



# Puritan Reformed

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## Doctor of Ministry Program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

HANDBOOK 2022-24

(updated 2/7/2023)

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## DISCLAIMERS

This Doctor of Ministry Handbook includes policies and procedures pertinent to the doctoral program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. Prospective and registered students should consult the handbook throughout the admission process and their study. Please visit website for the most recent edition of the handbook.

This handbook is *not* an agreement or an offer of admission to the program, and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary reserves the right to change or correct any material in this handbook.

## Doctor of Ministry Program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

A seminary is a center where called students are trained for faithful ministry in Christ's church (2 Tim. 2:2). It is to be an arm of the church of Jesus Christ, outfitting its students for ministry throughout the world (Matt. 28:18-20). The gospel alone is the hope of our perishing world. We believe that God, by His Spirit, will use the theological education of qualified spiritual leaders to enliven His people, save the lost, and glorify His name with faith that overcomes the world.

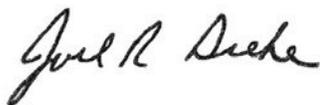
Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary strives to be a catalyst for defining, inspiring, promoting, and defending the Christian faith around the globe through its graduates and faculty. The world needs faith that is based on Scripture, self-denying and serving, and openly dependent on God's sovereign grace and His Spirit. By such faith, Jesus Christ is imaged, and God's glory is transcribed in the world.

The need for faithful ministry in the academy and church is great, as are the opportunities. Moreover, no vocation on this side of heaven is as privileged or rewarding as Christian ministry. God has granted Puritan Reformed many blessings, including God-fearing instructors and students who have much love for God and each other. We are grateful for a student body of diverse backgrounds and denominations, seeking to glorify God by promoting His kingdom. The biblical, doctrinal, experiential, and relevant Reformed faith we strive to promote in every classroom builds a solid foundation for ministry today.

We are delighted that you have chosen to undertake the Doctor of Ministry degree program with us and hope that your time of study is intellectually challenging and stimulating, as well as spiritually enriching.

If you feel called by God to pursue a Doctor of Ministry program and are looking for training that combines solid Reformed and classical theology with robust, biblical piety, our program may be exactly what you are looking for! We hope you will seriously consider Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary as the place to prepare you, with the Spirit's blessing, for a life of Christ-centered service. May God guide you and us in His way and, if it is His will, cause our paths to cross in several years of fruitful fellowship.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel R. Beeke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Joel R. Beeke, President

## Program Purpose and Goals

Foundational to the Doctor of Ministry program is the academic, spiritual, and practical formation of the student. First, within the world of Reformed seminaries, Puritan Reformed is recognized by its emphasis on biblical, Reformed, experiential, and practical ministry. This recognition has led to a worldwide demand for a comprehensive Doctor of Ministry program. Secondly, Puritan Reformed is recognized for its attention to preaching (homiletics). This recognition is underscored, moreover, by the numerous inquiries received from Puritan Reformed alumni, constituents, and others since the commencement of the Doctoral (PhD) program in 2016. The DMin program in homiletics combines academic rigor and integrity, and joins this with biblical piety (*pietate cum scientia conjungenda*)—in other words, it is a program designed to serve the ministry of preaching for both the academy and church.

## Program Concentration: Homiletics

The specific focus of the Doctor of Ministry program of Puritan Reformed is on biblical, Reformed, experiential and practical preaching. Puritan seeks to adhere to the Reformed and Puritan tradition of homiletics, exemplified by John Calvin, William Perkins (*Art of Prophesying*), Petrus van Mastricht (*Best Method of Preaching*), Jonathan Edwards, and many others. We aim to do so by offering a Doctor of Ministry program that is distinctive in its academics as well as its biblical piety; this will be evident in the admissions requirements, as well as the program's academic rigor, and spiritual and practical formation components.

The Doctor of Ministry program will be academically rigorous as we seek to offer a comprehensive program with high, measurable, and peer-reviewed academic standards. The program will be further enhanced by 1) Puritan Reformed-approved and qualified adjunct faculty serving as subject experts and co-advisors for the DMin student; 2) external courses taken by the DMin student; and 3) publication of the DMin dissertation project. Spiritual components of the DMin program may consist of assigned readings and preaching (in theory and practice). Resonating with the Reformed and Puritan tradition of international learning, Puritan Reformed, in summary, seeks to establish a Doctor of Ministry program with a strong attention to homiletics that couples academic excellence and spiritual richness.

Last but not least, the Doctor of Ministry program in Homiletics aims to contribute to the long-term aspiration of the seminary to establish a Global Center of Reformed Preaching. This center will capture the heart of the vision and mission of the seminary, articulate its homiletic

vision, and solidify its academic and practical contribution to preaching. This center will be a place where seminary faculty, students, and stakeholders work in a collaborative environment to create rich learning and teaching experiences for the preparation and delivery of sermons; the center aims to increase student preaching ability, to build meaningful partnerships, and to invite stakeholders to become members of an active learning community for biblical, Reformed, and experiential preaching.

### Admission Requirements

The requirements for admission and study are subject to the educational and degree program standards set forth by ATS; admission requirements may vary, but will general include the following:

1. Because of the biblical convictions of the sponsoring denominations of the seminary regarding the qualifications of those serving as ordained pastors, the DMin concentration in Homiletics is restricted to male applicants.
2. The deadline: It is recommended that applications for admission to the doctoral program be submitted no later than April 30 (for a fall-semester start) or October 30 (for a spring-semester start). The applicant will be informed about the decision of the Admissions Committee by the Director of Admissions shortly after a decision has been made. The Admissions Committee meets on a rolling basis approximately every month. Applications are considered at the next available meeting only when *all* application components have been received, though the committee reserves the right to deny applicants before the administering of the applicant interview should components do not meet program standards.
3. Admission of applicant: A prospective student must apply for the Doctor of Ministry program via the seminary website; the application must include personal and academic essays, a sermon sample, and academic and ecclesiastical references. The Doctor of Ministry applicant will most likely be approached by the program director for an interview. The interview with the applicant concerns academics, spiritual life, study requirements (on-campus courses/residency requirements, questions of tuition, etc.), passion for preaching, as well as employment and family circumstances. The program director will submit a report to the Admissions Committee, either recommending or not recommending the applicant for admission. The report will include an evaluation of the academic and homiletic contribution of the proposed study, and an evaluation of the applicant's contributive ability for preaching. NB: The president or his designee(s) is (are) free at all times to attend the interview and

admission process.

## Application Requirements

1. To apply for the Doctor of Ministry program of the seminary, the applicant must ordinarily present the following application components:
  - a. A completed online application form.
  - b. Two letters of recommendation: an ecclesiastical letter of recommendation from the pastor or consistory (i.e., session or council) of the church of which the applicant is a member, and an academic letter of recommendation from a professor under whose guidance the applicant has pursued studies.
  - c. Official transcripts of all academic work beyond high school. If more than one college was attended, transcripts from each institution must be sent.
  - d. Application essay(s). All applicants must submit a short essay (250–500 words) explaining why they are applying to Puritan Reformed.
  - e. Academic writing sample. All applicants must submit an academic writing sample. This sample may be a previously written paper, article, or essay that demonstrates proper citation methods and ability to construct, in English, a graduate-level paper.
  - f. Preached sermon samples (preferably a video recording)
  - g. TOEFL or IELTS results. All ESL (English as a Second Language) students are required to submit their TOEFL or IELTS score. PRTS requires a minimum of 85 on the internet based TOEFL. The IELTS equivalent required is 6.5. The PRTS reporting code is 0368.
  - h. Application fee of \$50. The application fee is non-refundable.
  
2. To be eligible for admission to the doctoral program, the applicant must:
  - a. Be called to the ministry of preaching.
  - b. Demonstrate high potential for local and regional influence through (future) ministry of teaching and preaching after completion of studies.
  - c. Possess a MDiv degree in theology preferably from an accredited institute of higher learning.
  - d. Have a minimum of three (3) years pastoral and preaching experience.
  - e. Adhere to the Three Forms of Unity and/or Westminster Standards (apart from a position on paedo- or credobaptism).
  - f. Demonstrate biblical piety and character.

## Coursework

1. Length of Study: The Doctor of Ministry program is designed for pastors and preachers who are engaged in full-time ministry. The four core courses (course code HOM) are modular, one-week courses to be taken on campus. Students should complete the Doctor of Ministry study within six years of matriculation (exceptions should be approved Academic Dean). This timeframe includes the completion of all coursework, as well as the research (proposal), writing, and defense of the dissertation project. It is recommended that the dissertation project should be published with a publisher within two years after the defense or published articles derived from the dissertation project.
2. Residence Requirement: The delivery of educational material via technology allows students to complete the required coursework (both residential and non-residential) within a period of four years. The resident or on-campus requirements of four (4) modular courses (week-long courses) must be completed within this period of four years. To foster involvement all students are encouraged to be on campus in August while taking the core courses.
3. Course Requirements: A total of twenty-four (24) credits + a DMin project are required for the Doctor of Ministry degree. The four (4) required modular (week-long) courses are offered on a rotating basis in August, with each August two of the required courses being offered, and then the next August the other two required courses offered. Courses do not need to be taken in order from 901 to 904.

Four Required Core Courses:

**12 credits**

1. HOM901 – Introduction to Homiletical Studies
2. HOM902 – Reformed Experiential Preaching I: Exegetical Considerations
3. HOM903 – Reformed Experiential Preaching II: Reformed Historical Considerations
4. HOM904 – Speak the Word: A Study in Oral Communication

*Introduction to Homiletical Studies.* This course is an introduction to homiletical studies, including the history of homiletics and will be primarily based on primary source readings, secondary literature overview, developments in homiletics, and research method. The classical Roman and Greek rhetoric and oratory will be studied, including foundational works of Cicero and Quintilian, the canons of rhetoric (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, and pronuntiatio*), as well as transitional moments from Augustine to the mid-1800s, and includes studies of Augustine, *De Doctrina Christina*, book IV, medieval *artes*

*praedicandi*, such as *Summa de arte prædicatoriâ* of Alain of Lille (ca. 1128-1201), Erasmus, *Ecclesiastes: sive de ratione concionandi* (1535), Melancthon, *De officiis concionatoris* (1529), and *Elementa rhetorices* (1532), and his appropriation in the works of Lutheran orthodoxy. In addition, attention will be given to the trajectories of homiletics in the Reformed tradition, and include readings of homiletic manuals of Andreas Hyperius (1511-1564), William Perkins (1558-1602), Johannes Hoornbeeck (1617-1666), David Knibbe (1639-1701), Conrad Bröske (1660-1713), William Chappell (1582 - 1649), John Wilkins (1614-1672), Oliver Bowles (c.1577–1644), Lucas Trelcatius Jr. (1573-1607), Willem Teelinck (1579-1629), Antonius Walaeus (1573-1639). Johannes Martius (1603-1665), Maastricht's *De Optima Concionandi*, Guiljelmus Saldenus (1627-1694), John Edwards' *The Preacher* (1706), Friedrich A. Lampe (1683-1729), Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), among others. These primary sources will be set in historical context, and trajectories of continuity and discontinuity will be discussed. Attention will be given to the classical structure of the sermon, including *Exordium*, *Narratio*, *Propositio*, *Confirmatio*, *Confutatio*, and *Conclusio*, as well as a discussion on the grand and plain style of preaching, the move from *explicatio* to *applicatio*, and the intersection of preacher, audience, psychology, affections, and communication. In summary, this course aims to contribute to the classical foundations of a homily.

*Reformed Experiential Preaching I.* This course is an introduction to the way in which exegesis gives preaching its experiential character and impetus. The conviction of this course is that all faithful preaching in its very essence is experiential, as preaching is for faith (Rom. 10:14), and faith is full-orbed, "not just a certain knowledge whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His Word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel in my heart, that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits" (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 7; A 21). God speaks in preaching. His claim reaches the hearer. It gives life from spiritual death as the Spirit uses the Word of God. Thus preaching by definition is experiential, though many strip from the Word its experiential character. The method of the course is to examine how servants of the Word have mined the text for the experiential in the understanding of what preaching is, the preparation for preaching, the exposition for and in preaching, the application in preaching, and moment and context of preaching, and the reception and echo of preaching. The aim is to grow the range and consciousness of sonority of experiential listening to and preaching the text.

*Reformed Experiential Preaching II.* This course will examine Reformed experiential preaching, defined and described, addressing this question: what is Reformed experiential preaching? It will observe the major elements of Reformed experiential preaching and the experiential preacher in his life and ministry. It will then illustrate Reformed experiential preaching by looking at those who have embodied it; preachers such as Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin, Perkins, Sibbes, Goodwin, Bunyan, Teellinck, à Brakel, Edwards, Davies, M'Cheyne, and Lloyd-Jones. After such considerations, attention will be paid to how the Reformed experiential preacher can consider such historical figures in his ministry today.

*Speak the Word: a Study in Oral Communication.* This course addresses to be an effective communicator of the Word; learn how to articulate ideas clearly, argue logically, listen carefully, and unify groups of people under a common goal. Authentic and effective communication skills are a must for effective speakers, and communicators of the Word.

Four elective courses from ThM/PhD course offerings in which major research papers are related to homiletical issues: **9 credits**

Students *may* take courses at WTS, The Master's Academy, or The Institute of Expository Preaching, among others. However, tuition and administration expenses of external course are not covered by Puritan Reformed nor included in the tuition as outlined below.

One directed study arranged between student and advisor **3 credits**

DMin Dissertation project

The Doctor of Ministry dissertation project is a written doctoral-level study that address both the nature and practice of preaching ministry. The study is completed with an oral defense, evaluation, and preached sermon. The study shows evidence of being informed by research method, course work, and project research enhancing knowledge and practice of one's preaching capacity.

### DMin project

1. DMin project Proposal: A proposal of the DMin project must be approved by the doctoral program director, advisor, co-advisor (and if necessary, one subject-expert scholar outside PRTS). The proposal is to be written following a proposal template and is normally to be submitted to the registrar two years before completion of the DMin project. See Appendix 1 for more information.
2. Advisors: Upon entrance of the student in the DMin project phase, the student will be assigned an advisor and at least one co-advisor. The advisor or co-advisor should be a member of faculty or an adjunct faculty
3. DMin project: The DMin project should demonstrate the student's mastery of relevant sources and methods and should make an original contribution to the field of homiletics. It should include a concluding summary written in English that demonstrates the relevance of the research for the ministry of preaching. The DMin project will be submitted to the office of the registrar for examination by at least two external subject experts and at least two members of faculty. The acceptance of the DMin project must be affirmed by a two-thirds majority of the examiners. Upon acceptance, a formal defense will be held on campus in the presence of a panel of scholars, members of the board of trustees and faculty. This defense should take place before graduation.

4. DMin project defense and Graduation: The dissertation should be submitted no later than January 1 in order to graduate in May of the same year.

#### Tuition and Fees

Application for admission (non-refundable)	\$ 50.00
Enrollment deposit	\$ 100.00
Tuition for the Doctor of Ministry program is	\$ 325.00 per month for four (4) years
Late registration fee	\$ 50.00
Continuation fee (after 4 years)	\$ 975.00 (not prorated)
Distance Education fee	\$75.00 per course taken from a distance
Graduation fee	\$ 250.00

## Appendix 1: Guidelines for Doctor of Ministry (DMin) Project Proposals and Examination

### The Ministry Project

The Doctor of Ministry project (“DMin project”) will involve the design, implementation, and evaluation of a project in ministry. The student’s project will have a practical element that introduces another aspect into their ministry. The project should address their ministry setting and what the student cares about. The project should set out a strategy to effect change that will transform and/or intensify the faith and practice of the student’s ministry community. The student should be able to reflect on what happens in a way that makes learning relevant beyond his particular community, thus adding to the general body of knowledge concerning ministry (whether theoretical or practical). Becoming a “doctor” of ministry means that a student has learned something new about how ministry happens and can reflect on that learning in a way that enables the student to be a “teacher” of ministry.

### Deciding What to Do

The four core courses (Introduction to Homiletical Studies, Reformed Experiential Preaching I and II, and Speak the Word), as well as other courses, offer the student the opportunity to develop the basic components of the DMin project proposal. During the first two years of the program, as the student deepens his understanding of the ministry context, explores and articulates his theology of ministry, and sharpens his skills in the practice of ministry, the student will lay the foundation for the DMin project. What the student chooses to do should be thoroughly grounded in what one has learned about one’s setting and one’s theology and practice of ministry.

Because the DMin project is grounded in a particular place, the student should also think early about how to involve participants in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the DMin project. Most students will put together a DMin support group that can be an important sounding board and partner in developing a focus for the project.

In addition to the courses, the most important person in this process is the student’s faculty advisor. The student should work closely with his advisor throughout the DMin program, but especially as he begins to focus and clarify his thinking about the DMin project. Approval by the advisor is required before a proposal is submitted for examination.

### Writing the Proposal

The writing of the DMin project proposal is both a necessary step toward completing the DMin project and a means of demonstrating that the student has gained the learning and skill necessary to proceed. This document is the “qualifying exam.” The faculty will be looking for evidence that (a) the issue is sufficiently defined and delimited as a manageable project, (b) the issue is broad enough to be of interest beyond the student’s local congregation, and (c) the proposed action of ministry has promise as a means of addressing the issue.

The student will be evaluated whether he has the necessary insight and skill to complete the project; this evaluation will largely focus on the coherence and appropriateness of what the student proposes. In the proposal, the student should also be explicit about the learning on which he is drawing, showing how his plans are informed by an understanding of the social and cultural context, how it is grounded in a theology of ministry, and how it draws on the best insights of those who have thought about and practiced the kinds of ministry related to the student’s proposal. The sources should be named and appropriately cited throughout the proposal. This is not simply a “review of the literature,” but it should demonstrate that the student knows what others have said

about the relevant issues and strategies.

### Submitting the Ministry Project Proposal

One may submit a DMin project proposal when:

- He has completed your four core courses, and
- He has completed at least four electives, and
- He has the approval of his advisor.

The approval of the faculty advisor usually means that the student has submitted a preliminary draft to the faculty advisor, received comments, and revised the proposal to his satisfaction. Students should assume that it will take a few weeks from the time the advisor receives a first draft to when the student receives final word on the proposal. A final decision on the proposal will require the vote of the entire faculty.

### Contents of the DMin Project Proposal

1. Ministry Project Title: The title should describe the ministry project in clear, concise language so that someone who sees the title knows exactly what the project is about. The goal is to describe the project, not sell a book.  
Good Title: "Strengthening Grace Reformed Church's Ministry with Experiential Preaching"  
Bad Title: "From Brokenness to Wholeness: The Experience of a Congregation."
2. The proposal should begin with a succinct statement of what is to be accomplished. What are the goals and how will the project move toward those goals? This should be no more than 1–2 paragraphs.
3. The proposal must explicitly address how the DMin project addresses and grows out of the realities of internal and external settings of ministry. Why is this project proposed for its particular place? What do you understand about the social and cultural realities of your setting that has helped you think about how to lead toward change? Here the student should draw on the coursework already completed. This section should be approximately 4–6 pages in length.
4. The proposal should include an explication of the theology that calls forth the proposed project's activities. What do you believe about the nature of the church, ministry, and God's activity in the world that draws you to this proposed action? Why is this ministry fitting? Here the student should include attention to scholarly theological sources, as well as to appropriate ecclesiastical traditions, relevant theoretical analyses, as well as the student's own experiences and convictions. This section should draw on courses already completed and the student's ministry experience; this section will usually be 4–6 pages in length.
5. The proposal should offer a detailed outline of the transformative actions the student wishes to undertake. This need not be a complete set of all plans and resources, but it should include sufficient detail clarifying how the student hopes to achieve the stated goals. Supporting details (e.g., sample sermon outlines, etc.) may be added in an appendix. This outline should be 3–5 pages in length.
6. Having described what you are going to do, the student should discuss why one has chosen these particular strategies. On what theoretical and practical aspects of preaching is one drawing? How are your actions grounded in an understanding of the specific practices of preaching? For example: what theories of learning, exegesis, experiential theology, communication, spiritual formation, etc., are relevant to your work? The work the student did in the elective courses may be considered. This section will normally be 3–5 pages in length.
7. The proposal should contain a brief description of how you plan to evaluate the proposed DMin project. What will count as "success" and why? How will you gather information on the

responses of participants? What changes or developments will you be watching for? This section will normally be 1–2 pages.

8. The proposal will end with a brief statement about what sort of support you have for the project from (1) those in the student’s ministry setting, and (2) faculty advisor. Who will be helping you, and how will they be doing it? This will usually be one or two paragraphs.
9. The main text of the proposal will be followed by a bibliography. The first section of the bibliography will be the “works cited” in the proposal itself. The second will be a list of “additional resources” the student anticipates using in the DMin project. While the faculty recognizes the bibliography will grow and change through the course of the project, a provisional bibliography must be developed at this stage. The bibliography must be in proper academic form.
10. After the bibliography, add any appendices useful in helping the committee to understand the details of the proposed project. Examples of items to be included here are sample sermon outlines, lesson plans, event descriptions, sample questionnaires, etc.
11. Finally, provide a detailed timeline for the completion of the DMin project. The timeline should include any remaining course work to be completed and should project a date for the project’s completion and submission of the final DMin project.
12. The total length of the proposal (excluding the bibliography) should be 20–25 pages (double spaced, 10 or 12-point type, with margins of 1 inch). Consult the seminary’s guidelines on paper writing, or seek the advice from the librarian concerning proper style.

#### The Acceptance of the DMin Project Proposal

The faculty advisor will assess the submitted DMin project proposal, and upon approval, submit the proposal to the Academic Dean for the assessment by the members of the faculty. Upon approval of the faculty, the student will be informed accordingly. The DMin project needs to be completed within 3 years after the date of the acceptance of the project proposal.

#### Maximum Timeframe for Program, Deadlines, and Extensions

A student who cannot complete his course work or DMin project within the allotted time must receive approval of the registrar to adjust the student’s plan. The entire DMin program must be completed within six (6) years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the academic dean in consultation with the director of the doctoral programs.

#### Degree Candidacy and DMin Project Proposal

Students who meet the following requirements are admitted to the degree candidacy:

- Completion of coursework with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Submission of a DMin project proposal approved by the advisor and faculty.

#### DMin Project Requirements

The following guidelines pertain to the DMin project:

- Students must have an approved project proposal.
- Students must offer original research and practical contributions in homiletics that serves the academy and the church.
- Students will be assigned a supervisor and co-advisor; the student may recommend an external co-advisor to the supervisor and doctoral program committee. The recommendation may or may not be followed by the supervisor and doctoral program supervisor.
- It is strongly recommended that the DMin project be edited by a professional editor.

- A completed DMin project shall be submitted in electronic format (both Word and PDF), as well as two bound print copies. The electronic and hard copies must be submitted to the registrar for distribution to the supervisor, co-advisor, and examiners.
- Upon acceptance of the DMin project by a three-fourths majority of the supervisor, co-advisor, and examiners, a public defense will be scheduled.

#### DMin Defense

The following guidelines pertain to the DMin project defense:

- The public defense will take place at the main campus of PRTS. The defense will be chaired by the President, who will open with prayer.
- The President will invite the student to summarize the reason, findings, and contribution of the study (approximately 10 minutes). The President will then invite members of the faculty (with the exception of the supervisor) and other members of the examination panel to question the candidate on the project.
- Special permission may be granted by the President for elders or ministers of churches to ask the candidate a question.
- Upon completion of the defense, the President and members of the examination panel will leave the room to deliberate and subsequently render an assessment of the defense.
- The student is informed of the results of the deliberation by the President. The supervisor will then offer an *oratio laudatio* that incorporates the results of the external examiners. The ceremony will be closed with prayer.
- During the commencement exercises, the President or designated person will confer the degree on the candidate.