



San Francisco
Theological Seminary

Doctor of Ministry
Pastor as Spiritual Leader Concentration

The DMin Concentration in Pastor as Spiritual Leader offers spiritual formation and academic study to ordained and non-ordained people working in churches and synagogues or other religious communities or religious non-profits. In conjunction with programs in Spiritual Direction and Formation, it integrates prayer, contemplative listening, discernment, biblical and theological reflection to facilitate understanding, competence, and transformation of spiritual leaders and their communities.

Our program reflects these commitments and beliefs:

- The transformed person of the spiritual leader is a significant component in the transformation of the community. The community itself is likewise a transforming agent for its members and its leader.
- Congregations and other entities look to their teachers, pastors, and directors to embody and facilitate leadership that is prayerful and discerning, critically reflective, emotionally intelligent, and grounded in tradition.
- Religious communities are primary (but not exclusive) arenas in which people of faith are equipped and encouraged to participate in the Spirit's work of worship, study, prayer, mission, peace-making and tikkun olam – mending the world.
- Prayer, contemplative awareness and discernment are foundational to a religious leader's ability to serve his/her people with energy, imagination, intelligence, love and freedom. Prayer is an expression of one's relationship with God, as well as a primary means by which we grow in this relationship. Contemplative awareness involves the full, healthy embodiment of one's whole self in relationship to God, self, others and creation. With discernment, one becomes increasingly able to notice where God is at work in religious communities, the world, and one's own life--and able to respond in faithful discipleship.
- We are based in a Protestant seminary, but believe that the world needs spiritual leaders from every tradition – and from the wisdom of spirituality itself. We hope to provide a welcoming community of discourse where we can pray together and learn from one another.

Courses

This DMin. degree requires six 3-unit seminars, the Dissertation/Project Seminar and the completion of a Dissertation/Project.

Foundational Seminars (required for all DMin students):

- Pastor as Person
- Theology, Culture and Mission

Pastor as Spiritual Leader Concentration required courses (*preferably taken in sequence*):

- The Art of Christian Listening: This course introduces participants to contemplative listening and to the dynamics of personal spiritual direction. PSL participants will ponder how to adapt these dynamics to their settings.
- Prayer and Discernment for Pastoral Ministry: This course overviews forms of prayer and dynamics of discernment as set within the context of congregations, chaplaincies and other ministry settings.
- Discernment of Systems and Structures: This second discernment course extends discernment to systems of all kinds, including congregations, chaplaincies, communities, schools, civic groups, etc.

Electives: selected from the PSL or other DMin concentrations to enhance the individual student's ministry context and objectives for the degree.

- Dissertation/Project Seminar:
This not-for credit workshop is designed to introduce basic research methods for social analysis, help students to define their area of interest D/P topic, and prepare for the D/P process. It is offered in two levels,
 - D/P Seminar I, normally taken in the first year of course work
 - D/P Seminar II, normally taken as the student is completing course work and is beginning work on their D/P topic proposal and D/P design proposal.

Admissions

In addition to the basic DMin requirements, applicants to the Pastor as Spiritual Leader emphasis shall provide additional narrative materials, as follows:

In no more than one page each, respond to the following questions.

- What attracts you to this emphasis? Describe your inner process as you came to select this emphasis.
- Describe an incident in your ministry in which you were called upon to function as a spiritual leader. How did you respond and what fruit did it bear in both you and in the wider community?
- It has been said that the leader's greatest asset is their own search. How would you describe the heart of your search for God or religious transformation at the present moment?