

**Supervised Ministry**  
**Student Information Packet**  
2010

**Moravian Theological Seminary**  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

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## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The primary function of Supervised Ministry (SM) at Moravian Theological Seminary is to provide supervised on-site experiences of pastoral ministry, in conjunction with academic studies, for all students studying for the M.Div. degree. The goal of SM is to help students begin to form their pastoral identities by combining theory and practice during the course of their seminary education.

The results anticipated for the student through experiences of SM are:

- skill development in various areas of ministry
- increasing aptitude for theological reflection upon the practice of ministry
- growth in self-awareness as person and pastor
- ability to relate academic studies to practical ministry
- testing of pastoral performance in real-life situations
- capacity to critique and evaluate various leadership styles

The experience of SM is intended to lead the Student into a life-long process of self-reflective pastoral practice. The experience will sharpen the student's awareness of the call of God and the Church as s/he begins to serve God's people through various activities of leadership and service. The anticipated outcome is the formation of pastors who are responsive to their calling, attentive to the needs of the Church, and creative in the development of ministry for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISED MINISTRY**

The program seeks to place students in appropriate Teaching Church settings where both affirmation and challenge will be offered. Teaching Churches receive students as pastors-in-training, responding to their assigned areas of leadership and utilizing their skills. Supervisors work closely with the students to provide regular opportunities for pastoral activities and to offer regular in-depth supervision. Members of the Supervised Ministry Lay Committees support and encourage the students, providing periodic feedback and critique. Through SM, students begin to function as *paid, accountable* pastors and receive a standard remuneration for their services. A student is expected to spend, on average, 10-12 hours per week in service and training at his/her Teaching Church.

Supervised Ministry begins when a student is placed in a Teaching Church and a Supervised Ministry Covenant has been satisfactorily negotiated. The SM experience in that setting ends when the Covenant has been fulfilled or when alternative arrangements are made. Students are expected to function in two different SM sites during the course of their seminary education. In general, the first SM setting begins in January of a student's first year and continues for 17 months as an introductory placement; the second (advanced) appointment runs from September to May of a student's third year. It is understood that no academic credit is given for SM, but scholarly application is reflected in specific courses that require a Supervised Ministry component.

The program of Supervised Ministry is arranged and administered by the Director, Assistant Director, and Advisory Committee of Supervised Ministry.

## THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY IN A TEACHING CHURCH

It is expected that students will be introduced to a full range of pastoral functions by their Supervisors and Teaching Churches within five focus arenas of ministry:

- administration & leadership
- worship & preaching
- pastoral care & counseling
- teaching & faith development
- congregational mission & evangelism

These arenas will all be addressed in an introductory fashion in the first placement. In addition, they will have dedicated course requirements on a more advanced level throughout the five semesters of supervision. Students will function under the guidance and authority of their Supervisors and will engage as assigned in specific activities within these arenas of ministry, such as worship leadership, preaching, visitations, hospital calling, counseling, program planning, group advising, teaching, confirmation education, official board meetings, committees, fellowship gatherings, outreach and evangelism, wedding and baptismal preparations, funerals, community and denominational events.

The particular arenas of ministry to be explored in a given semester will depend upon the student's field-related course requirements for that semester, and upon other activities mutually arranged with the Supervisor, as stated in the SM Covenant. A typical pattern is as follows:

Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> year:	An Orientation to SM – 6 sessions	
	<u>Courses:</u>	<u>Requirements:</u>
Spring, 1 <sup>st</sup> year:	Christian Worship Speech practicum	Regular liturgical leadership
Fall, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year:	Homiletics	Reflect on Supervisor's preaching habits
Spring, 2 <sup>nd</sup> year:	Practice of Preaching Pastoral Care & Counseling	Preach 3 times in congregation throughout the semester Visitations and counseling
January, 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> year:	Evangelism	Create congregational evangelism strategy
Fall, 3 <sup>rd</sup> year:	Teaching Ministry	Observe/Lead adult class Preach children's sermon
Spring, 3 <sup>rd</sup> year:	Congregational Leadership	Analyze congregational conflict, official board meeting, church budget process

These eight courses **require** SM placement for MDiv students. If students are part-time, appropriate settings to fulfil these requirements will be necessary. Specific course assignments to satisfy SM requirements need to be clearly articulated.

## **THE TEACHING CHURCH**

The primary setting for Supervised Ministry is the Teaching Church. The Teaching Church is a church of any denomination, which chooses to participate in the program, which fulfills the requirements pertaining to Churches, Supervisors and SM Lay Committees, and which is approved as a Teaching Church by Moravian Theological Seminary. A Teaching Church is one that is capable of offering to a student a full range of pastoral experiences in a supportive environment where sensitive Supervision can take place.

A Church should seek approval from its official board(s) before requesting participation in the SM program. A Church is approved as a Teaching Church when its pastor (Supervisor) and its SM Lay Committee fulfill the training requirements. The Church completes a Profile which is kept on file in the office of the Director and is updated regularly. Teaching Churches are listed in various Seminary publications. Teaching Churches are recognized as vital and essential adjunct settings for Seminary education.

## **APPROVED TEACHING CHURCHES**

Churches and Supervisors who enter the SM program and receive their first Student Intern are required, during that first year, to gain Teaching Church status with the Seminary. When the requirements are fulfilled and maintained, the Supervisor and congregation are listed in the Seminary Catalogue.

The requirements for an Approved Teaching Church are:

- Attendance at the orientations and workshops
- Weekly Supervision of Student by the Supervisor
- Regular (monthly) meetings with the Student by the SM Lay Committee
- Supervisor attendance at monthly Supervisor Convocations (must attend 3 of 6)
- Supervisor presents one case study at a Convocation
- Submission of evaluations by Supervisor and Lay Committee as Requested by DSM

## **SM ORIENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS**

Orientations to the SM Program are scheduled every fall for new Supervisors and Teaching Churches. There are two Orientations offered: one specifically for new Supervisors, and one specifically for Lay Committee Members of Teaching Churches. The Supervisors' Orientation is arranged and led by the Directors in conjunction with other Seminary personnel. The Lay Committee Orientation is scheduled within the first 2 months of a student's arrival at the Teaching Church. It is developed by the Directors, but organized and led jointly by the Student and the Supervisor in the local congregation. Both Orientations run several hours in length. Their purpose is to prepare new Supervisors and Lay Committee members for their tasks related to their work with student interns.

In addition, two other Saturday morning Lay Committee workshops are offered, one in fall and one in spring to strengthen the committee's role in the student's ministry. Likewise, all Supervisors meet six times throughout an academic year to discuss field education issues, offer professional growth resources, and share supervisory concerns, insights, and methodologies.

## **THE SUPERVISOR**

The Supervisor is an ordained pastor or professional church leader who has been approved by Moravian Theological Seminary for the program of SM and who is prepared to provide Supervision for seminary students. The Supervisor must believe strongly in Christian ministry and must know how to share that ministry in a working-learning process. S/he needs to be the kind of person who will both model ministry and share it; who can both empathize with a student and motivate the student; who can both allow a student the freedom to explore and to grow, while at the same time interpreting sensitively the limits of a congregation's expectations.

The task of Supervision is an ongoing process within the covenant relationship. The Supervisor, therefore, considers the student as a colleague in ministry and seeks to create situations and conversations that will utilize the student's gifts and will stimulate the student's growth. As the key person functioning in the SM program, the Supervisor is considered by the Seminary as an important partner in the educational program of the Seminary.

## **THE SUPERVISORY SESSION**

The Supervisory Session is the heart of the SM program. This is a weekly session between Supervisor and student, 1 to 1½ hours in length. The session is regularly scheduled and carefully arranged. The purposes of the Session are as follows:

- to allow mutual exploration of professional concerns,
- to provide Supervisory critique of the student's performance,
- to assign and plan the student's functions and activities within the Church.

It is the student's responsibility to provide, in advance of each Session, an agenda for the Session. It is the Supervisor's privilege and responsibility to add to and adjust the agenda as s/he deems helpful.

The Supervisory Session serves as the vehicle through which the student learns to cultivate a self-reflective understanding of ministry. The student's ministry is formed by the student's spiritual convictions openly confessed and examined; by the performance of pastoral tasks in the congregational setting; and by the student's response to perceptions of that performance given by the Supervisor, the Lay Committee and others. The Session, therefore, is not merely an unfocused monologue on the part of the student, nor is it a didactic instruction session on the part of the Supervisor. Rather, it is a structured time of mutual reflection and sharing of pastoral issues, a time for hard thinking and theologizing, a time for praying and seeking direction, a time to relate spiritual and personal concerns to the practice of ministry, and a time for the Supervisor to provide models for ministry that will help the Student advance.

The Session is not a time for personal counseling. Should the Supervisor determine that the student requires counseling, the Supervisor should discuss this with the Director or the Assistant Director. It is not appropriate for the Supervisor to engage in the counseling of a student who is under his/her supervision.

**Issues discussed in a Supervisory Session are considered confidential.**

## **THE SUPERVISED MINISTRY LAY COMMITTEE**

The Supervised Ministry Lay Committee consists of four to eight lay persons, appointed by the church or the pastor (Supervisor), in consultation with the student, representing a cross-section of the congregation. Members of the Lay Committee should be individuals of various ages, genders, backgrounds and vocations. They should be individuals who:

- Demonstrate love for and loyalty to the Church
- Possess a keen personal sense of Christian calling, and a positive but objective view of pastoral ministry
- Will be able to encourage and support, as well as provide honest and useful critique
- Will be open to the student's agenda and suggestions; while clarifying for the student the congregation's history, expectations and limits

A Chairperson may be chosen by the SM Lay Committee, or the student may serve together with a Lay Committee member as Co-chairs. The Supervisor shall not be a member of the Lay Committee and will not attend meetings unless invited. The student provides the main agenda for each meeting. The Committee meets monthly to:

- Review the work of the student as set forth in the Covenant
- Provide feedback to the student
- Discuss congregational or ministry issues introduced by the student or by the Committee
- Facilitate the fulfillment of course requirements for the student
- Provide accessibility for the student into congregational life

**Discussions at Lay Committee meetings are to be kept confidential.**

## **FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The Seminary and the Churches recognize both the need that students have to work in *paid, accountable ministry* as Intern Pastors, and the need that Students have to secure adequate financial resources. Teaching Churches, therefore, are asked to remunerate Students for their services provided through the Supervised Ministry program. It is recommended that students shall receive a standard remuneration of \$1800/semester. This compensates them for 10-12 hours/week of service, during each semester of their placement. Additional travel reimbursements are optional. Please note that FICA **should** be withheld at the appropriate rate, except in those denominations which supply this as part of a student's financial aid package.

No Church shall offer a Student more than the standard remuneration figure stated above. Churches that cannot offer this figure, but which qualify in every other respect as Teaching Churches, will be considered equally by the DSM for the placement of Students, with the realization that some students will need to opt elsewhere for financial reasons. Contracts for summer work, which some Students will arrange in their Teaching Churches, lie outside the parameters of the SM program.

## **CRIMINAL AND CHILD ABUSE CHECKS**

All students directly engaged in parish ministry as part of their Seminary program, with responsibility for vulnerable individuals within a congregation, are required to file a current Criminal Record Check and Child Abuse History Clearance with the Director of Admissions and Student Life. These documents must be on file before a student may register for those courses requiring SM placement (see p. 3) and participate in a Supervised Ministry. The appropriate forms are available by contacting the Seminary Student Life Office and the cost of acquiring these record checks (\$20) is the responsibility of the student.

## **SPECIALIZED SETTINGS**

Students may consider functioning in one Specialized Setting during their second, *advanced* placement. A Specialized Setting is one where a particular aspect of ministry or service predominates. The Specialized Setting may not provide the full range of pastoral activities and education, and therefore may not offer a total program of Supervision. However, the Specialized Setting will provide experiences and Supervision that will prepare a student for particular modes of ministry. In many instances, the Specialized Setting will offer to the Student experiences that cannot be gained in an “average” parish. Each Specialized Setting will be defined individually and will be approved for Supervision as determined by the Director and the Advisory Committee.

Currently, these site possibilities are being explored or developed: Team Ministry, Couples Ministry, Urban Ministry, Church Revitalization Ministry, Rural Ministry, Multicultural Ministry, Emergent Church Ministry, New Church Ministry, Small Church Ministry, and Missional Church Ministry. There is ongoing discussion with denominational leaders regarding settings outside local congregations for specialized ministry in institutional chaplaincies and denominational agencies, though preference is maintained for parish-based appointments.

## **EVALUATIONS**

In addition to weekly supervisory sessions and monthly meetings by the SM Lay Committee, written evaluations are requested by the Director. These are of three kinds:

- Semester-end evaluations by Supervisor and the Lay Committee.
- Regular critiques of performance in specific activities in preaching, worship leadership, teaching, and pastoral care.
- The Student is asked to provide an evaluation at the conclusion of his/her appointment of both the Supervisor and Teaching Church.

Forms for all evaluations are provided by the DSM. Electronic forms are available and all respondents (supervisors, lay committees and students) are encouraged to utilize this technology.

## **CONSULTATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR**

Every Student engaged in Supervised Ministry will have a consultation session with the Director or Assistant Director at least once per year. The purpose of the consultation is to discuss how well the SM experience is proceeding, and to explore ways of enhancing the experience. The effectiveness of the Supervisor-Student relationship and the SM Lay Committee-Student relationship will be reviewed. The Student is free to suggest agenda items for this consultation to accompany those presented by the Directors. Any request for change of placement will be carefully considered in consultation with the Directors.

## **PLACEMENT PROCEDURES**

All placements of students in SM sites shall be facilitated and approved by the Director and Assistant Director. Placements will be suggested without undue regard to gender, race, natural origin, or denominational background. All terminations are also arranged in consultation with the Directors. A student shall not ordinarily seek placement in his/her home congregation or where the student is currently employed in another capacity. Normally, only one student will be placed in a congregation at any time.

Two placements during a student's seminary career are required: an introductory 17-month placement from January of the 1<sup>st</sup> year through May of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year; and an advanced 9-month placement from September through May of the student's 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

The step-by-step placement process is as follows:

- Congregational and Supervisor profiles are gathered from potential Teaching Churches.
- Denominational judicatories are consulted for guidance and direction.
- On-site visits by the Director familiarize the seminary with each site.
- Student Profiles are gathered from students seeking placement.
- Students are interviewed by the Director as part of the Orientation process.
- The DSM directs the student towards a specific Church according to the strongest prospects for learning.
- The student visits services of worship and congregational events at the recommended Church.
- Interviews are arranged between students and prospective Supervisors.
- Final commitments are made by common agreement among the student, the Supervisor, and the Director.
- Covenants are constructed, signed, and submitted within one month of beginning placement.
- SM experiences begin with Installation Ceremonies during regular services of worship within one month of beginning placement.
- Students already in the program who are looking for placement in the 3rd year will do so in consultation with the Directors of SM.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

It is understood that exceptions will need to be considered on an individual basis between the student and Directors. Every effort will be made to accommodate a student's particular needs while honoring the integrity of the programs guidelines. All exceptions need the approval of the Directors.

## **THE SUPERVISED MINISTRY COVENANT**

Every arrangement for SM shall begin with the construction of a SM Covenant. The Covenant should place emphasis upon the opportunities for learning that are being provided for the student and upon the student's professional responsibilities to the Church. This Covenant is initiated by the student, and it covers all of the areas relevant to the student's anticipated experiences in the Church for the coming year. It is expected that the Covenant will be reviewed and revised as necessary for each semester. These periodic updates should be communicated with the Directors. The SM arrangement is considered finalized when the Covenant has been signed by four parties: Student, Supervisor, SM Lay Committee (Chairperson), and the Director.

The basic ingredients of a Covenant are the following:

- Frequency and length of Supervisory Sessions (1 hour/week minimum)
- Frequency and length of SM Lay Committee Meetings (1 meeting/month minimum)
- Learning goals for the student
- Areas of ministry to be undertaken (note especially specific course requirements)
- Areas of ministry not to be undertaken
- Time commitments (maximum 10-12 hours/week)
- Financial arrangements, such as salary, transportation, allowances, etc.
- Church's task expectations and assignments for the student, beyond those fulfilling course requirements
- Church's resources for meeting the goals
- Calendar showing general dates of student involvement and dates when student is not expected to be involved
- Commitments on the part of Supervisor and SM Lay Committee to provide critiques as requested by seminary professors and by the Director

All Covenants are kept on file in the office of the DSM. Copies should also be retained by Students and Supervisors, for easy reference. The covenants are due in the office of the Director within one month of beginning the placement. Notice of any changes to the existing covenant must be given to the Directors in a timely fashion.

## **PASTORAL CONSULTANTS**

The Pastoral Consultant is a female clergyperson who, by approved arrangement, serves as a role model and provides support for a female seminary student whose regular Supervisor is male. Similar arrangements are available for male students with female Supervisors. A Pastoral Consultant is arranged by the Directors, upon the request of a student, any time after the beginning of an appointment to a Teaching Church.