to the gospel. it will seek to insure that the symbolic meaning given to the verbal presentation of the gospel comes as close as possible to the symbolic meaning present in the Bible itself. Cultural interaction builds on certain premises of communication. Research seeks to learn how they function in a given culture.

What are some of those premises? Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.[6] For example, in a Buddhist or Hindu culture being "born again" is a cultural symbol given meaning by the idea of the transmigration of the soul. To a Buddhist unaware of the gospel, being born again by the spirit could easily mean becoming a bird in the next life cycle. When Richardson arrived in the Sawi village with his wife and child, he came on a canoe. Fearful the canoe would tip, he handed his baby to a villager. That made a tremendous impression he learned of much later. Why? For him, it symbolized only concern for physical welfare. For the villager, to hand a child over to another was a sign of great trust in another.

The meaning of symbols (act or deed or object) is derived from, or arisen out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows.[7] Culture is a shared system of meanings. It is learned, revised, maintained and defined in the context of people interacting. A policeman walks up to your door, you open the door. What is your first word to her or him? "What's the trouble?" a policeman is a visible symbol indicating there is trouble somewhere and probably in connection with you (he's at your door). Remember the old ad for Mitchum underarm deodorant? A woman in a uniform gets a phone call; she rushes through a shower; she has breakfast, grabs a cab, and runs for the airplane. Then she sits down in the pilot's seat. The ad is sending more than one message! The observer assumes she was a stewardess.

Meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person dealing with the things he or she encounters. In other words, culture is a worldview oriented map. It is not simply a map we consult. It is also a map we ourselves create. Different cultures are like different schools of navigation designed to cope with different terrains and seas. If we take this process of cultural meaning seriously, we must of necessity take research seriously. For our work is essentially cross-cultural and

[4] James P. Spradley, p. 13.
[5] Engel, Get Them to Listen, 20.
[6] Spradley, Participant Observation, 8.
[7] Ibid., 9.

liable to gross errors in misreading meanings and symbols.

Demanded by Discretion and Prudence

It is a Christian duty to exercise discrimination. “Why don’t you judge for yourselves what is right?” asked Jesus (Lk. 12:57). The sense here is discerning what is fitting to do in the circumstances. The Christian is not called to credulity. He or she has an ability to discriminate, to “judge righteous judgment” (John 8:15). One of the purposes of the Proverbs is “to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young” (1:4). These two words appear together only three times in the Bible (Prov. 1:4; 8:12; Dan. 2:14). In their deepest theological significance, they are intimately related to the knowledge of God. But they also carry the sense of tact, discrimination, shrewdness and good sense. The book of Proverbs, says Derek Kidner’s commentary, emphasizes that the godly man or woman is in the best sense a person of affairs, who takes the trouble to know his or her way about, and plans his or her course realistically (22:3, “a shrewd man sees danger and hides himself; but the simple go on and suffer for it”). In fact, discretion’s most basic meaning is the power of forming plans. As positive virtues, we are exhorted “to preserve sound judgment and discernment” (3:21), to listen to sound words “that you may maintain discretion” (5:1). “Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion”(11:22). That is, a woman who discerns what is appropriate or in good taste (cf. 1 Sam. 25:33, Dan. 2:14). it is the art of acting circumspectly (1 chron. 22:12; 2 chron. 2:12; Ezra 8:18 where Sherebiah is described as a “capable man” [NIV]). The same emphasis appears in the word “prudence” in the etymological sense of “foresight,” (Luke 16:8).

This prudence makes use of instruments. Two are mentioned by Engel.[8] (1) The pretesting of strategy. Out of more than 100 American Christian films tested in an African country, only a handful was correctly understood by the audience. These had been proven to be suitable for showing. Similarly, one mission Board, Bibles for the world, has made a practice of distributing Bibles to telephone owners in some parts of the world. However, in many areas, the Bibles have been immediately discarded. Why? The cultural assumption is that a sacred book should not be distributed through the mails. The Bible was so distributed; therefore, the Bible could not be a significant holy book. Obviously a different strategy is demanded. Pretesting will look for it. Not only is stewardship of funds at stake, so also is the result of our evangelistic method. (2) Measurement of effectiveness. In oral (so called non- literate cultures), boards need to examine the wisdom of extensive Christian literature of the traditional sort. Research in Brazil discloses people there read photo novels and comic books. In Korea there are comic book rental libraries always filled with children. Surely this raises questions about the wisdom of translating standard theological treatises to reach the multitudes of Brazil or Korea.

Orientation of Research: Problem Definition

Assets and Liabilities in Research

Unlike the cultural anthropologist, the missionary usually is not troubled by the choice of a society in which to study. Orientation is usually always toward the country in which he or she serves. as such, certain problems do not need to be faced: availability of housing and supplies; whether a stranger may expect a friendly reception by the society; should the family accompany the missionary; should time be taken to learn the language; prior knowledge of the field before arrival (assuming that a missionary either has been there already or at least done some preparatory research).

[8] Engel, *Get Them to Listen*, Chapter 1.

At the same time, his or her location on the field may create other problems an anthropologist does not have to the same degree. There will not be the amount of time that can be freely given to nothing but to research. After all, the primary task of a missionary is not research but evangelism and discipling. Further, he or she will not be able to achieve the objectivity needed of a research. A study of church growth may disclose problems of so sensitive a nature that personal relationships with the church or the mission could be damaged by publishing the results.

The researcher will face heavy ethical decisions prompted by a Christian conscience not often shared by the anthropologist or ethnographer. Further, there will be problems created by his or her Christian vocation. Suppose the researcher intends to study the convertibility of the Muslim in Pakistan. Research into the character of Islam in Pakistan will have to be done. What are its ethnic distinctives? How animistic is it? Muslims will be more reluctant to talk to missionaries about this than to so-called objective ethnographers. We have run into that problem already in Philadelphia. Further, how can one in doing this study, totally "put aside" (or bracket off) a deep desire to share Christ? This may be part of the reason why so little study has been done of non-Christian religions by missionaries through fieldwork.

Why is the Research being Done?

Research is of value, says Engel, when it is undertaken for the right reasons. And even for the missionary, there can be improper motivations of many sorts. Engel mentions several such improper motives: (1) everyone else is doing it, the evangelical research Bandwagon syndrome. It sends people to one more successful church growth seminar at Garden Grove, one more Nouthetic counseling weekend. (2) A search for the Holy Grail. The assumption is that research in church growth in India will provide you with a magic key previously undiscovered by experience and intuition. This forgets that research largely verifies previously established hunches. Its major benefit is greater certainty that the right strategy is being pursued.[9] (3) To convince everyone that "I am right." Research is seen as a way to demonstrate the truth of my personal claims, to buttress my assumptions.

Many of these improper motivations flow out of the researcher. Ethnographers are allowed to go into a situation with no awareness of the biases they bring to it from their own cultures and personalities. As an exercise, read some ethnographies and try to analyze what the statements say about the ethnographer rather than the group under discussion. Robert Redfield romanticized rural peasant life. In his case study on Tepotzlan, this was displayed in his emphasis on its more harmonious life. Oscar Lewis analyzed the same village years later, and he saw things like hostility, greed, and jealousy. Lewis had a personal view of life that allowed for, if it did not emphasize, the darker side of life.

The attitude of the researcher is crucial. It is the background, the initial framework, against which similarities and differences in the studied group are assessed. It conditions the evaluative tone of the description of the studied field. It has been suggested that the less the ethnographer likes his or her own culture, the more favorably the alternatives may be viewed. So Redfield may have studied Tepotzland with the idea that his culture--urban Chicago--represented a deterioration of the human condition. What are your attitudes toward the city in which you were raised? How does it parallel the city to which you go to study? This question becomes even more crucial when your object of research is your own people. Research has only begun to deal with this problem. I have still to find any practical suggestions in this area. Here are a few tentative ones of my own:

[9] Ibid., 27.

- Take time to study your own personality, and cultural attitudes. List your own personality-oriented choices. Do you tend towards perfectionism? Are you heavily oriented towards results? Aare you accessible, open to others? Do you have a high degree of flexibility? Are you frustrated in a personal role that demands a high degree of participation?
- Keep track of those things that irritate you in your new culture, those areas where "culture shock" appears the quickest. Why don't "they" come on time to appointments? Why is it that my students in the seminary can't think analytically? Why are the traffic patterns not only frightening but irritating to me? Ask yourself, "what does this tell me about myself?" not simply, "What does this tell me about them?" In your experience you will come across breakthrough times. a new incident will suddenly flash across your experience that will produce a strong change. Build on it. What have I learned through this *kairos* time about myself? Don't use such times only as times of insight into others.
- Be open to total revision of all your previously held value judgments about the object of your study, about your "adopted" culture. Look at yourself as someone in process. You are on a pilgrimage. What has this research taught you about yourself that needs changing? Learn to do ethnography in the course of actually doing original research.[10] If you are a person who does not like change or finds self-change threatening, you will have trouble with research. Are you stubborn and hold original ideas tightly? You will have trouble.

All these personal factors can inhibit proper expectation for research. Research does not replace intuition and experience. But it does reduce, not eliminate, the possibility of error. Uncertainty remains. And this, in terms of what the Bible says about sanctification, is a good thing. It provides you with a growing edge for the future. However, if you have a hard time living with uncertainties, you will have a hard time with research.

What is the Real Problem?

The research must shed light on real, not theoretical problems. Engel focuses on the problem of fuzziness and generality in this connection.[11] We have found this to be the major struggle in drawing up DMin project proposals as you will quickly find out. And yet, this question "Is the single most difficult step in the entire research process."[12] It may also be the single most important step in the entire process. How does one arrive at the real problem? Spradley suggests at least two steps:

1. Consult with informants to determine urgent research topics. Begin with informant-expressed needs. Then develop a research agenda to relate these topics to the enduring concerns of missiology. Informants can identify urgent research more clearly than the researcher. Spradley, for example, began with an interest in the social structure of an alcoholism treatment center. His informants were long-time drunks who were constantly moving in and out of the Seattle city jail. They suggested more urgent research agendas: "Why don't you study what goes on in that jail?" they would ask. He switched his goals and studied the culture of the jail, the social structure of inmates, how drunks were oppressed by the jail system. He found that being in jail affected a person's identity. It even made a man want to go out and get drunk. In jail a man learned to "hustle." This reinforced his identity as a tramp trying to "make it" on the streets. This theme became the thesis of the ethnography: jailing drunks, rather than being therapeutic,

[10] Spradley, Participant Observation, 47.
[11] Engel, Get Them To Listen, 28-30
[12] Ibid., 29.

actually played an important role in creating the identity of tramp. His thesis became the title of his published ethnography, “After 30 days in jail, you owe yourself a drink.” Al this, by the way, is one of the reasons why we require the approval of your board or agency for your research project.

2. Insure that your research is what Spradley calls “strategic research.”[13] This kind of research does not begin with some particular culture or area of the world. It begins with an interest in human problems. These problems suggest needed changes and information to make such changes. Spradley himself suggested topics like: (1) a health care system that provides adequate care for all members of the society; (2) equal rights and opportunities for all classes of people; (3) socially responsible corporations that operate in the public interest as well as for private interest.

Along these same lines, here are some I would suggest: (1) How, if possible, can a missionary from Japan actually be involved in helping a younger church to grow? (2) How can missionaries effectively present Christ in Taiwan to “ancestor worshippers”? (3) How do right wing totalitarian governments encourage and hinder church growth in an urban setting? (4) What kind of Christian literature is most effective in evangelization of the Muslim culture?

After identifying the general area, strategic research translates that into a specific research project. For example, Phil Schwab of team in Taiwan took question two I have listed. He researched “ancestor worship” in Taiwan and what it meant for the Taiwanese. Then he prepared a series of home Bible studies of an evangelistic sort for this group. He had several Taiwanese evangelists help him to field test the materials. Then he revamped his studies and redid the tapes. What was his final goal in the study? The final goal was the production of a series of six evangelistic tapes suitable for use among ancestor worshippers in Taiwan.

How Will the Data be Used?

The research project, in other words, actually is phased into strategy. This is simply saying that our research remains applied research. Unused research is an unwarranted luxury. It is also a factor that must be dealt with at the beginning of the research as well as at the end. In short, it is ethnography with a purpose. We always ask, “ethnography of what?”

Data Needed - Common Core

Obviously the specifics of each research task vary sharply. However, there is a common core of data. Engel sees as falling into four categories.

- Awareness: what does the research group know and comprehend about the subject(s) under consideration?
- Attitudes: how do they feel about the subject(s) under consideration? What is the reaction of the Muslim in Pakistan to this piece of Christian literature? How does an ancestor worshipper in Taiwan react to this particular approach in Bible study? What is the reaction of an Indonesian to a gospel presentation by a Japanese missionary in contrast to, e.g., an American missionary?
- Lifestyles: what are the important motivations and felt needs which affect the way in which communication is seen as being relevant to the person? This was a key for Don Richardson in

[13] James P. Spradley, The Ethnographic Interview (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1979), 15.

breaking through the Sawi worldview to make the gospel genuinely heard.

- Decision-making styles: how do the researched group members arrive at decisions? is it an individual decision? A group decision? If it is a group decision, for example, what are the dynamics that enter into the group movement? What are the effects of interaction with family members? With other significant persons such as the head elder of a village? With the cultural patterns recreated by their being in an urban setting as opposed to a rural setting? With patterns of media exposure? Is the media in an urban setting the best way to present the gospel? What forms of media are best? What forms are worst? Should it be tried at all?

Search for Patterns

In all this, the missionary is searching to discover and understand the cultural patterns of the society being studied. It is a search for pattern. As a search for pattern, it is a holistic search. It is more than merely the testing of hypotheses. It is an appropriate check for the results of informal ethnography. But it is a distorting framework for the research phase as a whole.

This is why participant observation is a key to understanding. The field worker becomes aware of the complexities and contradictions in what people say and in what they do. As much as possible, he seeks to discard his culturally assigned role as "outsider" and becomes an "insider." learning answers to the four categories of Engel implies direct, prolonged contact with group members.

Participant observation also avoids certain mistakes in understanding cultures. He or she learns to distinguish between real versus ideal culture. What people say is "right and proper" is ideal culture. Yet people do not often follow their own ideals, but observe actual behavior points to the realities, rather than the ideals, of cultural life. This gives insight into how well cultural ideals are followed, how they are enforced, what happens to people who violate them, how various situations cause rules and behavior to be modified.

This distinction is important for missions. For example, you determine to study evangelistic methods in bringing Indonesian Muslims to Christ. You study Islamic standards of behavior regarding conversion. You know the Qu'ran declares death for conversion out of Islam. You remember that in Saudi Arabia that rule is carefully followed. You know of the law of apostasy in Islam. All this is ideal Islam. In studying Islam in Indonesia, however, you know there is a large gap between real Islam and ideal Islam on these matters. For example, there is a deep interpenetration of Islam and animism in Indonesia. In fact, it is more animist than Muslim. You suspect the law of apostasy does not hold very strongly for Indonesian Muslims. That, in fact, is why so many have come to Christ there. You begin to sense that Islam is not the ideal monolith you originally thought it was. Participant observation provides this information.

Participant observation also offers safeguards against what anthropologists call reactivity. Reactivity refers to the effect that an observer (or any kind of investigator) has upon the phenomenon he or she is attempting to study. Human beings have an impressive ability to guess what the researcher wants from them. And, if the culture is a shame-oriented culture, they do not want the researcher to lose face either and be shamed. So they alter their behavior to please the researcher. Or even to confuse and deceive the student. Participant observation minimizes this danger. Living with a people makes it impossible for them to hide everything. The longer one lives with them, the more difficult it is for them to fully conceal. Further, the longer one lives with them, the less likely that the presence of the researcher will produce unknown effects upon the behavior being studied.

Data Collection

Most disciplines have a standard methodology. We have relied mostly on those provided by cultural anthropology. But Engel has helped orient us to communication skills. And that in turn relies more on organization skills developed out of sociology (e.g., statistics information). Missiology, and more particularly the demands of the DMin research project, makes use of all of these. Where demanded, we make use of ethno history, sociology, methods of anthropology.

Determining what to use and when must be determined on the basis of what we intend to do, what and how we are going to write. We can slant the final project towards a more historical approach. Or we can focus on anthropological themes in determining felt needs of a culture. But our ultimate goal is one of application. And, for that reason, we can never simply write ethno history or anthropology.

It is important to make up your mind as much as possible early in your study here. This will seriously affect the decisions you make as to what methodological tools you will especially use. If you are weak in these areas, you will have to do continued reading in these areas. And this also is best done while you are here. You may not have such resources in the area where you are going.

What is your Thesis?

Are you presenting a case study on the growth of a single church in one area? or different churches in a single city? In such a case, you will need to do a great deal of statistical work. You'll need data for line graphs, material for working out graphs of various sorts. You'll need to explore historical matters in connection with the graph. You'll need to go into anthropological issues to explain the graph. And you must explain in such a way that the reader will know what you are about. All this, of course, presupposes you can get the statistics and that they are fairly accurate. This is often a great problem in such studies. You'll probably need a whole chapter or appendix on statistics alone.

Perhaps your approach will rely heavily on ethno history. In fact, you might be driven to this if you find you cannot get statistics. You decide to concentrate on the links between culture and the history of the church. That will require reading in the methods of ethno history. And here you will discover that ethno history is a developing science. So you must look at articles to find out what it's all about. Maybe even take a course in a university in our area or in your area of labor. In short, the direction of your purpose or goal will affect what tools you select. How will you set up collecting the information? How will you explain it? How will it fit into the whole design of your project?

Why?

Why have you chosen this particular subject? Why do you think it's important? Note that all the DMin project proposals begin with sections explaining the setting in which you have made your decision to research a particular item.

What if you are going to investigate any theory? William Conley in his study on the Kalimantan Kenyah uses the cultural theme idea of Opler. So he must first explain what Opler's idea is and he must also illustrate its weaknesses as a model (what it may not explain). Conley, by the way, is not strong in this area. How did you test the theory? Does your theory explain how churches grow under certain conditions? What effect does an urban setting have on church growth?

If you are writing a work and primarily focusing on historical skills, the dangers in this area will be especially acute. You will tend to be dominated by the past and not by the future. You must work at demonstrating that history is not something that just belongs to the past.

Where?

Where did you collect your materials? There are abundant resources beyond our capacity to assimilate. Your study should include a chapter on methodology where you acknowledge in detail your sources. If the IVCF at the University of Pennsylvania is the major or a major source, acknowledge that. It will help future researchers to carry on where you left off. If there are material sources that were not of much help, say that also.

You may also discuss what avenues were open to you for study which you did not use. Explain why you didn't use them. This opens the door to further research for those who follow you. It also protects you against the problem of having so much material that you can't evaluate it and of being judged improperly for having neglected it. It also leaves the way open for you to go back and keep doing more work. It ties your work to subsequent research. You might even recommend further areas of a study demanded by this line of approach.

Who?

Who has helped you? This is not just a matter of thanks and honor to them. You are acknowledging people who have opened doors. If private archives have been opened, you should acknowledge this. This is especially appropriate for any documents not open to the general public.

if you are using questionnaires, be especially careful. Your writing will need to make clear what kind of people received the questionnaire. a copy of the full questionnaire should be included in the project. Try and get such questionnaires out very early in the process of preparation. Responses are notoriously slow to such instruments. What kind of people answered? National pastors? School teachers? Every member of a congregation? Missionaries?

Interviews are also important. The thesis may be entirely dependent on interviews. If you need a translator, this should be stated. Say something about the translator.

Cover also the width of your investigation. How many copies of the questionnaire were sent? How many returned? How did you test the reliability of the answers of the informant?

How?

This is the most important organizational question of all. How did you get your data, test it, or assemble it? What criteria did you use? How did you write statistics? How reliable were they? How effective were they for the purposes for which you intended to use them? Do they really prove what you say they do? What problems did you face in reaching the data you presented? You'll have to explain this. There will be irregularities that keep recurring. Did you find two primary sources that conflicted requiring you to make a final and important decision? Did you meet any problems in library or archival materials? Were there any problems of careless keeping of records? How did you establish rapport with informants and respondents? Were there problems? Where?

What kind of presentation have you decided on? Say what you're going to do so the reader can have an insight into your method from the start. Will there be any graphic arts, line graphs or bar graphs? Have you used any important theory from anthropology or sociology in order to set out your data or to measure it against the facts? If so, what theory? Whose?

There are no two charters on methodology that are alike. In short, introduce the reader to what you are going to do. Be open, straight forward, share your research.

Conducting General Research Studies

There are some types of research which are more general in nature and actually entail a number of research methods. In this section we will review a few of these. For each general research study guide, the purpose of that research will be explained. In addition there will be an explanation of the methods required and the types of information that you can expect to find and/or for which you should be looking. The general research study guides in this section are:

- Model study guide
- Community analysis study guide
- People group/ethnographic study guide
- Effective evaluation study guide

Model Study Guide

Purpose: A model study is an examination of how someone has gone about doing things. its goal is to uncover the developmental process that leads to the results rather than the outcomes. By studying the activities of other ministries (or secular programs) you can learn principles that can be applied in your own context. Developmental process goes beyond the "what" to reveal the "who," the "why," and the "how." By revealing principles for doing ministry, developmental process also teaches us a theology (e.g., a theology of compassion for single moms).

Primary methods:

- o Background research (using case studies, pamphlets, annual reports, brochures, etc.)
- o interviews
- o Participant observation

Information to collect:

- Identification of model. Include:
    - o Name of model
    - o Location of model
    - o How you did your research (who you interviewed, what you did your observation of, whether or not you had written material to review, etc.)
- History of model (reflective historical sketch, not just bare chronological account). include:
    - o When ministry was founded
    - o Original perception of need
    - o Original vision for meeting that need
    - o People involved in starting ministry
    - o Beginning size of ministry
    - o Developmental timeline
    - o Changes made in vision or program
    - o Growth/decline of program
    - o Significant events in life of program
- Description of model. Include:
    - o Organizational structure – run by a church, a few individuals, a board of directors, a denominational office – who is accountable to whom
    - o Program content – what is being done, for whom – is program full-time, during workers'

leisure time, evenings, weekends, etc.
    - Theological basis – what is stated as theological (or biblical) basis – how program reflects this
    - Cost and support of program – who pays the cost (beneficiaries of program, others in church/community, denomination, government, other non-local sources, etc.)
    - Intended audience – extent target audience is being reached – other audiences benefiting from program
    - Skills required for program
- Evaluation of model. Include:
    - Ministry principles discovered in this model
    - What model does well
    - What model leaves undone
    - How principles (not program pieces) apply to your ministry project

Community Analysis Study Guide

Purpose: There are two major purposes in doing a community analysis study. One has to do with understanding the needs of the community as identified by the community itself. Too often ministries enter a community, look at various aspects of it, and determine what they see as needs. However, what an outsider might consider a need may have no relevance to the community residents. The other purpose in doing a community study is to identify who the people groups are, the type of community it is, and the feelings of those in the community in order to know how to most effectively introduce the gospel to that community.

Primary methods:
- Community walk through
- Spiritual mapping
- Participant observation
- Informal interviews
- Formal interviews
- Library research (for cultural and sociological background information)

Demographic Data Gathering

Information to Collect:
- Who lives in the community?
    - Racial breakdown
    - Age breakdown
    - Economic level
    - Educational level
    - Family structure
    - Employment structure
    - English language ability (in immigrant communities)
    - Generational breakdown (in immigrant communities)

- What type of community is it?[14]
    - Integral community – individuals are in close contact, sharing many concerns; they also participate in activities of the larger community.
    - Parochial community – having strong ethnic identity or homogeneous character; self-contained, independent of larger community, screens out what does not conform to its ways.
    - Diffuse community – often homogeneous with many characteristics in common but little active internal life; not tied to larger community; little local involvement with neighbors.
    - Stepping-stone community – an active community playing a game of "musical chairs;" people participate in community affairs not for sake of the community, but to "get ahead" in a career or some other non-local point of destination.
    - Transitory community – community where population change has occurred or is occurring; fractured by clusters of people (old-timers vs. newcomers); little collectivity.
    - Anomic community – really a non-community; individualized; no cohesion; social distances between people; no barriers to outside influences; incapacity to respond in common for action.
- Where is the power in the community?
    - Strong governmental representation
    - Churches form power base
    - Social agencies
    - Divided power (some groups have power, some do not)
    - No power (a marginalized community)

People Group/Ethnographic Study Guide

Purpose: People group studies are done in order to acquaint you with the culture (or subculture) of the people group(s) to whom you plan to minister. This in turn allows for proper contextualization. It is important to draw distinctions between form and meaning in order to get to the underlying worldview issues. Also, it is best to use both an etic approach (through the eyes of the researcher) and an emic approach (through the eyes of the people themselves).

Primary methods:

- Participant observation
- Ethnographic interview
- Possibly some secondary literature analysis

Information to collect:

- General characteristics
    - Identification of the group
    - Metropolitan population; location pattern if discernible
    - U.S. population
    - Population in country of origin (if immigrant group)
    - Other countries where found (if immigrant group); other U.S. cities where found
    - Circumstances of immigration to U.S. or migration within U.S. (or simply within the city)

[14] From Rachelle B. Warren and Donald Warren, *The Neighborhood Organizer's Handbook* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977)

    - Language(s)
    - Literacy/English language proficiency
    - Religion(s)
- Provision of services
    - agencies working with the group and services offered
        - governmental
        - secular
        - religious
- Basic needs identified: physical, psychological, educational, etc.
- Evaluation of the level at which these needs are being met

Christian influence

- Percent Christian
- Names of churches/denominations/agencies
- Names and addresses of pastors serving in metropolitan area
- Evaluation of the strength of the Christian community
- Evangelism being conducted
- Christian literature/Bibles available

Influence of other religions

- Cults at work among group members
- Organized expressions of non-Christian religions
- Non-Christian religious leaders in metropolitan area who belong to and/or are working with the people group
- Places of worship (non-Christian) in metropolitan area
- Major teachings
- Major festivals, ceremonies, customs associated with the religion
- Evaluation of the strength of religious commitment
- Evaluation of the changes in religious commitment taking place due to immigration and other factors
- General cultural pieces

Patterns of behavior

- Relationship building
- Values
- Underlying assumptions
- Types of employment

Effective Evaluation Study Guide

Purpose: No ministry is worth doing if it is not worth evaluating. This is true not only of new ministries but also of old ministries that might have worked well in the past but are being continued only because “that’s the way we’ve always done it.” in terms of your project, you may want to have the actual ministry (or portions of it) evaluated, as well as have your overall project evaluated.

Primary methods:

- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Pre- and post-testing

Information to collect:

- Accomplishment of goals
- Goals met
- Goals unmet – unexpected setbacks
- Strengths
    - Personnel
    - materials
    - Presentation
- Weaknesses
    - Personnel
    - Materials
    - Presentation
- Recommendations for change

Guide to Specific Research Methods

In this section, more specific research methods and how to use them effectively will be explored. In social science research, there is a saying: “garbage in, garbage out” (GAGO). What this means is that no matter how good a writer or presenter an individual might be, if the individual does not have the right information to begin with, he or she will not be able to get accurate findings.

Some methods can be accessed again in order to fill in gaps (such as rereading portions of a book, or going back to the census), but other methods cannot. for example, once questionnaires are administered it is virtually impossible to get those exact same people to answer one or two additional questions that the researcher later realized were necessary. And if the researcher cannot get the exact same people, he or she cannot substitute others as it destroys the scientific integrity of the research. Also, it is difficult to call an interviewee after the fact and ask more questions. sometimes the researcher finds a very congenial person willing to do that, but more often than not the persons being interviewed are busy people who cannot and will not give the researcher extra time just because he or she didn’t think things through well enough in advance.

The moral of the story is that researchers have to carefully think through ahead of time how they are going to use each piece of research. The following pages should assist you.
The research methods to be covered in this section are:

- Library research guide
- Literature review guide
- Annotated bibliography guide
- Interview guide
- Questionnaire guide
- Participant observation guide
- Walk through guide
- Demographic statistics guide
- Census web site guide
- Focus group guide

Library Research Guide

It can be very disconcerting to be given a topic to research in a library and not have the foggiest notion of how to find anything. Most students understand the idea of library catalogs (usually on computers now), but it can still be somewhat daunting. You would love to go into a library and ask the librarian for help with the idea that the librarian would then turn over all the material needed. However, that doesn’t happen. The librarian will point you to the computers and tell you how to access various files, and you must do the rest.

Doing library research is not the same as going into a library for a few minutes to find an interesting book to read. It takes time—a lot of time. You need to set aside a period of at least two to three hours (and don’t forget to bring change and/or a copy card to copy articles).

- Get the names of one or two authors who are well known in the field being researched. If you are not familiar with any authors, ask a professor or sometimes a librarian for assistance. you are looking for two types of authors— those who may have written quite some time ago but are known for their contributions to the field when it was new or possibly going through a drastic change, and those who are more contemporary. Find material by each of these authors. Look for books on the shelves, or get the librarian's help in how to find articles in journals or magazines.

- For the more contemporary authors, look at the bibliographies at the end of their works. If you start with the newest work, you will find works by the same author and others, all of which precede the newest work. You can then access those works, look in their bibliographies, and continue the process. If you begin to notice certain authors and/or articles being referenced a lot, you have probably unearthed a very important source.
- If you find a book in the stacks of a library, you should look at all the books around it, too, while you are in that particular section of the library. The library system locates books with similar interests in the same area, and you will undoubtedly find additional help here.

How to get data from Books

Selecting the books/articles (to be sure they are useful)

- Skim – look at the table of contents, the back cover, and possibly flip through the book to see subheadings (if they are not listed in the table of contents). This will give you a very general idea of what the book is about and how it is approaching the subject.
- Scan – if the book (or article etc.) still looks interesting, read the first and last sections (a few paragraphs) of each chapter that fits your topic, and maybe the first paragraph of each subheading. This will give you a better idea of the general thesis of the work. articles in journals usually begin with an abstract which can be very useful in determining the author's perspective.
- Scrutinize – finally, if you still think it is important, read carefully those sections pertaining to what you are interested in. even in this stage if you start reading something that does not have relevance to what you are studying, skip over it and go to the next section.

Taking notes

- Always make sure that before you write down even one note you write out all bibliographic information (check with the Turabian style guide for what you need or other style guide you have chosen). There is nothing more frustrating than having a "perfect" quote that you can't use because you can't figure out where you got it from.
- Whether you are writing a quote or paraphrasing an important point, be sure to mark down the page number. If a quote carries over to a second page, be sure to indicate where that happens. This is important because you may want to use only a portion of the quote in your final paper, and you need to know which page that portion is on.
- Develop your own system of note taking. You can use 3x5 cards (or larger cards), you can use legal pads, or you can enter notes directly into your computer. Hint: it is usually better to quote things in your notes. You can always paraphrase later, but if you want a quote and didn't take your notes that way, you either have to forget about it or waste time going back to the book/article.
- When copying quotes, be sure to copy them exactly. For example, if a quote writes out "united states," don't be tempted to put "U.S." in your notes. If you add a word or two to make a quote read better in your sentence, use brackets []. If you leave out a portion of a quote that isn't necessary, indicate this by using three dots with spaces in between (. . .).

Organizing Notes

Everyone has (or needs to develop) his or her own system of organizing notes—from giant stacks of scraps of paper to a well-organized filing system of some type. For a ten- page paper you can get away with the "scraps" approach, but this could be devastating to you when doing a project of this magnitude. Therefore, we strongly urge you to be as organized as possible.

One way to organize your work is to make a file folder for each chapter (or use an expandable file with sections for each chapter). In these folders you can put a number of items. First, you can put resources into the folder. Resources can include copies of articles, names of books/articles suggested by someone else, and various brochures, newsletters, or resource papers collected. You can also keep all your notes in those files (or have a separate card file divided by chapter for notes or whatever works best for you).

The advantage of beginning with a file for each chapter can be seen when you are reading an article for one chapter and come across an important section for another chapter. For example, suppose you are reading and taking notes on theology of missions and in the middle of an article you find statistics on tribal populations in Nigeria that could be helpful for your demographic chapter. Simply write out the data you need (being sure to include bibliographic material and page number), and then put it in the appropriate folder where you can forget about it until you start the demographic chapter.

Literature Review Guide

What is a literature review? A literature review is a comprehensive, critical summarization of the written research that has preceded your project report. It is an analysis of writings on a specific topic over time from the earliest recognized work on the topic through the present time. Depending on the topic, the relevant literature may cover several different academic or scientific disciplines or one very narrowly defined discipline, a time period of several hundred years or only a decade, varied theoretical empirical questions all related to the same topic or only a very limited number of topical interests. If it is a biblical/theological theme, the writings may begin with classics from a number of centuries ago and then follow the thought as it progresses through the current times. If it is a literature review on a sociological topic such as globalization, the student may not have to go as far back in time to begin but will have to locate some of the earliest writings and trace the thought forward. Your job is to organize that literature around your particular research question. Potential sources for such a review include periodicals and journals, published books, abstracts, technical and research reports, doctoral dissertations, unpublished manuscripts, book reviews and interviews, non-print media.

What is the process of developing a literature review? A literature review is very much like doing detective work. You should use the steps to doing library research in the previous section. You begin by plunging into the literature somewhat randomly. You follow up leads—studies referenced several times, an important name used in several articles, a particular theory. Once the student has located the oldest work on the topic, he/she should write out the basic premise and conclusions of that work. Then the student should move forward to each succeeding work and determine what that work has to offer. It could be a critique of the previous work, a different way of looking at the topic or testing a hypothesis, an analysis of how the passage of time might change the initial premise, etc.

The point is that the student should not repeat the same thing covered in an earlier work but only write up what is new. Whenever possible, collect (photocopy) the articles you come across that seem relevant. Remember your analysis of the literature is ultimately going to be framed by your particular concern in the project. Therefore, as you become conversant with the literature, you will begin to identify those portions that are important to you and those that are irrelevant.

You may want to make as full use as possible of BTS's library in beginning this literature search. a librarian can provide you with an orientation to the library facilities. Don't forget, however, that the seminary library is just the beginning of your detective work. Much more useful resources may be available to you in your ministry area, depending again on the nature of your project.

In the course of doing an applied research project you will most likely have to do more than one literature review. For example, you may have to do one on the biblical/ theological foundation of the project. You may also have to do one on a sociological theme such as globalization or a ministry theme such as church planting. These reviews are best done in chapters treating those same themes in different ways. For example, a literature review on church planting could be combined in a chapter analyzing some models of church planting and determining what model is best for your particular context.

Annotated Bibliography Guide

Yet another type of study related to library research is an annotated bibliography. You need to compile an annotated bibliography of approximately 30 items drawn from books, journals, and magazines, focusing on the geographical area of your interest and/or the topic under consideration for your DMin research project as part of the post-assignment for the first project module.

The purpose of this bibliography is to assist you in beginning the search for useable written materials that will help you in your major research area. The bibliography is not to be considered a final perfected bibliography but rather a help to you to get started in your search for materials. An annotation is a brief description of the work's contents or relevance to your research. A bibliography may be annotated either in whole or in part. The annotation need not be a complete sentence, but it should begin with a capital and end with a period. The annotation begins on the line following the entry proper and should be indented at least five spaces. Turabian (section 16.2.1, page 148) gives us this example:

Format for Citation:

Author Last, First. Title. Location of Publisher: Publisher, Year of Pub.
Annotation

Example:

Toulmin, Stephen. The Uses of Argument. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958.
This is the seminal text in describing the structure of an argument in non-symbolic language. It will be useful for my discussion of the use of argument in theological discourse and in preaching. It is a scholarly text and has stood the test of time even though some of the theory is now dated and superseded by new theories.

The following are guidelines on how an annotation is constructed:

An annotation is a note added by way of comment or explanation to a book or journal citation. Its purpose is to mention briefly the major thesis of the book/article and something of how the thesis is developed in the content of the item.

The annotation should note the uniqueness of the listing. This might be a new idea or thesis it presents or new data to support an old thesis. Its distinctiveness may lie in the audience it seeks to reach, perhaps the clarity with which the thesis is presented.

The annotation should make some brief critical evaluation of the item that will be useful later to the reader. It should seek to answer the question, "why should the reader interested in the general topic of the dissertation want to read this item?" This evaluation should not be lengthy. An annotation is not a book review.

The annotation should not be longer than one or two paragraphs. It should be long enough to quickly recall for the reader or you the significance of the item. Annotations of only one or two lines seldom achieve this purpose (even though the Turabian example above is shorter).

Each annotation should begin by listing the following information in full: (a) the author or editor's name: (b) the full title of the book or journal article; (c) if a book, the place of publication and the name of the publisher; (d) if a journal article, the name of the journal and volume number (e.g., vol. 2, no. 6); (e) the date of publication; (f) the number of pages; (g) if a book, whether it contains indexes.

Interview Guide

Interviews can be used for a variety of purposes and they can range from informal conversations to very rigidly structured and taped interviews. The type of interview and its accompanying methodology varies according to what you want to accomplish with it.

Informal interviews

These can be helpful in a number of situations where you want to get the "feel" of what is going on. You do not tape these "interviews" and you usually do not have the chance to take notes. You need to keep things in your mind and then write them down as soon as you get a chance—even if it's only taking a minute to jot down a couple key phrases and some form of identification, and you can fill in the rest later on. Two uses for this type of interview are as follows:

1. Community study: when you are doing a community study, it is extremely helpful just to chat with "the man (or woman or child) on the street" to find out their feelings. Even with informal interviews your conversation is not just chit-chat but is calculated to get information. For example, you can enter a store to buy something and talk to the cashier. In small corner stores, cashiers are often owners or relatives of owners. You can comment on how nice the store is and ask how long it has been in the community. From there you can ask whether the person lives in the community or travels from another area. You can also ask his or her opinion of the community—what do they like about it, what do they not like, would they live there if they had a chance to live somewhere else, etc.
2. Ethnography: when you do participant observation, perhaps of a homeless shelter, you want to understand how the "clients" are feeling or thinking about what is going on around them. If you come with a notebook and pen, they may just run away. But if you are assisting the volunteers in dishing out the evening meal or making up the cots, you may have an opportunity to briefly interact with the clients. To glean helpful information this way often takes time because of the

issue of trust, but it is extremely useful.

Semi-structured open-ended interviews

This is the type of interview you would do if you wanted to find out from twelve pastors how leadership is developed in their churches, for example. You can usually use a tape recorder (always ask permission first), and you can always take notes.

Preparing for the interview

- List out all the information you want to get from the interview.
- Develop four or five major questions designed to stimulate the interviewee to volunteer all the information you need. You do not want to ask more questions than this (for a one or one and a half hour interview) because you want to give them the freedom to touch on the issues they see as important.
- Be sure the interviewee knows how much time you require. It can be very annoying if a person thinks he or she is being asked for a ten-minute chat and ends up being tied down for over an hour.

Asking the Questions

- Begin with the most general question you have. Let the interviewee do the talking. You can interject phrases such as, "I see" or "That's really interesting—I didn't know that" to keep the interview going.
- Take short notes of important points (be sure to ask for the proper spelling of names if they seem important).
- Jot down a point you want to go back to later. The idea of this type of interview is to use the interviewee's own words to probe. You can say something like, "a moment ago you mentioned something about freedom for the children. What did you mean by that?" When the interview begins to lag, go to your second question. Often the interviewee will actually touch on your other questions just in the course of what he/she is saying.
- When you see time is getting short, or the interviewee seems "antsy," quickly go through your questions and list of what you needed to know and make sure you've covered everything.
- Be sure to end with a very gracious thank you.

Writing up the interview

- Write up the interview as soon as you possibly can.
- Tapes should be transcribed verbatim by you or someone assisting you.
- Write up a short narrative (or make a list) of your impressions of the interview process and the interviewee's openness, attitude, etc.

Structured closed interviews

This type of interview is done when uniformity of answers is important. When to use this type of interview:

- Ethnographic interview (see more detail in next section): This type of interview is used when asking questions of key informants. for example, if you are doing a study of teenage moms and want to know why these young girls became mothers, you need to ask the same question of each girl in exactly the same way so that the variation in answers is truly due to their differing perspectives and not due to the nuances in the way you asked the question.

- Survey interview: This is useful when you want to take a survey of a community. You have a sheet with a list of pre-approved questions to ask each person. Again, questions are structured and asked the same way each time. This can be very helpful in determining needs assessment.

How to conduct the interview - This varies to some degree depending on whether you are doing a survey or working with an ethnographic informant.

Selection of interviewees: when doing a structured closed interview, you must determine ahead of time how to "sample" the population you are targeting. For example, to do a "needs assessment," you may decide to knock on every fifth house in a particular community. You also need to decide ahead of time what your alternative is going to be if no one is home or they do not want to do the interview.
Questions: when doing a structured closed interview, never allow the interview to be more than ten minutes long (five minutes is better). That means you must be very precise in determining what questions to ask and how to ask them. Questions should be read verbatim.

Recording answers: when doing a structured closed interview, the easiest thing to do is to have a sheet in front of you for each person, and simply write in the answers as you go down the list of questions. In an ethnographic situation this may not be possible.

Ethnographic interviews

An ethnographic interview is a specialized form of interview used to understand another people group's culture. People should be selected who represent the culture well. It may be wise to select males and females from a variety of age groups in order to determine if cultural mores have changed between generations. If the people group about which you want to learn is a relatively new group to the U.S., you may want to select first generation immigrants as well as second generation representatives (those born in this country).

Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people.[15] We are used to being the teachers and having those to whom we want to minister as the learners. In order to be effective, we must learn to switch our roles--they are the teacher, you are the student. This role switching is one of the most difficult things to do.

The three most important ethnographic elements are its explicit purpose, ethnographic explanations, and ethnographic questions.

1. Explicit purpose: when an ethnographer and informant meet together for an interview, both persons realize that the talking is supposed to go somewhere. The informant only has a hazy idea about its purpose; the ethnographer must make it clear. Each time they meet it is necessary to remind the informant where the interview is to go. Because ethnographic interviews involve purpose and direction, they will tend to be more formal than friendly conversations. Without being authoritarian, the ethnographer gradually takes more control of the talking, directing it in those channels that lead to discovering the cultural knowledge of the informant.
2. Ethnographic explanations: from the first encounter until the last interview, the ethnographer must repeatedly offer explanations to the informant. While learning an informant's culture, the informant also learns something--to become a teacher. Explanations facilitate this process.

[15] Spradley, 3.

3. Ethnographic Questions: There are three main types of ethnographic questions.

    1) Descriptive questions: This type enables a person to collect an ongoing sample of an informant's language. Descriptive questions are the easiest to ask and they are used in all interviews (e.g., "could you tell me what you do at the office?").
    2) Structural questions: These questions enable the ethnographer to discover information about domains, the basic units in an informant's cultural knowledge. They allow us to find out how informants have organized their knowledge (e.g., "what are all the different kinds of fish you caught on vacation?").
    3) Worldview questions: The ethnographer wants to find out what an informant means by the various terms used in his native language. Worldview questions enable the ethnographer to discover the dimensions of meaning which informants employ to distinguish the objects and events in their world (e.g., what's the difference between a bass and a northern pike?"). This type of question also gives the ethnographer an understanding of the "why" behind actions (e.g., the reason girls aren't encouraged to go to school in some cultures relates to how the culture views gender roles).

Questionnaire Guide

We are all familiar with questionnaires and have probably filled out more of them than we would ever have wanted to. However, questionnaires are extremely important for getting information from relatively large numbers of people. There are two equally important parts to a questionnaire— the questions and the answers. Some people think writing these questions and answers is simple, but this just is not true. Designing effective questionnaires is one of the hardest tasks of doing research. The problems lie in several areas which are addressed below.

Writing questions

Operationalization: This is a fancy name for figuring out exactly what question to ask. Even questions that seem easy to ask are not. For example, if you ask someone their age, they may feel embarrassed and either lie or skip the question. But if you give them intervals (0-9 years, 10-19 years, 20-29 years, etc.) from which to choose, the answers are not as exact but will often be more accurate. This is even truer when dealing with the sensitive issue of income.

A more difficult area is dealing with concepts. If you want to know the general commitment level of people in your church, you cannot ask them, "how committed are you to the church?" because they all understand the concept "committed" differently.

For example, some people truly believe they are committed to the church when they come to Sunday morning service once or twice a month but don't go to any other church. Other people question their commitment even though they go to all the meetings and teach Sunday school. They believe they should be doing more. So, how do you measure commitment?

The idea behind operationalization is for you as the researcher to decide what behaviors and attitudes adequately demonstrate the concept. This always takes more than one question. For our commitment example we may ask the question, "how often do you attend Sunday morning service?" you may ask them how important they think it is to participate in special work days of the church. You may also list a number of ministries and ask them to check off all those in which they regularly participate. Taken together (with one or two other questions), you can "measure" the commitment of the church as a whole.

Types of Questions

- General information questions - designed to elicit objective information from the respondents regarding their background, their environment, etc. (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, education, income, etc.).
- Behavior questions - designed to elicit objective information regarding habits, etc. (e.g., church attendance, recreational habits, sexual activity, etc.).
- Attitude questions - designed to elicit how a person thinks or "feels" about a topic--his/her inclinations, prejudices, ideas, fears and convictions.

Special cautions regarding attitude questions:

Plagiarism - This is one place plagiarism is encouraged, but make sure the borrowed question is about the attitude you want to study and not something different.

The attitude object: attitudes do not exist in the abstract but are about or toward something, and that something is often called the attitude object. The first step in the formulation of attitude questions is to make sure you know and clearly specify the attitude object--on what topic are you interested in getting opinions. Then it is essential that you pretest each question to weed out ambiguities. This can be done by asking people to restate the question in their own words.

Facets of attitudes include: 1) their content (what they're about); 2) their direction (positive, negative, neutral); and 3) their intensity (how strong is the attitude).

Strategies for measuring attitude strength-- you can: Build a strength dimension into the question itself so that evaluation and strength are measured at the same time, or use a separate question to assess the strength.

Components of attitudes

- Evaluative component, that is, whether the respondent likes or dislikes the object, favors or disfavors the object or in some other way has a pro or con attitude toward the object.
- Cognitive component - that is, what the respondent knows or thinks about the attitude object.
- Action component - that is, the respondent's willingness or intention to do something with regard to the object of the attitude.

Problems with attitude questions – you cannot always assume that the respondents know their attitudes. Given that many attitudes have various aspects or dimensions, the respondent may agree with one aspect and disagree with another. This is why attitudes cannot be measured by a single question. Answers to attitude questions are more sensitive to changes in wording, emphasis, and sequence than are factual questions.

Structure of Questions

- Open-ended questions - respondents answer in their own words. These may be more difficult to answer and will be more difficult to analyze. However, they are preferred in the following cases:

1) when you don’t know enough to write appropriate response categories (exploratory) and 2) when asking a threatening question (see threatening questions below). As a concluding catch-all; e.g., “Please note any other information or ideas you believe might be helpful to me in completing this study.”

- Close-ended questions - respondents are offered a set of answers from which to choose. They are easy to ask and quick to answer, and the analysis is straight-forward. However, they may introduce bias either by forcing the respondent to choose from given alternatives or by making the respondent select alternatives that might not have otherwise occurred to him or her. In most instances, close-ended questions are preferred because they have greater specificity. The answer set is just as crucial as the question itself in terms of gleaning accurate, unbiased results.

- Contingency questions are questions that apply only to a subgroup of respondents. They are preceded by a filter question which directs the respondents to the appropriate contingency question not in sequence. An example would be:
    - Filter question: “Have you ever participated in a short-term mission trip?”
    - Contingency question: “If yes,...”

- Threatening questions - topics that respondents may find embarrassing or that cause anxiety will often lead to denial of the behavior in question or to underreporting. Decide whether the question is or is not threatening. The best way to determine the threat-level of a question is to ask whether respondents can possibly feel that there is a right and a wrong answer.

- If a question is threatening, note the following: open-ended questions are better. Use familiar words (e.g., “doing drugs” and “drinking” rather than “substance abuse”). Before asking about current behavior, it is better to ask whether the respondent has ever engaged in the behavior. Embed the threatening topic into a list of more or less non-threatening topics.

- Non-threatening questions - if a question is non-threatening, note the following: close-ended questions are best. Make sure that all reasonable alternative answers are included. Aided-recall procedures are helpful (include an exhaustive list of answers). Make the question as specific as possible. Use words that all respondents will understand.

Hints on constructing questions

- Specific questions are better than general ones.
- Use simple language.
- Vocabulary should be understandable by the average eighth grader.
- Words that are subject to a wide variety of interpretations should either be avoided or qualified by specifying their frame of reference.
- Leading questions - avoid questions phrased in such a manner that it appears to the respondent that the researcher expects a certain answer.
- Double-barreled questions - if a question is really two questions in one, the respondent could feel differently about the two segments and not know how to answer. Confusing policies with personalities - avoid attaching names to policies as opinions could attach to either (and may not be the same).
- Make the questions as short (concise) as possible.
- Double-negatives - avoid possible disagreeing with negative statements as it gets confusing.

- Be careful when asking questions requiring recall of the past, as recall can be sketchy and selective.

Although it is important how the questions are worded, remember that your research has to use the answers. You want to get as much information as you can from those answers. The more specific you are (without appearing threatening), the more manipulation you can do later. For example, if you want to know ages, you could put “0-17 years” for children, “18-29 years” for young adults, “30-59 years” for mature adults, and “60+ years” for seniors. If you’re sure that’s all you need to know, then fine. But if you do this, you cannot break it down any further at a later time (like for infants, toddlers, primary children, junior children, and high school youth). Here are some helpful points about making up answer sets.

Answer set formats

- Dichotomies - simple “either-or” types of questions. The most common dichotomous answer is yes/no. for the most part these questions should be avoided as they do not give enough variability.
- Rating - reflects the intensity of the particular judgment. a common rating scale would be: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree.
- Bipolar scales - adjectives are placed at each end with choices in between with no descriptions. An example would be: Agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Disagree.
- Matrix - all questions use the same answers (spelled out across the top of the page).
- Ranking - information regarding the degree of importance or the set priorities that people give to a set of attitudes or objects. This is extremely confusing for respondents and should only be used if you know that the respondents can keep it straight. You could use this by listing ten ministries of the church and asking respondents to rank the four most important in the order of their importance with 1 being the most important.

Hints on making answer sets

- Offer a no opinion and/or a “don’t know” option.
- Omit the middle alternatives and measure intensity (force people to choose rather than take a middle-of- the-road position).
- Use forced-choice questions rather than agree/ disagree wherever possible.
- Read the question and make sure the answers make sense with the way the question is worded. For example, if you ask, “Do you like the songs we sing in worship?” you are asking for a yes/no answer. if you want to have a different answer set (such as
- Strongly agree all the way to strongly disagree or even more specific answers), then you must reword the question.

Designing the questionnaire

Length

- A written questionnaire normally should be no longer than 2-4 pages.

Placement on Page

- Do not start a question at the bottom of a page if it will not completely fit on the page (including the answers).
- If a series of questions using a matrix answer set extends beyond one page, answer headings

should be repeated at the top of the second page.
- Leave adequate space between questions and answers. Do not “scrunch” or use extra small print.

Order
- Introduction - The questionnaire should always be introduced by either a cover letter or an introductory paragraph. This should include: general purpose of questionnaire, assurance of anonymity, and appreciation for respondent’s time.
- The first question should be easy and non-threatening.
- A few non-threatening general information questions can be included toward the beginning. Threatening ones, e.g., income should be put at the end of the questionnaire.
- Questions relating to a particular attitude should be dispersed throughout the questionnaire as opposed to being lumped together.
- Vary the response categories to avoid tendency of answering all questions in a specific direction regardless of the question’s content.

Number of respondents
- Normally you should have at least 50-100 respondents if you want to use your answers in any kind of statistical form (including listing percentages).
- If you are using the questionnaire as an exploratory tool or as an evaluative tool where only a limited number of people can respond (e.g., pastors in a particular area), try to get at least ten. The main point is that no matter how many respondents you have, you should make note of that in your text when reporting the results.

Pretests

Pretests may seem like extra work, but there are good reasons to do a pretest. We, as researchers, know exactly what we mean when we use certain words or phrases. We are all guilty of assuming everyone else should know what we mean too. However, that is just not true. Therefore, here are some good reasons for doing pretests: 1) to determine if there is enough variation in the answer set for any specific question, 2) to determine if the respondent’s frame of reference is the same as the researcher’s. This is important as differing frames of reference may produce different meanings to the questions resulting in inconsistent answers, 3) to determine if questions are too hard or assume too much knowledge on the part of the respondent, 4) to determine if the order of the questions is affecting any answers, and 5) to determine if the respondent loses interest or attention (or becomes tired or bored) which could result in inaccurate reporting.

To do a pretest, select 5-10 people representative of your target group. Have them do the questionnaire and then ask them questions about how they understood each question. Give them a chance to give any other input they might think will be helpful to you.

Participant Observation Guide

As the name implies, this form of research has two parts: (1) participation and (2) observation. Students must be careful while doing participant observation that they neither become participants only and forget about observation nor become observers only and ignore the participation phase.

Participation

Researcher’s Presence

In some cases participation is not a problem at all. It is relatively easy to participate in a church service or a structured meeting. Participating in an after-school program could consist of helping with supplies for the teacher (kind of a teacher aide). Participating in a program for unwed mothers, however, could be quite different. These types of programs only work well if trust is instilled in the “clients.” your very presence could cause a disruption in the program and uneasiness on the part of the clients. Some of this is inevitable, but the researcher should make every effort to participate in a way that will minimize (or hopefully eliminate) the possibility of the program being altered by his or her presence.

Differences between participant and participation observer[16]

- Dual purpose – (1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and (2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation.
- Explicit awareness – you must be explicit in your awareness of things you usually do not notice.
- Wide-angle lens – you must take in a much broader spectrum of information than a straight participant.
- Insider/outsider experience – you are acting as an insider but you cannot forget your role as an outsider who is viewing everything going on.
- Introspection – this is a tool for you to understand new situations and to gain skill at following cultural rules – it means purposely getting in touch with what you are feeling and thinking during the activity.
- Record keeping – you need to take notes as best you can during the activity (depending on the type of activity) and certainly write up a complete record later.

Observation

We have a tendency not to observe most of what goes on around us. Anyone who has seen a police drama on television understands that if ten people see the same crime being committed, there will likely be ten different and often conflicting descriptions of what took place. We are not trained to observe. Now we must be intentional.

What to observe

The main focus can be summed up as place, actors and activities. If we are interested in doing a really detailed observation we can further refine our focus to include space, object, act, activity, event, time, actor, goal, and feeling. These can then be set up as a matrix and interrelated with each other. To see how this would look, review Spradley’s book, Participant observation, pages 82-83 (see bibliography for full citation).

Difference between participant observer and observer only

If we observe only, we are much more likely to make others feel “on the spot” and thus alter the situation.

[16] Taken from Spradley, Participant Observation, 54-8.

If we observe only, we will have a record of our own impressions but we will not be privy to the introspection talked about above that comes from actually experiencing the program.

If we observe only, we won't have the opportunities to hear the natural interaction. We will look like we're eavesdropping rather than being a part of a conversation.

Walk-Through Guide

It is illuminating to do a walk through, even in an area with which we are very familiar. We tend to block out whatever is not important for our purposes and much of what seems familiar. We do not take the time to really observe. The purpose of a walk-through is to get a general "feel" for the community based on planned observations.

Plan for a walk-through

- Who: You should always plan to do a walk-through with someone else. The point is that pairs (no more than three people) look more natural than a person alone. Pairs also allow for immediate dialogue and question formation. You should bring a small note pad (steno pad or smaller) to jot down observations. Spend time immediately after the walk through dialoging with your partner(s) in order to "debrief." This will bring up questions you may not have thought of alone.
- Where: Choose an area no smaller than four blocks by four blocks for the walk through. In most cases, this will be the central area of your ministry/project/etc.
- When: In the long run it would be beneficial to do a number of walk-throughs on different days at different times. Choose different times that fit your schedule and maximize observations. (For example, don't go on a rainy day when most people will be inside.)
- How: Intentionality - journal your observations, interpretations and conclusions with a view to debriefing them at a later time.

Conducting Observations

Words such as intense, careful, detailed, systematic, conscious, and purposeful are attached to the observing. View with a questioning mind. What has happened here? Why has it happened? Who is involved? What are the patterns? Where and how are the patterns broken? Write down anything important, anything interesting, anything that struck you, something that made you uneasy, felt familiar, felt unfamiliar, something you didn't understand.

You should focus on people, places and actions. Some ideas include the following:[17]

Observations of Buildings

- How old are the buildings?
- What architectural style(s) are the buildings? Are there secondary clues to building age? Do weathering and building materials confirm the age of the style or indicate a more recent imitation of an architectural style? Were all or many of the buildings built at the same time? This

[17] Taken from Rudy Mitchell, Studying Urban Communities (Boston: Emmanuel Gospel Center), 1994.

is indicated by many buildings of the same style. A wide variety of styles on a street or in the area may indicate development over an extended period of time.

- What sizes are the buildings? The size along with the quality of the building materials and workmanship can reveal something about the original and current family sizes and wealth. to some extent larger families tend to need larger housing units. The size and scale of stores and non- residential buildings can also indicate if the economy was (is) one of small, locally oriented businesses or larger scale regional stores.
- What are the heights and number of floors? What are the widths and depths of the buildings? How do the various buildings compare in size?
- Maintenance and condition of buildings - observe details of any recent improvements, repairs, additions, and renovations. Sometimes these are most visible in new windows, doors, siding or roofing. Observe building maintenance needs as well.

Observations in the Public Environment

What plant life do you observe? Are there trees, shrubs and flowers? What functions might these serve and what do they add to the area? Observe the size, and arrangement of sidewalks and walkways in relation to streets and buildings. How far are buildings set back from sidewalks? Do the sidewalk designs and maintenance encourage pedestrian activity? Are there sidewalk cafes, etc.? What other uses are taking place on the sidewalks and walkways?

Other “artifacts” which can often be observed include house number, nameplates, doorbells, mailboxes/slots, security grates or bars, and objects on balconies, porches, roof-decks, and lawns (cooking grills, furniture, toys, etc.). What do these artifacts tell you about the age, lifestyle, culture, and family composition of the residents? Note any signs and announcements on commercial or even residential buildings.

Notice the arrangement of buildings (and their approaches and pathways) in relation to each other, to streets, sidewalks, fences and yards or open spaces.

People - one must be cautious in making judgments about people based solely on external observations. Nevertheless, some facts can be learned, and tentative conclusions are possible in some aspects. Observations can provide a basis for tentative hypotheses, which can be evaluated through direct questioning and interviews. A neighborhood environment with people present is different from one without people. Streets where people just come and go are also different from a street where people often stop and talk with each other, rest, and spend time in meaningful activities. Often the architecture and design of the buildings, streets, and public landscaping facilitate (or discourage) public activities and interactions.

The following outline can be used to organize observations or create a form. Here are a few to consider:

- Age range
- Race
- Ethnic group and language
- Occupation if observable
- Life cycle stage (young single, young married, retired, etc.)
- Gender
- Actions, types of actions

- People coming or going
- People resting and sitting, interacting
- People, particularly children, playing
- People engaged in work
- Duration of actions
- Number or frequency of each type of activity; note patterns
- Interactions between people, and observed relationships or roles, types of interactions, durations of interactions
- Objects related to people
- Tools and functional items
- Car or bike?
- What items if any are people carrying? Backpacks, briefcases, bags, and other items
- Dress, appearance and grooming, uniforms - informal or formal; occupational (e.g., police officer); recreational (e.g., softball uniforms), styles - Do the clothes tend to be traditional/ conservative, nationality related, survival type, high style, or non-traditional? Does people's clothing appear inexpensive or expensive?

Concluding Your Walk-Through

- Interpretations, reflections and comparisons: This is done in dialogue with your partner(s) and maybe others who are familiar with the area. Interpret the social reality (what does it mean?) and your feelings. How did you respond to what you saw (fear, compassion, sadness, anger, etc.)?

- Conclusions: This must be done with an "informed, thoughtful, compassionate, and conscious eye." Also, these conclusions should be considered tentative hypotheses only. You cannot rely on external observation only to understand a community. How did you make sense of your observations? How would you do ministry in this context?

Demographic Statistics Guide

Sources of demographic or census data

- Census Bureau – in Washington, DC or a regional office
- City libraries – usually the main branch but some local branches have demographic descriptions of their neighborhoods. Getting a copy of these can be very helpful, but be careful that they are current.
- University and college libraries (not all colleges or universities are depositories for census data, but many are.
- The U.S. census website
- City planning commissions – sometimes they use a rehash of census data and sometimes they have their own sources.
- Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Local service agencies – these tend to be very specialized both in locale and scope, but if the agency has similar goals, this could be a good source.

Planning for working with demographic data[18]

Give careful advance thought to the boundaries of the community or neighborhood served by the congregation. Some churches find that their "neighborhood" or "parish area" is in two parts: the immediate neighborhood in which the church building is located and a wider area (sometimes covering several townships or counties) from which many members commute. Some churches may therefore find it helpful to divide their community analysis into two parts.

Many church leaders are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with working with statistical data; others find this work exciting. It is helpful to identify in advance those members who make use of such data in their work and who can help interpret community data. Assign or delegate someone to familiarize him or herself with the key concepts and terms used in the presentation of census data.

Experiment with creative ways of displaying the data itself. Encourage users of the data to "translate" the numbers into terms and experiences with which they are personally familiar. One useful way to work with census data is to prepare three sheets of paper labeled "surprises," "important findings for our church," and "areas needing more exploration." Be wary of projecting past trends into the future.

Census information

The major source of demographic data available across the U.S. comes from the decennial census. Most countries have some form of census done every five to ten years. Accuracy varies, but these data bases still give us a great deal of information. Census tracts are a type of geographic unit used for census purposes. Tracts are found in urbanized areas known as metropolitan statistical areas (MSA). They are small, relatively permanent areas averaging 4,000 persons each and are intended to be socially homogeneous (that is, they contain people of similar backgrounds and economic status). They respect natural and human boundaries such as rivers and major highways. Unlike states, counties, minor civil divisions (MCDs), and census county divisions (CCDs), tracts have little intuitive meaning for people. They require special maps that identify their boundaries.[19]

Census Web Site Guide

To get on the U.S. census web site, type in the key word "AmeRicanfactfinder." Each browser seems to get at this a bit differently, but there should be an entry saying something like "the official U.S. census web site," and that's what you want. Once inside, the web page will have a menu on the left hand side. For our purposes we are only interested in two entries here—(1) maps and geography and (2) data sets (see below).

If you already know your census tract number and the boundaries of the tract, you will not need to go through the "maps and geography" section. However, if you don't know this information, click on "maps and geography." you will then have a choice between "reference maps" and "Thematic maps." click on "reference maps." you will need to have an address or a zip code in the area you want to study. You will then enter this in the repositioning cue as seen below. This will then bring up a map with your entered

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[18] Ibid., 68.

[19] Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, eds., *Handbook for Congregational Studies* (Nashville: Abingdon Press) 1986, 55.

address in the center of the map. You will see a large number within the darker boundary lines, and that is the census tract number (see map below). You should make note of the tract number and the boundary road names, and then go back to the main page and click on “Data sets.”
You are now ready to click on the census 2000 data set. There are a number of data sets, but the one with the most information is the summary file 3 – sample Data file. Click on that and then go to the right and click on the “Detailed tables” in the pull-down menu. You will now be asked to select your geographic area. For a census tract analysis, you would follow these steps:

1. At “select a geographic type” click on “census tract”
2. At “select a state” click on the state you want
3. At “select a county” click on the county you want (note: Philadelphia city is in Philadelphia county)
4. At “select one or more geographic areas” select the tract number(s) you chose.
5. Scroll down and click “add” and then click “next”

You will now be asked to select one or more tables. Click on the table you want and then click “add” before going to another table. When you’ve clicked on all the tables you would like to see (you can do up to 50 at a time), click “show result” and the tables will appear. Simply print these off to be analyzed later.

Note: if you want to look at a whole city rather than a census tract, at step #1 above, click on “Place.” you will then go through steps 2, 3, and 5 (not 4) and proceed with the tables. If you want to do comparative analysis to track trends (which is usually quite helpful), go back to the data sets screen and click on the 1990 tab. Then go through the same steps. The data is laid out a bit differently so be careful you are not comparing apples and oranges.

Focus Group Guide

Focus groups are a relatively unused form of research outside of marketing interests, yet it is a very valuable method for testing the waters and designing programs. Let me give you an example. A church in a primarily Puerto Rican community in North Philadelphia saw more and more teenage girls getting pregnant and becoming mothers. In the church there were a couple of women who had a real heart for these teenage moms and wanted to start a holistic program to meet their needs. To find out what was important to the girls themselves and to provide ownership in the program, the church met with a group of teenage moms and asked them focused questions about their hopes, desires, needs, etc. from that meeting they were able to identify components for the program that would specifically reach teenage moms in that community.

Setting up the focus group

It is best to have a group of about ten people who do not know each other well. This is because people who know each other tend to know the views of each other and that hinders the open interaction. Have a list of five or six focused questions to use in the meeting. By focused we mean questions that will guide the participants into a discussion on relevant topics.

Plan the focus group: Begin with a fellowship time. This has many advantages. It gives time for latecomers to arrive without disrupting the meeting. It allows the facilitator to put names with faces and pick out who seems to be shy and who seems to monopolize conversation, and it allows the participants to begin focusing on the subject at hand and to get to know each other a little.

Assign seats around a table: Put shy people directly across from the moderator so that they can respond without feeling too many eyes on them. Put the person who monopolizes the discussion on the same side as the facilitator a couple people down. This detracts from that person being the center of attention and makes it more difficult to "hog" the discussion.

Have an assistant sitting directly next to the facilitator. The assistant's job is to make sure the tape recorder is working properly, to change tapes when necessary, and to write down notes—not so much on what people say but on the attitudes displayed and the interaction of the group.

Holding the discussion:

- Length of time – the discussion should not be more than one to one and a half hours.
- Asking Questions – the facilitator's role is much like that of an interviewer in terms of starting the discussion and picking up on points mentioned that can assist in probing. One major difference, though, is that the facilitator must keep all participants involved. This is the major reason an assistant is helpful for the technical pieces. The facilitator must pay close attention to the dynamics of the group.

Using the Data

I Have My Data—Now What?

Collecting data, although often difficult, is only the beginning of the project. Now you are faced with how to analyze, organize and present the data. “How do I wade through all this material?” When you get to this stage, you will be very happy if you took our advice and kept your notes up to date and organized in some type of a file.

In this section we will cover three different steps:

- Analysis of data
- Organization of data
- Presentation of data

In addition, we will further break down the presentation section into four subsections:

- Written text
- Tables
- Graphs

Analysis of Data

Before we organize our data we must analyze the pieces. Analysis seems to throw people, but it shouldn’t if we follow a couple simple guidelines in the form of questions to ask.

What findings (statistics, interview facts, reading notes, etc.) are interesting in terms of your project?

You are not trying to integrate the various sources of data at this point. You are only looking at each piece individually and deciding on whether or not it is of value. for example, if you are collecting census data as part of a study on how the church can incorporate first-generation immigrant Cambodians, you may not need to know the value of housing in the entire area (it is very difficult to break this down by ethnicity). However, the racial/ ethnic makeup of the area could be important as it would determine with whom the Cambodians must interact in order to become a part of the community.

Why is a particular finding interesting in terms of your project?

One danger in doing a major research project is that you find so many interesting tidbits along the way which can waste your time on tangents that have little or nothing to do with your project. Remember, your purpose statement/major research question is the focus you must keep. No matter how interesting something seems, if it does not contribute to answering your major question, you must ignore it.
It was difficult to decide whether to deal with analysis first or organization first because they really go hand in hand. However, we believe some initial analysis actually is the first step of organizing your material. So, let’s now go on to the organizational piece.

Organization of Data

The most important thing to remember in organizing data is to try to cut the data into smaller more easily manipulated pieces. The first, most obvious cut is to divide the data into chapters (something you should have been doing all along). The next step entails outlining.

It is not necessary to actually write out an outline, although that can be very helpful. It is necessary, however, to in some way break down each chapter into smaller parts. These steps may be helpful:

1. Read through all your data for a particular chapter. This reading is not intended to fill your head with facts. Rather, it is more of a browsing to determine the main points. Select three or four points for the chapter and decide the order in which you want to cover those points. Then, as much as possible, actually physically divide the data into stacks for each point. if a data source (such as notes from a particular book) covers more than one point, put it in the stack of the earliest point it deals with, and when you are through with it, transfer it to the next relevant pile.
2. Now go through your first point reviewing the data in detail. Here is where you add the next step of analysis. You will be integrating data from a variety of sources. For example, if you are writing up a model study and your first major point is the development of vision, you may have written data from brochures as well as data from a number of interviews which may reflect different perceptions of the process. However, you are only writing the equivalent of a three to five page paper for that point, so it is not such a daunting task. Do the same for each of the three or four points. Each of these major points should have a subheading.
3. Once you have all the points written, go back and introduce the chapter in a way that will let readers know what to expect and how that chapter contributes to answering your major question. Make sure you add in transitions so that the text moves smoothly from one point to the next.
4. Finally, write a concluding paragraph indicating the major conclusions you have drawn from that chapter.

If you follow these steps, you will not at any one time be facing the task of writing a 150 page paper but rather a series of small papers, something about which you can be much more confident. When it is all put together, you have your big paper.

Before moving on to the presentation of the data, let me point out that if you have questionnaires, or even census data, you may need to do some additional organization prior to these steps. Questionnaires will minimally need to be tallied up, so that for question 1 you may have 11 strongly agree, 28 agree, 6 disagree, and 4 strongly disagree. It also might be helpful to separate answers according to race, age, gender, first or second generation, etc.

This would then give you a matrix similar to the following:

	Male	Female	Total
Need to start a school now	12 37.5%	20 62.5%	32 100.0%
School would be good but later	9 52.9%	8 47.1%	17 100.0%
Don’t need another school	13 72.3%	5 27.7%	18 100.0%

You can tell from this matrix that although there are almost the same number of men and women their responses are quite different. The women prefer beginning a school now, but the men are not so sure. Part of the analysis of this would be trying to understand why the men and women feel differently.

Presentation of Data

You have now analyzed, organized, reanalyzed, and reorganized your data and are writing your chapters. You not only have to make sense of everything, but you have to write it out using very specific guidelines.

Written Text

The tone of the paper should be mature and academic--do not fall into the temptation of being "preachy." This is not a sermon, it is an academic work.

You may use any style guide that you want (Chicago, APA, Turabian, etc.). If you use your chosen style from the beginning, you will not have to make as many corrections as some have had to do in the past.

Please review the Doctor of ministry Proposal (see section 6) and Dissertation template (see section 11) for all Biblical seminary-specific format guidelines.

Tables

We need to take just a little time to deal specifically with tables. We showed you a matrix in the organization section. A table is quite similar, but it is typed as part of your paper and it includes three additional pieces: (1) table number, (2) title, and (3) source.

Table numbering: Table numbers can start with 1 and be numbered consecutively throughout the paper, including the appendices. An alternative would be to number them within a chapter or appendix. In this case you could have a Table 2-3 which would indicate it is the third table listed in chapter 2. Table A3-1 would be the first table in Appendix 3.

Table title: The title of a table should include answers to all the traditional who, what, where, and when questions. An example would be:

> Table 1: Educational attainment of Hispanics, age 25 and older, in New York City by national subgroup, 1990
> Who: Hispanics (by national subgroup, meaning Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, etc.)
> Age 25 and older
> What: Educational attainment where – New York City
> When: 1990

Without all this information, there would be no way to make comparisons with other works or other time periods, etc. There would also be no way for an interested researcher to check out the work.

Source – The source is written below the actual table. Again, it allows someone else to duplicate your efforts or expand upon your work, and it is a type of citation. For the above example, the source could read:

> Source: U.S. census of Population and Housing, 1990.

Sometimes the source could be a book. Then you would include the bibliographic information including page number(s) where you got the data.

Graphs

We all know what graphs are. They're circles broken into pieces (called a pie chart), lines traveling up and down as they go across the page (called a line chart), and either vertical or horizontal bars of various sizes spaced across the page (called a bar chart). Each of these can be very useful, but only if it is used for its intended purpose. They all show comparisons of one type or another. Before going through each of these, there are a few points to make that apply to all three types.

Title – The titling of graphs should follow the same rules as tables except you will number these as figure 1-2, etc.

Source – The source should also be listed below the graph in the same manner as with the tables.

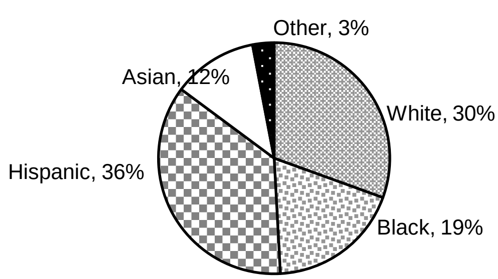
Legends and labels – Be sure that all parts of your graph are labeled completely so the readers will know exactly what comparisons you are making.

Now, let's go through each graph type (examples of each type follow the descriptions).

Pie Chart

The idea behind a pie chart is that you are showing the breakdown of a whole unit. In order to do this, every item in the whole must fit into one and only one of the categories. For example, suppose you have a multi-ethnic church and want to show the ethnic breakdown. You could do this with a pie chart something like the example included. You can also show two pie charts side by side to show a change or to contrast two different groups. For example, you could show the ethnic breakdown of the student body of a particular school and then show the ethnic breakdown of the faculty and/or staff. In this case, be sure the charts reflect exactly the same time period. If you want to show how the ethnic makeup of your church has changed from 1980 to 1990, you can also do this, but be sure you use the same criteria (e.g., membership roles). In other words, when doing a comparison, make sure the data is indeed comparable.

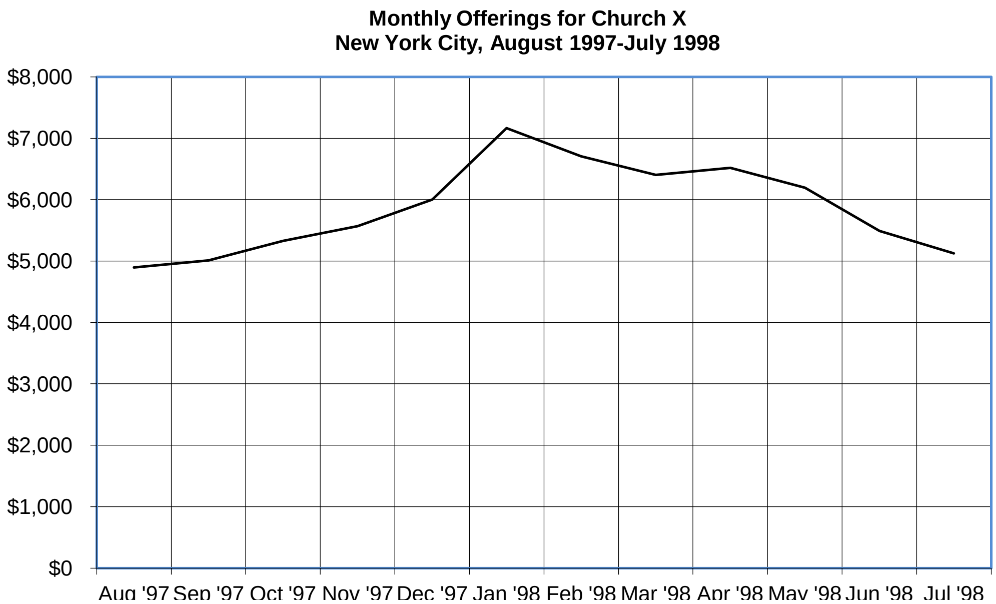
Ethnic Breakdown of Church X Membership
New York City, May, 1999



Line Chart

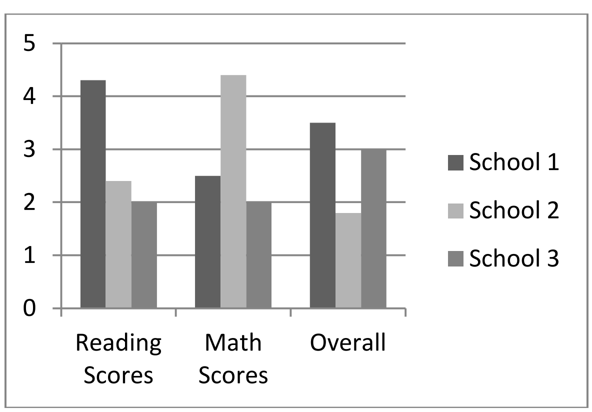
The main purpose of line charts/graphs is to show change over time. You are measuring the same item over a period of equal intervals (e.g., weeks, months, years, decades, etc.). "Joining the dots" with lines is intended to show the trends, the ups and downs, or growth and decline. See the example.

You can show more than one line on a single chart to highlight a comparison. For example, you could show church membership in three different churches in town over the same fifty-year period. Again, be sure you are comparing truly comparable items. Don't compare church membership in one church to Sunday morning attendance in another church.



Bar Chart

The purpose of bar charts/graphs is to compare items during the same time period(s). For example, you can show total educational testing scores for five different schools. See the example of a bar chart below. By making each category a different color (or different black-and-white fill in), you can compare those same schools for reading scores, math scores, and overall scores.



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Writing the Project Dissertation

This section describes the layout and formatting of the dissertation, which is the student's report on his or her project. It also describes the possible topics to include in the text of your chapters.

Required Content

The dissertation should include the elements described in this section. Students should work with the first project module instructor(s) to plan their chapters and expected content of each chapter.

PRELIMINARY PAGES

Title page
Copyright
Acknowledgement or Dedication
Table of Contents
List of Tables
List of Figures
List of Appendices
Abstract

Suggested CHAPTER CONTENT AND SUBHEADINGS (subheadings with each chapter vary with each dissertation)

Chapter 1 – Introduction

- Introduction
- Background
- Statement of the problem or case being studied/Description of the ministry or program being studied
- Project goals
- Summary

Chapters 2-3 – Theoretical Background, Bib-Theological Background, etc.

- Introduction (summary)
- Relevant theological/biblical literature
- Relevant theoretical research
- Relevant case studies, descriptions of similar ministries, etc.—other relevant literature
- Summary

Final Chapter – Conclusions, Implications, and Discussion

- Introduction (summary of chapter 1-3)
- Summary of results (conclusions)
- Discussion of the results
- Implications of the results for the ministry and for other settings
- Summary

SUPPLEMENTARY PAGES

Appendices

Appendices may be included in the dissertation. Appendices provide the instrument(s) used in the research and display raw data, curricular examples, or other pertinent information. Written releases permitting interviews and the use of copyrighted materials are also included in an appendix.

Suggested Appendices

Procedures and Methodology

- Introduction (summary)
- Definitions (optional)
- Procedures and/or methods used by the project
- Population, if applicable
- Instruments used (surveys, interviews, etc.)
- Data collection and procedures for analysis
- Summary

Research Results

- Introduction (summary)
- Results and analysis of the results

Bibliography

- Provides a bibliographic reference for every citation within the text
- May include references to resources that significantly impacted the project
- Provides sufficient detail about research method(s) so that an interested researcher may replicate it/them
- Follows consistent formatting, preferably Chicago style, but candidates may choose the style they and/or their editor are comfortable with (e.g., Turabian, Chicago, APA, etc.)

Topics typically addressed in the Dissertation: (not an exhaustive list)

Introduction to the project, purpose, rationale
Background of the project
Statement of the problem or case being studied
Description of the ministry or program being studied
Project goals and significance
Definition of terms
Discussion of the student's understanding of the context of the project
Contextualization issues and considerations
Theological background or foundation of the project
Relevant theoretical research, current literature, etc. (literature review)
Methodology and procedures used in the project and instruments used
Data collection and procedures for analysis
Summary of results and analysis/interpretation of the results
Implications of the results for the ministry and for other settings
Evaluation of the project by the researcher and the participants
Recommendations to other leaders
Conclusion

BTS Style Requirements

The dissertation must conform to the format and bibliographic style requirement as they appear in this handbook and in the student's chosen style guide (Turabian is preferred by the DMin program, but other style guides may be used if used consistently and accurately).

As noted elsewhere in this handbook, the dissertation must be written in good, standard English and must be free from all grammatical, syntactical, spelling, and typographical errors and use gender-specific language. Students are encouraged to use an editor at their own expense.

Formatting Guide

The following is the formatting (page layout) guide for the project dissertation. An electronic template for the dissertation is provided in section 6 of this handbook.

PAPER

Size: 8 ½ x 11

Color: white

Weight: the proposal should be printed on regular copier paper. The final dissertation submitted to the library for binding (check with the library for how many copies to submit) should be printed on heavy paper that is at least 25% rag or cotton content and acid-free.

TYPEFACE

12-Pt: for text

- Times New Roman

10-Pt: for tables/figures (if advisable for space/readability)

- Times New Roman

Bold font

- May be used with chapter numbers and titles and level one headings

Line spacing

Single space

- Indented block quotes – text over 40 words,
- Tables and figures – where advisable for space or readability
- Multi-line footnotes (use sparingly)

Double space

- Before major subheadings,
- After block quotes,
- Before and after tables or figures, and between footnotes and bibliographic references

Quadruple space (permitted)

- After chapter titles

CITING SCRIPTURE – refer to your style guide

CAPITALIZATION

First word of subtitle

SPACING

- “Widow” and “orphan” spaces/lines – not permitted margins
- 1.0” margin – before titles of chapters and major sections
- 1.5” margin – left side of page (for binding purposes)
- 1.0” margin – right, top, and bottom of all other pages
- 0.5” margin – from bottom of pages to page numbers

PAGINATION

Lowercase roman numerals – preliminary pages

- At bottom center
- 0.5” from bottom edge

Arabic numbers – all text and supplementary sections

- At bottom center
- 0.5” from bottom edge

HEADINGS – refer to your style guide

- Prevent isolated headings (headings must be accompanied by at least two lines of text of the same page).

FOOTNOTES

- Tables and figures (varies with formatting style) footnotes —discouraged; use sparingly
- Insert at bottom of page.

Project Advisor Job Description

Qualifications

- Holds a minimum of a doctoral degree from an accredited school that required a major research thesis or professional paper
- Supports the mission of Biblical seminary and agrees with BTS's conviction statement.
- Has significant ministry leadership experience in an evangelical church, ministry, or organization that is appropriate to the student's project.
- Has sufficient time to serve as project advisor.
- Is able to attend the student's oral review, either in person or via conference call.
- Is approved by the DMin committee and faculty for the advisor role.

Responsibilities

- At the student's initiative, meet/talk with the student as needed about his/her project and dissertation, review the project instrument and methodology, and generally assist the student toward successful completion of the program in the time frame identified by the student.

- Initiate a meeting (in person or by teleconference) with the student if you have not heard from the student when expected or previously arranged or if there has been no contact for a significant period of time.

- Provide spiritual and personal encouragement and guidance.

- Provide adequate and timely feedback on the student's work.

- Abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the DMin Program handbook.

- Grade the student's work at the end of the second (DM927 or DM932) and third (DM928 or DM933a) modules. The advisor is given a grading rubric for evaluating the dissertation. Attend the student's oral review either in person or via conference call.

- Contact the student promptly if problems develop, if there is reason to believe that the student is failing to make sufficient progress, or if the advisor cannot fulfill the terms of his/her contract.

Contact the DMin director if, after discussing a problem with the student, there are unresolved issues, the student continues to make insufficient progress, or if the project advisor cannot fulfill the terms of his or her contract.

Stipends and Terms of Agreement (also see teaching agreement)

The agreement is void if the student does not enroll in the next project module, if the student withdraws from the module, or if the student does not produce any work.

Copy Editor Job Description

This job description is provided as an example of what a student and an editor might want to consider when establishing a business agreement for editorial work.

Qualifications

- Expertise in formatting and style, using Turabian or other style guide.
- Ability to establish and maintain consistent formatting per DMin program specifications.
- Ability to correct minor grammatical and diction errors.
- Ability to set and meet realistic deadlines and clear specifications for the work with the student.
- Ability to complete work per specifications within the stated time period.

Job Description

The copy editor's job is to check for accuracy and ensure consistent formatting and style is followed throughout the dissertation, using the style guide agreed upon by the student and editor. In the first editing, and with the student's approval, the editor may also suggest improvements about how the document is constructed. This stage of the process would also point out awkward and confusing sections, as well as any lack of attention to consistent style. It is not the editor's job to critique what the student is saying, only how the candidate is saying it. The student can accept or reject suggestions about how the dissertation is constructed and how statements are made. The editor should correct for consistent style and make formatting and grammatical changes.

During the final editing phase, the editor's job would be to make sure all grammatical, formatting, and style changes have been made so that the document is error free and ready for publication. Each side agrees to specific deadlines throughout the process and adheres to those deadlines unless fair warning is made. Neither side can fall behind in established deadlines and expect the other party to make up the difference.

A professional relationship with respect on both sides is anticipated throughout the editing process.