**The Doctor of Ministry Program at Cuttington University**

**Program Description**

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) program at Cuttington University engages pastors, leaders, and other interested professionals in rigorous, relevant, and creative theological reflection, as they continue to serve in their professional capacities. Combining intensive on-campus sessions with online learning, the DMin program offers students and leaders the flexibility they need to earn a doctorate without leaving their positions.

Study of holy scriptures and church traditions is paired with study of contemporary leadership theories and practice, furthering a deeper understanding of the sources, nature, and character of Christian leadership. This program is for professionals who seek to deepen their knowledge, strengthen their leadership, enhance their critical skills, and build a dynamic collegial community with relationships that could last a lifetime.

In a hybrid learning environment with small cohort sizes, distinguished faculty, a commitment to leadership in the Church and society, and an emphasis on developing innovative research-based theses, our students are set up for success.

**Program Overview**

Curriculum

The Doctor of Ministry (DMin) curriculum is offered in a hybrid residency format, which requires students to enroll in courses over two years. Each course runs for six weeks and could be a combination of residency and structured distance learning facilitated by the faculty utilizing both synchronous and asynchronous formats. All our courses prioritize student interactions, collaboration, and high-level engagements with faculty and peer scholars-practitioners formed during the residential intensives/courses.

To facilitate the maximum opportunity for peer-learning, support, and accountability, the Cohort Model is a preference for this program. Cohorts are expected to start and complete each course, as well as the program together. Courses are taken in series, one at a time. Each cohort is assigned a cohort mentor (faculty) to facilitate spiritual formation, and offer other forms of support to the students throughout the program. Students and their cohort mentors engage in corporate worship and meet at scheduled times during each 6-weeks period. These meetings can be in-person or virtual as determined by the Cohort mentors. Mentors are a great resource and students are encouraged to engage their mentors as often as necessary.

The courses typically begin and run at the following times during the year:

February: 1st week of February – 2nd week of March

March: 4th week of March – 2nd week of May

September: 4th week of September – 1st week of November

The two years of coursework is followed by the development of an innovative and independent research project. This project is the highlight of the Doctor of Ministry program, affording students the opportunity to develop and contribute an original work to the body of theological reflection and practice of ministry.

Working closely with a faculty supervisor, students create their research agendas, engage in disciplined and relevant theological reflection, and develop and complete their thesis projects. The hope is that each student will produce a significant—and ideally, publishable—piece of work. Students are encouraged to begin exploring and identify their research topic at the beginning of the program. This will allow each student ample time to develop and produce a quality paper.

While there may be endless possibilities regarding a thesis topic, students are encouraged to narrow their focus to something of interest to themselves, and valuable to the church and/or society. While the final year is expected to be dedicated to completing the research project, a good thesis typically takes one to two years to complete. Thus, beginning the research and project development at the beginning of the program is the best way to proceed.

Students in the Doctor of Ministry program will choose one of these tracks:

1. Missional Leadership
2. Ministry Development
3. Educational Leadership

**Curriculum Outline and Degree Plan for the DMin Program**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Content | Hours |
| Foundations & Methods | Research & Ministry courses | 9 |
| Concentrations and Core Competencies | Educational Leadership  Missional Leadership  Ministry Development | 21 |
| Research Project | Project Presentation and Oral Defense | 6 |
| Total Program Hours | | **36** |

**General Course Categories for the DMin Program**

Course descriptions vary depending on the context, contents, objectives, and preferred methodology of the faculty who lead the courses. Syllabi will contain detailed course contents, requirements, and expectations.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Course Number | Category Title | Comments |
| DT 701 - 703 | Research Methods Courses | Required |
| DM 705 - 722 | Educational Leadership courses |  |
| DM 724 - 741 | Missional Leadership courses |  |
| DM 713 - 730 | Ministry Development courses |  |
| DM 798 | Directed Study (with Assigned Supervisor) | Required |
| DM 799 | Dissertation Project Seminar | Required |

The courses are designed to allow students a natural progression: from foundational courses of research and analyses to concentration courses based on the track chosen by the student, to the capstone project of researching, writing, and presenting an original project completed by the student.

**Graduation Requirements**

The Doctor of Ministry can be completed in three years. Requirements for graduation are:

* 6 terms of coursework to be completed within 2 years, for a total of 24 credit hours.
* 1 year of writing and research to be completed within 1 year for a total of 6 credit hours.
* A Dissertation Project.

**Our DMin program is unique, flexible, manageable, achievable, and affordable.**

The hybrid learning system allows for the combination of in-person and online instruction, guided research, case studies, contextualized field work, and service-learning opportunities. This flexibility accommodates diversity in the learning styles and circumstances of professional students. The collegiality, mutual accountability and support provided within the Cohorts will enhance the students’ ability to succeed.