



# BIRMINGHAM THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## DOCTOR OF MINISTRY HANDBOOK

Pastoral Leadership • Biblical Counseling • Public Theology & Apologetics  
Church Vitality & Multiplication • Chaplaincy • Honors

*YOUR CALLING IS OUR CALLING*

2026–2028 Academic Years  
2200 Briarwood Way • Birmingham, Alabama 35243  
[www.bts.education](http://www.bts.education) • (205) 776-5650

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# Part I: The Doctor of Ministry Program

## Mission and Vision

**Mission:** BTS is committed to making quality, Reformed theological education accessible to learners everywhere, equipping leaders for Christ's church.

**Vision:** BTS strives to be the leading seminary for quality, sound, affordable theological education that extends to learners in diverse environments for kingdom impact on their communities.

## Philosophy of Education

BTS is committed to making quality Reformed theological education affordable and flexible to learners everywhere. We offer multiple graduate and postgraduate programs, both locally and online, to bring value to the church and the surrounding community. We serve individuals and churches by training future and current pastors, counselors, and lay leaders both domestically and internationally. We are a historic, Reformed seminary committed to biblical inerrancy, infallibility, and authority and hold ecclesiastical accreditation from multiple Protestant denominations.

BTS utilizes pastor-professors to bring focused academic and theological training with practical application, designed to develop vocational and volunteer leaders in the church. BTS is a multisite seminary that provides resources to students on a full-time and part-time basis. We believe education is a service that should be extended as far as reasonably possible to help the church grow spiritually and to bring kingdom impact to local communities with the good news of salvation through Christ alone.

## The Doctor of Ministry Program

BTS has designed its Doctor of Ministry program to accommodate both the bi-vocational pastor and the full-time pastor active in ordained ministry. The DMin is a professional doctorate for experienced ministry leaders, offering six concentrations:

- Pastoral Leadership
- Biblical Counseling
- Public Theology and Apologetics
- Church Vitality and Multiplication
- Chaplaincy
- Honors

All faculty members in the DMin program have obtained terminal postgraduate degrees and are or have been full-time ministry practitioners in their fields of expertise. They have learned to integrate biblical, historical,

practical, and theological resources into successful ministries and therefore serve as practical academicians as well as mentors to our students.

The BTS DMin program is a cohort-based, class-oriented program that challenges its students through educational innovation and community-driven learning, encouraging students to achieve a balance between learned content and applied professional behaviors.

## Our Goal

The goal of the BTS Doctor of Ministry program is to challenge students with advanced learning that enables them to pursue unique research in their respective fields, bringing new perspectives to ministry challenges. The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) defines doctor of ministry programs as those that should demonstrate the candidate's ability to identify a specific theological topic in ministry, organize an effective research model, use appropriate resources, and evaluate the results in a way that reflects depth of theological insight in relation to ministry. BTS's DMin program is designed to meet and exceed this standard within the historic Reformed tradition.

We believe a covenantal approach to biblical studies, within the historic Reformed tradition, enables practicing ministers, counselors, and church leaders to produce biblically faithful, academically sound, and appropriately practical solutions to the many challenges facing the church and Christians today in diverse ministry communities.

We strive for our graduates to be known by the appropriate characteristics of *orthodoxy*, *orthopraxy*, and *orthopatheos*: that we might learn the truth, practice the truth, and love the truth.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of their program, BTS graduates will demonstrate growth in eight institutional Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- **Scripture:** Articulate the truth of Scripture and Scripture as truth effectively, developing a love for the whole counsel of God.
- **Reformed Theology:** Engage and reproduce the primary and essential elements of Reformed Theology relative to the Five Solas.
- **Local Church:** Be engaged in applied ministry projects in the local church.
- **Wisdom:** Develop their character, demonstrating an increase in wisdom and its fruits.
- **Discipleship:** Understand and articulate the nature and importance of discipleship—both ordinary (means of grace) and extraordinary (biblical counseling).
- **Communication:** Develop the efficacy of their communication across various departments, both in terms of content knowledge and rhetorical strategies.

- **Worldview:** Demonstrate a growing ability to apply God's word to all spheres of life, evidenced through class discussion and other assigned assessments.
- **Leadership:** Develop a deeper understanding of godly leadership and the ability to lead others in the service of the local church.

## Part II: General Information

### Admission Requirements

BTS requires all doctoral candidates to hold an advanced graduate degree from a respected and theologically compatible seminary. Applicants who hold theological master's degrees are given equal consideration in applying to the program, but MA degree holders may be required to demonstrate more significant sustained, applicable work experience than Master of Divinity graduates. The applicant must have completed at least 60 hours of graduate work. If the applicant has not completed 60 hours, BTS can supply a specially designed program to help them reach that standard to gain admittance to the postgraduate program.

Consideration for admittance to the BTS Doctoral Program by the Doctoral Admissions Committee includes the following requirements:

- The completed application
- Existing subject knowledge
- Evidence of cultural appreciation
- Evidence of the application of Scripture to the care of souls
- Administrative skills in managing ministry requirements

These matters will be assessed through personal references, a personal interview, and/or whatever testing the administration deems useful. BTS does not require the GRE for admittance but may do so in select circumstances.

International students whose primary language is not English may be asked to submit TOEFL scores after a formal interview, if necessary. Procedures required for foreign students in relation to immigration policies may be found on the BTS website or will be sent to the applicant after contacting the seminary.

### Admittance Requirements

BTS requires the following for admittance to the Doctor of Ministry program:

- Master of Divinity or its educational equivalent (MA with appropriate ministry experience)\*
- Greek and Hebrew studies (waived for Biblical Counseling; may be replaced with another language study for Public Theology and Apologetics)
- Proof of scholarly capacity (15–20-page submission) in Turabian format
- Appropriate application and references
- Formal interview with DMin program director

*\*Limited exceptions may be made for students with theology degrees totaling less than 60 hours but who hold significant ministry experience (20+ years). Extensive recommendations will be required in these cases.*

## Program Limitations

BTS holds to a traditional Reformed theological framework. As such, we hold to a position on complementarianism regarding the Bible's teaching on the roles of men and women in pastoral leadership positions in the local church. Considering this commitment, two of our concentrations (Pastoral Leadership and Church Vitality and Multiplication) are only open to men. Our concentrations in Biblical Counseling, Public Theology and Apologetics, Chaplaincy, and Honors are open to men and women.

For more information on BTS's theological stance, please refer to *"The Role of Women in the Church: A Rationale for the BTS Position"* available as an appendix in our Faculty and Student Handbooks.

## Application Process and Deadlines

Applications for Fall admittance follow this timeline:

- **May 1:** Early admittance deadline. Early applicants are eligible for an early scholarship decision by June 1.
- **June 15:** Letter of intent to attend must be submitted to secure an early scholarship award. Failure to submit by this date returns the student to the general scholarship allocation pool.
- **July 1:** Standard application deadline.
- **August 1:** Late application deadline. Late applications are subject to an additional \$50 late fee. Scholarship allocation for the general pool is processed during August.

The standard application fee is \$100 (nonrefundable). Applicants may secure the required forms at the seminary office or online at [bts.education](http://bts.education).

## International/Non-American Citizens

Non-American citizens who wish to pursue the program by moving to the United States must be willing to relocate to Birmingham, AL (in compliance with SEVIS standards) and must have their application completed by June 1 of the year of matriculation. While BTS can accommodate residential students for the program, since the entire program is offered via videoconference, residential attendance is not our primary recommended method of delivery.

International students who wish to pursue the doctoral program and remain in their country of origin are not required to obtain SEVIS approval and may follow the general application guidelines. For more information on non-American citizens and BTS, please see our Student Handbook.

## Schedule of Fees

- **Application Fee:** \$100 (nonrefundable)
- **Student Services Fee:** \$75 annual (fall)
- **Tuition:** \$200 per credit hour (three-hour courses)

- **Candidacy Examination Reader Fee:** \$60
- **Outside Dissertation Reader Fee:** \$200
- **Binding Fee (dissertation):** Established annually
- **Graduation Fee:** \$200
- **Estimated Total Cost of DMin Program:** Approximately \$9,000 or less

## Scholarships

Students may apply for a scholarship during the application process for their doctoral program. Scholarships are available at up to 50% of tuition for qualifying students. Scholarships are active for the lifespan of an active student. If the student becomes inactive, they must reapply for their scholarship.

The scholarship timeline operates as follows: students who apply by the May 1 early admittance deadline are eligible for an early scholarship decision by June 1. To secure that award, students must submit a letter of intent to attend by June 15. Students who do not submit their letter of intent by June 15, or who apply after May 1, will be placed in the general scholarship allocation pool, which is processed during August.

Scholarship applications may be found on the BTS website under the Resources tab.

## Program Structure

### Standard Tracks (Four-Year Program)

The Doctor of Ministry program for the Pastoral Leadership, Biblical Counseling, Public Theology and Apologetics, and Church Vitality and Multiplication concentrations is a four-year program. BTS begins with a course on Research and Design, enabling students to set up all four years in pursuit of their final dissertation. Beginning in the academic fall, students will pursue two and a half years of semester-based coursework, leading to a year and a half of independent study and dissertation research and writing. The dissertation is defended in the spring of the fourth year, and the final summer is reserved for revisions, if deemed necessary, before publication. The student will take a total of 33 hours in each program track: 24 hours of coursework, 3 hours of independent study, and 6 hours of dissertation or capstone project.

### Chaplaincy Track (Three-Year Program)

The Chaplaincy concentration operates on an accelerated three-year timeline using 8-week compressed asynchronous modules. This delivery format is designed to accommodate the unique scheduling demands of chaplains serving in military, hospital, prison, sports, and corporate environments. Students complete core coursework and electives over two years, followed by a year of independent study and dissertation. Advanced standing of up to 6 credit hours may be awarded to military chaplains who have completed C4 and ILE/MEL4.

## Completion Requirements

The degree must be completed within seven years from the date of enrollment. In exceptional circumstances, a student may request the Doctoral Committee for a one-year extension beyond the seven-year limit. Students are

expected to stay current with their starting cohort. Lapsing out of a cohort can cause significant delay in program completion. The student is expected to maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 with no more than one C grade in the entire program.

## Lapsed Registration

A student will be considered a lapsed registration after one calendar year without activity. If this occurs, the student is required to make a formal written reinstatement request.

## Class Meeting Protocols

Doctor of Ministry courses for the standard tracks are typically held on Mondays, normally taught in the evenings from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (CST) via videoconference. Morning timeframes may be offered to accommodate international students and various time zones. Occasionally, courses may be offered in a seminar format, and we also make use of the Lampstand Conference at Briarwood Presbyterian Church. Courses are offered each semester—fall, spring, and summer—normally with a four-to-six-week break between semesters.

Chaplaincy courses operate on 8-week compressed asynchronous modules running across all three semesters, with two modules per semester. All program tracks are fully available through videoconference or asynchronous technology.

## Attendance Requirements

The BTS DMin program is primarily conducted via videoconference in order to extend this educational opportunity to students around the world. However, we have three in-person gatherings where we request that students make every effort to join in Birmingham as a group:

- **Orientation:** The initial orientation phase takes place on the Thursday evening, Friday, and Saturday immediately following Labor Day and includes the first class of Research and Design (required for all students).
- **Lampstand Conference:** Held annually at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in January. While this occurs at different stages depending on the concentration, it is a significant time of fellowship and learning with other church leaders from across America and around the world.
- **Dissertation Launch:** At the beginning of the dissertation phase, students gather for a final review of the writing process, share ideas, learn from each other, and engage with BTS faculty.

Exceptions to the in-person attendance policy are made for students who do not reside in the contiguous United States, who are allowed to attend the primary sessions via videoconference. Students cover their travel costs, and BTS provides host families to help alleviate other expenses. Students may choose to stay at a hotel at their own expense. Most primary meals for students while in Birmingham are covered by BTS—including dinner at President Reeder's home the Friday evening of their visit.

## General Reading Requirements

Each Doctor of Ministry course includes an average of 1,500 pages of reading that must be completed in the increments prescribed by the professor and the syllabus. The professor may ask to receive the following as evidence of reading assignment completion:

- An analysis of the theological implications of the material
- A presentation of the salient theological implications of the material
- A reflection paper giving evidence of the student's personal interaction with the material and its application to ministry

## Independent Study

All programs include an Independent Study semester before beginning the dissertation. The program director, working with the student, will assign a faculty mentor appropriate to the subject matter of the proposal, or the student may contract an outside expert upon approval. The student must then submit a proposal for the Independent Study that the faculty member or outside agent must approve. Upon approval by the faculty member, the student must deliver the signed proposal to the program director for final approval.

The Independent Study course will be taken at the completion of the required courses of study, prior to the dissertation courses.

## Candidacy

Candidacy for the Doctor of Ministry program is defined as the time frame in which a student is deemed ready to pursue independent study and research prior to the writing of their dissertation. A student is admitted to a program to pursue coursework, then sits for candidacy to complete their dissertation.

The Candidacy Examination may be taken at any time from the beginning of the Independent Study course through the end of that semester. The Doctor of Ministry Committee will grant candidacy status based upon the following criteria:

- The completion of a written qualifying theological examination, including an understanding of Reformed theology as summarized in the student's chosen confessional standard (Westminster Standards, London/Philadelphia Confessions, Three Forms of Unity, or First/Second Helvetic Confessions), the ability to properly exegete Scripture, and track-specific questions
- Completion of the Independent Study course
- Submission of an acceptable dissertation or capstone project proposal

Students have the full summer semester to complete the candidacy examination and may take it twice if necessary. A \$60 reader fee accompanies the examination. A Candidacy Examination Study Guide is provided to all students as part of the DMin Dissertation Guidelines.

## Dissertation Overview

The final phase of the program is the dissertation. The dissertation is the application of biblical theology and research abilities applied to an understanding of a contemporary ministry program or problem, devising biblical and practical steps to address this challenge. All dissertations must be presented in standard academic format as denoted in the current Turabian style manual.

Dissertation length requirements (page count governs; word counts are approximate equivalents at Times New Roman, 12pt, double-spaced):

- **Standard Dissertation** (Pastoral Leadership, Public Theology and Apologetics, Church Vitality and Multiplication, Chaplaincy): 175–225 pages (approximately 45,000–55,000 words)
- **Biblical Counseling Capstone Project:** 75–100 pages (approximately 20,000–25,000 words), not including counseling practicum reports appended separately
- **Honors Dissertation:** 250–300 pages (approximately 60,000–75,000 words)

The dissertation timeline for standard four-year tracks is as follows: the student begins the dissertation in the fall of the fourth year, continues through the spring, and defends in the spring prior to graduation. The final summer is reserved for any revisions deemed necessary before publication.

During the dissertation, the student will be assigned a mentor and will be expected to meet with the mentor at least twice a semester. Once the primary draft is deemed acceptable by the mentor and second reader, the student must submit a copy for a required outside reader (non-BTS personnel), approved by the program director. A \$200 outside reader fee must accompany this submission. Five copies of an abstract of not more than 1,500 words must also be submitted at this time to the program director.

Complete details on the dissertation process, committee structure, proposal format, chapter requirements, formatting standards, and defense procedures are provided in the *BTS DMin Dissertation Guidelines*, which serves as the companion document to this handbook.

## Biblical Counseling Capstone Project

Biblical Counseling candidates may choose to engage in a Capstone Project or a traditional dissertation. This must be declared before the Counseling Practicum/Understanding the Capstone course so there is no confusion as to the project the student is working on. The Biblical Counseling student is engaged in developing a project to address specific issues in the biblical counseling community and draws a significant amount of research from personal counseling observations.

The Capstone Project must include the following sections: Introduction and Proposal, Literature Review, Biblical and Theological Approach to the identified counseling issue, and Review and Application using examples and detail from the Counseling Practicum Reports. Counseling practicum reports should be included as an appendix but do not count toward the overall page count.

## Oral Defense

Upon completion and approval of the dissertation or capstone project, the student will defend their work before the Dissertation Review Committee. The oral defense is generally scheduled during the final week of April. The committee consists of:

- Director of the BTS Doctor of Ministry Program
- Chief Academic Officer or designee
- Specific program track director
- May also include two selected faculty members from the study area

The chair of the BTS Board Academic Committee may attend as a nonvoting member. Any faculty or board member may be a nonvoting attendee and ask questions. Only the Doctor of Ministry Dissertation Committee members may vote.

The student will receive one of four outcomes:

- **Pass:** The dissertation is ready for publication as is or with minor revision. The student may walk at graduation and receive their diploma.
- **Pass with Revision:** The defense was satisfactory, but substantial revision is required. The student may walk at graduation but has one semester to complete revisions to the satisfaction of their dissertation supervisor before receiving their diploma.
- **Suspension:** A significant shortcoming impedes publication. Revisions require approval from the whole committee and may require another committee interview. The student may not walk at graduation and has three semesters to complete their dissertation satisfactorily.
- **Failing Grade:** There is no recourse. The student must complete another dissertation or project if they want to complete the program.

To qualify for a May graduation date, a proposed final draft must be submitted to the program track director no later than April 1 of that semester. Students requiring revision have the summer semester to complete their work.

## Part III: Honors Doctor of Ministry

### Mission

This honors-level Doctor of Ministry program cultivates scholar-pastors through rigorous Reformed theological research, equipping them to address contemporary challenges. We foster a community dedicated to original scholarship that enriches the Church's understanding of God and its mission. Graduates will embody exemplary leadership, integrating advanced theological inquiry with faithful pastoral practice to advance Christ's Kingdom, while sustaining long-form study on a specific topic or set of topics in applied theology.

### Program Overview

The Honors Doctor of Ministry program functions much more like a research PhD, with the caveat that it is still focused on current and contemporary ministry issues rather than being entirely dominated by historical questions. The Honors DMin requires a dissertation of 250–300 pages (approximately 60,000–75,000 words). Students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 at the master's degree level may apply for the Honors Doctor of Ministry.

The program must be completed in five years. Graduation is contingent upon the satisfactory (Pass) dissertation and oral defense. The student must keep an annotated bibliography and journal of their reading for the program. Said readings must total at least 40,000 pages by the end of the program (around 100 books).

If accepted into the Honors DMin track, the student will attend the Orientation Seminar and will be required to take the introductory Research and Design course. One of their projects during this class will be the development of a personalized syllabus for their program.

### Admission

Prospective students with a GPA of less than 3.5 may be considered upon the following criteria:

- At least seven years of ministry experience that reflects above average ministry maturity
- Demonstration through an interview with the Chief Academic Officer or Director of the Doctor of Ministry program that the student has acquired the necessary skills to complete the program
- Submission of evidence of current scholarly capabilities, preferably prior peer-reviewed publications

### Honors DMin Committee

The student will be assigned a committee of three readers for their Honors dissertation project. The chairperson will be a BTS faculty member, and another member will be the Honors DMin program director. The final committee member may be a non-BTS faculty member approved by the Chief Academic Officer and DMin Director. The student, with the mentor, will develop a proposal that must be approved by the committee. Up to two external scholars may serve on the defense committee.

## Honors DMin Mentor

The student will receive a mentor who will serve as the advisor for the student's program and may be anyone in the arena of study with proper credentials approved by the DMin director. The mentor may or may not be one of the student's Honors DMin Committee. The student's progress must be examined each semester with the DMin program. Students will be responsible for negotiating a contractual arrangement with the Mentor regarding their time commitment. The Mentor will receive remuneration from BTS in the form of a semester-based stipend (\$600). BTS will provide a contract template, and a copy must be filed with the Chief Academic Officer and DMin Director.

## Program Learning Outcomes

- **PLO-HN1:** Demonstrate advanced scholarly competency producing research meeting publication standards in theological journals.
- **PLO-HN2:** Design and execute a self-directed program of advanced theological study with faculty supervision and external scholarly readers.
- **PLO-HN3:** Connect specialized theological research to contemporary ecclesial concerns, demonstrating that scholarship serves the church.
- **PLO-HN4:** Maintain a comprehensive annotated bibliography of at least 40,000 pages of scholarly reading.
- **PLO-HN5:** Produce a dissertation of 250–300 pages representing significant original research with oral defense before a committee including external scholars.

## Part IV: Program Tracks and Curricula

### Pastoral Leadership

**Open to:** Men only

#### Mission

The mission of the Pastoral Leadership program at BTS is to train pastors to become biblical servant leaders who are capable of gospel ministry in a post-Christian culture with fidelity to God’s word, sensitivity to growing cultural differences, a passion for shepherding the local church, and a heart for discipleship, leadership development, and teambuilding.

#### Program Learning Outcomes

- **PLO-PL1:** Demonstrate advanced competency in biblical servant leadership, integrating theological reflection with pastoral ministry demands.
- **PLO-PL2:** Articulate and apply a biblically grounded philosophy of shepherding addressing spiritual, relational, and organizational dimensions of local church leadership.
- **PLO-PL3:** Develop and deploy emerging leaders and leadership teams through discipleship, mentoring, and intentional training structures.
- **PLO-PL4:** Preach and teach with theological fidelity and cultural awareness in a post-Christian context.
- **PLO-PL5:** Conduct independent applied research producing a dissertation addressing a contemporary ministry challenge.

#### Curriculum

Year	Semester	Course	Code	Credits
Year 1	Fall	Research and Design	DM4000	3
	Spring	Counseling Methodologies / Caring & Curing of Souls	DM4005	3
	Summer	Advanced Hermeneutics	DM4205	3
Year 2	Fall	Contemporary Theology and the Church	DM4910	3
	Spring	Church Vitality & Planting (Lampstand Conference)	DM4915	3
	Summer	Personal Leadership Development & Training Church Leaders	DM4925	3
Year 3	Fall	Preaching in a Post-Christian Context	DM4920	3
	Spring	Pastoral Ministry in a Cultural Context / Christ & Culture	DM4930	3

	Summer	Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation	DM4980	3
Year 4	Fall/Spring	DMin Dissertation (2 semesters)	DM4985	6

**Total Program Hours: 33**

## Course Descriptions

### **DM4000 Research & Design (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Communication, Leadership, Worldview*

Students will develop the research skills and methodology required for doctoral-level academic work, including the formulation of a viable research question, literature review, and project design. This course establishes the scholarly foundations for the Doctor of Ministry program, preparing students to engage theological and ministry questions with the rigor, creativity, and integrity expected at the doctoral level. Students will become acquainted with the latest research methods and tools, including a detailed study of Turabian format, ensuring they are equipped to communicate their studies appropriately and in the correct academic format.

### **DM4005 Counseling Methodologies / Caring & Curing of Souls (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Discipleship, Wisdom, Local Church*

This doctoral seminar examines the history, theology, and methodology of pastoral care and soul cure from the patristic period to the present, with a particular focus on the biblical counseling tradition. Students will evaluate the theological presuppositions underlying competing counseling methodologies and develop a sophisticated, doctrinally grounded approach to the cure of souls in the contemporary church. The personal and professional development of the minister and the biblical counselor is the focus of this course, integrating Scripture's sufficiency with pastoral wisdom for the care of God's people.

### **DM4205 Advanced Hermeneutics (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Communication*

Students will engage hermeneutical theory and biblical interpretation at a doctoral level, examining the major movements in contemporary hermeneutics and their implications for exegesis and theological method. The course equips students to interpret Scripture with greater sophistication, attending to questions of author intent, reader response, literary context, and the relationship between the Testaments. Special focus will be given to both problem passages and contemporary challenges against traditional Reformed hermeneutics, deepening the student's love for and facility with the whole counsel of God.

### **DM4910 Contemporary Theology and the Church (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Reformed Theology, Worldview, Communication*

This doctoral seminar engages major contemporary theological movements, thinkers, and challenges at an advanced level, examining how current theological proposals relate to the historic Christian tradition. Students will develop the critical evaluative skills needed to assess emerging theologies with confessional discernment, positioning them to lead the church in navigating the complex theological landscape of the twenty-first century.

Topics include the rise of liberal theology, neoorthodoxy, theology and language theory, liberation theology, the emergent church, and theology and critical ideologies.

### **DM4915 Church Vitality & Planting (Lampstand Conference) (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Local Church, Leadership, Discipleship*

Students will engage questions of church health, vitality, and multiplication at a doctoral level through a combination of academic seminar work and participation in the Lampstand Conference at Briarwood Presbyterian Church. The course integrates biblical ecclesiology with church health research and missional strategy, equipping students for leadership roles in revitalizing existing congregations and planting new ones. Students are required to attend the conference on-site unless they are international students or receive special exemptions.

### **DM4925 Personal Leadership Development & Training Church Leaders (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Leadership, Discipleship, Wisdom, Local Church*

Students will engage in structured personal leadership development while simultaneously developing their capacity to identify, train, and deploy leaders within their ministry context. Drawing on biblical leadership theology and contemporary leadership research, this course equips doctoral students to function as multiplying leaders who build the next generation of ministry leadership with theological depth and strategic intentionality. The course looks both inward to the heart of the leader and outward to leadership principles, facilitating the development of good and faithful servants to lead the church in spiritual and consequential health.

### **DM4920 Preaching in a Post-Christian Context (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Communication, Worldview, Reformed Theology*

This seminar addresses the unique challenges of biblical preaching in a post-Christian cultural environment, examining how the proclamation of the gospel must engage biblical illiteracy, skepticism, and competing narratives of meaning and identity. Students will develop a theologically robust, culturally attuned homiletic that maintains the full authority and sufficiency of Scripture while speaking compellingly to secular and post-secular audiences. The goal is to develop pastors who are biblically faithful in their preaching while relevant to the challenges presented by the current cultural climate.

### **DM4930 Pastoral Ministry in a Cultural Context / Christ & Culture (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Worldview, Leadership, Communication, Wisdom*

This advanced seminar examines the pastor's role as a cultural interpreter and shepherd in an increasingly complex and contested social environment. The course explores types and models of leadership necessary for ministry in a post-Christian society, the contextualization of ministry considering racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity, and the "Christ and Culture" problem in its contemporary form. Students will develop a theologically grounded framework for contextual pastoral ministry, equipping them to address the questions, anxieties, and confusions that contemporary culture poses to Christian faith with gospel clarity and pastoral wisdom.

### **DM4980 Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Communication, Leadership*

Students will pursue focused independent research in their doctoral concentration under faculty supervision, while completing the foundational work necessary for dissertation proposal development. This course provides individualized guidance in research methodology, literature engagement, and the formal requirements of doctoral scholarship. The course includes the Theological Examination for Candidacy. Students may take the exam at the beginning of the semester and, if they do not pass, have a second opportunity at the end of the semester. Successful completion of the exam, the proposal, and the final paper grants the student candidacy.

### **DM4985 DMin Dissertation (6 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: All SLOs*

Students will complete the Doctor of Ministry dissertation under sustained faculty supervision, producing an original work of ministry-focused scholarship that makes a meaningful contribution to their field of concentration. The dissertation demonstrates the student's capacity to integrate theological conviction, contextual analysis, and practical wisdom into a formally rigorous research project suitable for publication or ministry deployment. See the BTS DMin Dissertation Guidelines for complete requirements.

## Biblical Counseling

**Open to:** Men and Women

### Mission

The Biblical Counseling program at BTS is taught from a biblical theological framework and believes in the sufficiency of Scripture for addressing the problems of the human condition, specifically in relationship to heart issues. We seek to develop graduates who are experts in counseling ministry, empathetic shepherds who stand on firm theological footing, and those who are committed to the shepherding ministry of the local church. Our prayer is that this program will spawn a resurgence of counseling ministries located in the local church, with members trained by BTS graduates to lead people to the healing work of Jesus Christ.

### Special Program Requirements

The Doctor of Ministry in Biblical Counseling requires satisfactory completion of 24 hours of coursework as prescribed in the curriculum, 3 hours of independent study/practicum hours, and a 6-hour Capstone Project (or traditional dissertation). The Capstone Project for Biblical Counseling draws heavily from the student's Counseling Practicum, which will be incorporated into the research on a counseling topic, paradigm, or practice on which the student chooses to write. Students must accumulate 150 hours of reported counseling prior to beginning the Capstone Project.

*Note: If an applicant has not had a class in theological anthropology in their graduate coursework, they will be required to take BTS's Systematic Theology II: Anthropology class before admittance to the program.*

### Program Learning Outcomes

- **PLO-BC1:** Demonstrate mastery of a comprehensive biblical counseling methodology grounded in the sufficiency of Scripture.
- **PLO-BC2:** Integrate advanced understanding of human physiology and psychopathology with biblical counseling practice.
- **PLO-BC3:** Apply biblical counseling principles to complex family, marital, ecclesial, and legal contexts.
- **PLO-BC4:** Demonstrate sustained competency through 150 hours of supervised counseling documented in a formal practicum.
- **PLO-BC5:** Produce a doctoral capstone project or dissertation integrating theological foundations, methodological sophistication, and clinical competency.

### Curriculum

Year	Semester	Course	Code	Credits
Year 1	Fall	Research and Design	DM4000	3
	Spring	Counseling Methodologies / Caring & Curing of Souls	DM4005	3

	Summer	Advanced Hermeneutics	DM4205	3
Year 2	Fall	Biblical Counseling Internship Seminar	DM4805	3
	Spring	Biblical Counseling & Human Physiology/Psychopathology	DM4810	3
	Summer	Biblical Counseling & Marriage & Family	DM4815	3
Year 3	Fall	Biblical Counseling & Ecclesiology, Legal Issues & Peacemaking	DM4820	3
	Spring	Biblical Counseling & Professional/Personal Development	DM4825	3
	Summer	Counseling Practicum / Understanding the Capstone	DM4880	3
Year 4	Fall/Spring	Biblical Counseling Capstone Project (2 semesters)	DM4899	6

**Total Program Hours: 33**

## Course Descriptions

*Shared courses (DM4000, DM4005, DM4205) are described in the Pastoral Leadership section above.*

### **DM4805 Biblical Counseling Internship Seminar (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Discipleship, Local Church, Wisdom*

This seminar accompanies the doctoral biblical counseling internship experience, providing structured reflection on clinical cases, ethical challenges, and advanced counseling theory. Students will engage peers and faculty mentors in substantive discussion of the theological, methodological, and personal dimensions of their supervised counseling practice, deepening both competency and professional formation. Students should begin recording supervised hours toward their Counseling Practicum at this time.

### **DM4810 Biblical Counseling & Human Physiology/Psychopathology (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Wisdom, Worldview*

Students will examine the relationship between human physiology, mental health, and biblical counseling, developing a nuanced understanding of how physical and neurological factors intersect with the spiritual and moral dimensions of human struggle. The course equips students to engage medical and psychological categories critically and wisely, maintaining the sufficiency of Scripture while engaging biological realities with theological care. Students will conduct extensive exploration of biblical categories of human problems in comparison to the DSM diagnostic system.

### **DM4815 Biblical Counseling & Marriage & Family (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Discipleship, Local Church, Wisdom*

This advanced seminar provides doctoral-level engagement with the theology and practice of counseling marriages and families in crisis. Students will examine complex marital and family dynamics, engage the biblical vision for covenant relationships, and develop sophisticated case-conceptualization and intervention skills for the most challenging presentations encountered in biblical counseling ministry. The student will explore

preventative measures that can be employed in the church as well as biblical strategies for rebuilding broken relationships.

### **DM4820 Biblical Counseling & Ecclesiology, Legal Issues & Peacemaking (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Local Church, Wisdom, Leadership, Communication*

Students will explore the ecclesial context of biblical counseling ministry, examining the relationship between the counseling office and church leadership, formal discipline processes, and peacemaking frameworks. The course also addresses the legal and ethical landscape in which faith-based counselors operate, equipping students to integrate counseling with the broader life and accountability structures of the local church.

### **DM4825 Biblical Counseling & Professional/Personal Development (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Wisdom, Discipleship, Leadership, Worldview*

This seminar addresses the professional formation and personal spiritual health of the biblical counselor, examining how self-knowledge, ongoing sanctification, and professional competency intersect in the counseling relationship. Students will develop a sustainable model for personal and professional growth, ensuring that their counseling ministry flows from ongoing transformation and is characterized by integrity, humility, and gospel-rooted wisdom. The course provides tools to impart a personal, biblical worldview and life view for this diverse twenty-first century.

### **DM4880 Counseling Practicum / Understanding the Capstone (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Communication, Discipleship*

Students will simultaneously engage in advanced supervised counseling practice and develop a comprehensive understanding of the capstone project process. By the end of this course, the student should have completed all required hours for supervised counseling. The student will submit a 15–20-page paper with initial reactions to their counseling practicum and a proposal for their Capstone Project, backed by a research proposal identifying a minimum of 20–30 available textual resources. This course includes the Biblical Counseling Theological Examination for Candidacy.

### **DM4899 Biblical Counseling Capstone Project (6 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: All SLOs*

Students will complete advanced supervised counseling hours and produce a doctoral capstone project that synthesizes their biblical counseling training. The capstone demonstrates mastery of both counseling theory and applied practice, integrating theological foundations, methodological sophistication, and clinical competency into a significant contribution to the ongoing development of the biblical counseling movement. See the BTS DMin Dissertation Guidelines for complete requirements.

## Public Theology and Apologetics

**Open to:** Men and Women

### Mission

The mission of the Public Theology and Apologetics doctoral program at BTS is to develop ministry leaders equipped to meet the challenges of proclaiming and defending orthodox Christianity in the marketplace community. Students will be challenged by immersion in the theological and philosophical foundations required for engaging the current cultural climate, studying a range of topics that include foundational beliefs, anthropology, moral thought, and cultural development. Each class is designed to be academically challenging, with rich content that requires principle application to a variety of cultural, ethnic, positional, and geographic arenas. The program concludes with a dissertation project that should include significant original research and application to a current area of apologetics ministry.

**Note on DMin vs. PhD in Apologetics:** The principal reason for BTS's Doctor of Ministry in Public Theology and Apologetics is our foundation in the principle of ministry application. PhD programs are principally concerned with researching historical topics from previously unexplored angles. The DMin program is interested in original research applied to current problems existing within the current cultural context of ministry. We believe DMin and PhD students mutually benefit from each other's work.

### Program Learning Outcomes

- **PLO-AP1:** Articulate philosophical and theological foundations of Reformed apologetics with precision.
- **PLO-AP2:** Analyze and critically evaluate contemporary apologetic methodologies.
- **PLO-AP3:** Engage theological anthropology and cultural studies to address dominant objections to Christianity.
- **PLO-AP4:** Develop and implement a strategic apologetic ministry plan appropriate to vocational context.
- **PLO-AP5:** Conduct independent applied research producing a dissertation with significant original contribution.

### Curriculum

Year	Semester	Course	Code	Credits
Year 1	Fall	Research and Design	DM4000	3
	Spring	Philosophical Theology & Reformed Dogmatics	DM4505	3
	Summer	Metaphysics & Epistemology	DM4510	3
Year 2	Fall	Advanced Apologetics & Methodology	DM4515	3
	Spring	Theological Anthropology & Moral Theology	DM4520	3
	Summer	Cultural Development & Culture Studies	DM4525	3

Year 3	Fall	Contextual Apologetics	DM4530	3
	Spring	Lifetime Learning & Applied Apologetics	DM4535	3
	Summer	Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation	DM4580	3
Year 4	Fall/Spring	DMin Dissertation (2 semesters)	DM4585	6

**Total Program Hours: 33**

## Course Descriptions

*DM4000 Research & Design is described in the Pastoral Leadership section above.*

### **DM4505 Philosophical Theology & Reformed Dogmatics (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Reformed Theology, Worldview, Communication*

This seminar examines the intersection of classical philosophy and Reformed dogmatic theology, engaging how the church's intellectual tradition has employed philosophical categories in the articulation and defense of Christian doctrine. Students will develop advanced facility with the tools of philosophical theology and their role in constructing and evaluating systematic theological arguments from within the Reformed confessional tradition.

### **DM4510 Metaphysics & Epistemology (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Worldview, Reformed Theology, Communication*

Students will engage the central questions of metaphysics and epistemology as they bear upon Christian theology and apologetics, examining classical and contemporary positions on the nature of reality, knowledge, and truth. The course equips students to think with greater philosophical precision about the foundations of Christian belief and its engagement with competing worldviews, developing a clear Reformed epistemology that sets the stage for public discourse in defense of the faith.

### **DM4515 Advanced Apologetics & Methodology (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Worldview, Communication, Reformed Theology, Scripture*

This advanced seminar examines the theoretical foundations and practical application of Christian apologetics at a doctoral level, engaging the classical, evidentialist, and presuppositional traditions and their philosophical and theological implications. Students will develop a sophisticated, methodologically informed apologetic suited to the intellectual challenges of postmodern culture, equipping them to build their best positive case for the truth of Christianity grounded in the authority of Scripture.

### **DM4520 Theological Anthropology & Moral Theology (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Worldview, Wisdom*

Students will undertake doctoral-level study of the doctrine of humanity in its ethical and theological dimensions, examining the imago Dei, the effects of the fall, and the moral framework that flows from a biblical understanding of human nature and dignity. The course equips students to engage contemporary moral

controversies—including issues of personhood, social discourse, and the application of biblical justice—with the depth and precision required for leadership in the church and the academy.

### **DM4525 Cultural Development & Culture Studies (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Worldview, Communication, Leadership*

This seminar explores the relationship between Christianity and culture through engagement with cultural theory, sociology, and theology. Students will examine how Christian faith shapes and is shaped by cultural forces, developing the analytical tools necessary for contextually sensitive, theologically faithful ministry in a rapidly changing and increasingly pluralistic cultural landscape. The course can be considered an advanced engagement with the “Christ and Culture” problem.

### **DM4530 Contextual Apologetics (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Worldview, Communication, Discipleship*

Students will develop advanced competency in contextualizing the apologetic enterprise to specific cultural, religious, and intellectual audiences. The course examines how the classical, evidentialist, and presuppositional traditions each offer distinct resources for engaging different audiences, equipping students to select and adapt their apologetic approach with theological integrity and contextual wisdom without compromise.

### **DM4535 Lifetime Learning & Applied Apologetics (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Leadership, Discipleship, Local Church, Communication*

This seminar equips students for sustained, lifelong engagement with the apologetic challenges they will face across the arc of their ministry. Students will work with the supervising professor and outside mentors to develop and study strategic ministry deployment of apologetics in the marketplace—whether directly from the church, in the business community, with a youth ministry, in an academic context, or in different socioeconomic or ethnic contexts. Students will develop strategies for ongoing intellectual formation and the integration of apologetic reasoning into preaching, teaching, counseling, and personal evangelism.

### **DM4580 Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Communication, Leadership*

Students will conduct focused independent research in their area of doctoral concentration under faculty supervision while developing a comprehensive understanding of the dissertation process. The course introduces the formal expectations of doctoral research, including proposal development, literature review methodology, and the scholarly standards that will govern the completion of the Doctor of Ministry dissertation. This course includes the Theological Examination for Candidacy.

### **DM4585 DMin Dissertation (6 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: All SLOs*

Students will complete the Doctor of Ministry dissertation under sustained faculty supervision, producing an original work of ministry-focused scholarship that makes a meaningful contribution to their field of concentration. The dissertation demonstrates the student’s capacity to integrate theological conviction,

contextual analysis, and practical wisdom into a formally rigorous research project suitable for publication or ministry deployment. See the BTS DMin Dissertation Guidelines for complete requirements.

## Church Vitality and Multiplication

**Open to:** Men only

### Mission

The mission of the Church Vitality and Multiplication track in the BTS doctoral program is to explore and study the mission of the church and apply those principles to the multiplication of Christ’s church around the world. The program has three salient study areas—Church Planting, Church Revitalization, and Coach/Mentor Training—to help students become a valuable resource to other churches and pastors. The goal is to see networks and denominations of healthy, gospel-centered churches that are reproducing and revitalizing churches to expand the kingdom of God through His Bride. The foundation of this program is the Lampstand Conference at Briarwood Presbyterian Church. All subsequent courses are theologically and philosophically built out of this conference.

### Program Learning Outcomes

- **PLO-CV1:** Articulate a biblically grounded theology of church health, planting, and revitalization informed by the Lampstand Conference framework.
- **PLO-CV2:** Evaluate contemporary church planting models with theological discernment across diverse ministry fields.
- **PLO-CV3:** Apply principles of biblical multiplication and discipleship to church development and transformation.
- **PLO-CV4:** Demonstrate readiness to serve as a trained coach/mentor for pastors in church planting and revitalization.
- **PLO-CV5:** Conduct independent applied research producing a dissertation addressing a contemporary challenge in church multiplication.

### Curriculum

Year	Semester	Course	Code	Credits
Year 1	Fall	Research and Design	DM4000	3
	Spring	Church Vitality & Planting (Lampstand Conference)	DM4915	3
Year 2	Summer	Advanced Hermeneutics	DM4205	3
	Fall	Contemporary Theology and the Church	DM4910	3
	Spring	Contemporary Church Planting	DM4963	3
	Summer	The Transformational Church: Evangelism and Discipleship	DM4965	3
Year 3	Fall	Preaching in a Post-Christian Context	DM4920	3
	Spring	Gospel Coaching & Mentoring	DM4966	3

	Summer	Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation	DM4980	3
Year 4	Fall/Spring	DMin Dissertation (2 semesters)	DM4985	6

**Total Program Hours: 33**

*N.B. BTS is working with several nonprofit organizations (e.g., Embers to a Flame, Flourish Ministries, and MNA) to certify the BTS program as a pathway to coaching and mentoring certifications.*

## Course Descriptions

*Shared courses (DM4000, DM4205, DM4910, DM4915, DM4920) are described in the Pastoral Leadership section above.*

### **DM4963 Contemporary Church Planting (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Local Church, Leadership, Worldview, Discipleship*

This doctoral seminar examines contemporary church planting movements, strategies, and theologies, engaging both the global mission context and the North American landscape. Students will critically evaluate current planting models, develop a theologically and contextually informed planting philosophy, and equip themselves for senior leadership roles in church multiplication and missional strategy across geographic, socioeconomic, and ethnic contexts.

### **DM4965 The Transformational Church: Evangelism and Discipleship (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Local Church, Discipleship, Scripture, Leadership*

Students will examine the theology and practice of the church as a transformational community committed to evangelism and disciple-making. Drawing on the Great Commission, missional ecclesiology, and the Reformed understanding of means of grace, this course equips doctoral students to lead churches in integrated strategies for reaching the lost and forming maturing disciples of Jesus Christ, helping churches move from plants to formative institutions.

### **DM4966 Gospel Coaching & Mentoring (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Leadership, Discipleship, Wisdom, Local Church*

This seminar develops the art and theology of gospel-centered coaching and mentoring for ministry leaders, examining how skilled, grace-motivated guidance accelerates the formation and effectiveness of those in ministry. Students will develop advanced coaching competencies, learning to ask transformative questions, identify growth edges, and apply the gospel to the specific challenges and aspirations of those they mentor.

### **DM4980 Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Communication, Leadership*

Students will pursue focused independent research in their doctoral concentration under faculty supervision, while completing the foundational work necessary for dissertation proposal development. This course includes the Theological Examination for Candidacy. See the Pastoral Leadership section for the full description.

**DM4985 DMin Dissertation (6 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: All SLOs*

See the Pastoral Leadership section for the full description.

## Chaplaincy

**Open to:** Men and Women

**Delivery Format:** 8-week compressed asynchronous modules

**Program Length:** Three years

**Director:** Dr. Pete Sniffin (COL, USA Ret.)

### Mission

The Chaplaincy concentration equips experienced chaplains and ministry leaders for strategic, theologically grounded service in diverse institutional environments. Connected with the Harry Reeder Center for Pastoral Studies, this program develops leaders who can exercise faithful Reformed pastoral ministry in complex organizations while navigating the unique challenges of pluralistic settings with conviction, wisdom, and pastoral care.

### Advanced Standing

Military chaplains who have completed C4 and ILE/MEL4 may be awarded advanced standing of up to 6 credit hours, applied toward the elective portion of the curriculum.

### DMin Chaplaincy Core Courses

*The Chaplaincy concentration was developed in partnership with experienced military chaplaincy leadership and reflects the strategic demands of that context. However, the theological foundations, leadership frameworks, and ethical reasoning addressed in these courses are designed to equip chaplains across the full range of vocational callings—including military, hospital, prison, sports, and corporate chaplaincy. Students from all chaplaincy contexts will find the core curriculum directly applicable to their ministry setting.*

### Program Learning Outcomes

- **PLO-CH1:** Demonstrate advanced theological and pastoral competency for faithful ministry in diverse chaplaincy contexts.
- **PLO-CH2:** Articulate and apply a Reformed understanding of religious liberty, principled pluralism, and the chaplain's role.
- **PLO-CH3:** Exercise strategic Christian leadership in complex organizations integrating confessional fidelity with advanced public theology.
- **PLO-CH4:** Engage dominant worldviews with theological precision, developing a robust Christian worldview framework for pluralistic environments.
- **PLO-CH5:** Conduct independent applied research producing a dissertation addressing a contemporary chaplaincy challenge.

### Curriculum

Year	Semester	Course	Code	Credits
Year 1	Fall A	Research and Design	DM4000	3
	Fall B	First Freedom and Leadership	DM4605	3
	Spring A	Strategic Christian Leadership	DM4606	3
	Spring B	Christian Ethics for Strategic Leaders	DM4607	3
	Summer A	Strategic Application of Christian Worldview	DM4610	3
	Summer B	Elective I	DM4690	3
Year 2	Fall A	Elective II	DM4690	3
	Fall B	Elective III	DM4690	3
	Spr/Sum	Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation	DM4980	3
Year 3	Fall/Spring	DMin Dissertation (6 cr.)	DM4985	6

**Total Program Hours: 33**

## Course Descriptions

### **DM4000 Research & Design (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Communication, Leadership, Worldview*

See the Pastoral Leadership section for the full description.

### **DM4605 First Freedom and Leadership (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Worldview, Leadership*

This seminar examines the theological and constitutional foundations of religious liberty as the first freedom in American public life, with particular attention to the chaplain's unique role as both a confessional minister and a guardian of free exercise within institutional settings. Students will develop a Reformed understanding of principled pluralism grounded in Scripture and the Reformed theological tradition, engage the historical and legal development of First Amendment protections, and articulate a theology of religious liberty that sustains faithful pastoral leadership in environments where competing truth claims must be navigated with both conviction and care. Students will communicate their theological position with clarity through written analysis and seminar discussion.

### **DM4606 Strategic Christian Leadership (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Leadership, Wisdom, Communication, Local Church*

Students will examine the theology and practice of Christian leadership at the strategic level, engaging the distinctive challenges of exercising pastoral influence within complex, hierarchical organizations such as the military, healthcare systems, and corporate institutions. The course cultivates the wisdom necessary to navigate institutional complexity while maintaining accountability to the local church as the foundational context for Christian ministry. Students will integrate confessional fidelity with advanced organizational leadership, developing the communication skills and strategic discernment necessary to serve as trusted advisors to senior leaders while maintaining the theological integrity and pastoral identity essential to the chaplain's calling.

**DM4607 Christian Ethics for Strategic Leaders (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Wisdom, Communication*

This doctoral seminar develops the ethical reasoning required of Christian leaders serving in pluralistic institutional environments where moral complexity is the daily norm. Students will engage the Reformed ethical tradition—rooted in Scripture and the system of doctrine confessed in the Westminster Standards—in conversation with contemporary moral challenges, including institutional justice, bioethics, end-of-life care, organizational accountability, ethical issues in sports, corporate ethics, and the ethics of authority. The course equips students to communicate theologically grounded moral counsel with clarity, courage, and pastoral wisdom in contexts where ethical guidance carries operational consequence.

**DM4610 Strategic Application of Christian Worldview (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Worldview, Reformed Theology, Communication, Discipleship*

Students will develop a robust Christian worldview framework grounded in Reformed theology and apply it with theological precision to the dominant worldviews encountered in pluralistic professional environments. Drawing on Reformed epistemology, public theology, and cultural analysis, the course equips students to engage secular, religious, and post-religious perspectives with both intellectual rigor and pastoral charity. Students will grow in their ability to communicate the whole counsel of God to diverse audiences, positioning them as effective worldview interpreters and apologists who model discipleship through sustained intellectual engagement within their institutional contexts.

**DM4690 Chaplaincy Elective (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Varies by topic; all electives must address at least three institutional SLOs*

This elective provides doctoral students in the Chaplaincy concentration with the opportunity to pursue focused study in a specialized area relevant to their ministry context and dissertation research. Topics may include advanced pastoral care in trauma settings, cross-cultural ministry in military or institutional environments, organizational chaplaincy models, hospital chaplaincy, prison chaplaincy, sports chaplaincy, corporate chaplaincy, or other subjects approved by the Director of DMin Chaplaincy. The elective allows students to tailor their doctoral program to the particular demands of their vocational calling across the full range of chaplaincy fields. Regardless of topic, each elective must demonstrate alignment with the seminary's commitment to Scripture, Reformed theology, and preparation for service in and through the local church.

**DM4980 Independent Study / Understanding the Dissertation (3 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: Scripture, Reformed Theology, Communication, Leadership*

See the Pastoral Leadership section for the full description.

**DM4985 DMin Dissertation (6 credits)**

*Primary SLOs: All SLOs*

See the Pastoral Leadership section for the full description.

## Contact Information

### Administrative Contacts

**President:** Mr. Ike Reeder — Ike@bts.education — (205) 776-5280

**Chief Academic Officer:** Mr. Justin Richardson — Justin@bts.education — (205) 776-5386

**Chief of Staff:** Dr. Jay Haley — Jay@bts.education

**Chief Admissions and Communications Officer:** Mr. Dave Latham — David@bts.education — (828) 275-8991

**Registrar:** Mrs. Norma Thompson — Registrar@bts.education

**Director of Distance Education:** Mr. Brandon Robbins — Brandon@bts.education — (205) 243-7912

### Doctor of Ministry Program Contacts

**Director of Doctoral Studies and Dissertation Process:** Dr. Roy McDaniel — roy.e.mcdaniel@gmail.com

**Pastoral Leadership Director:** Harry Reeder Center for Pastoral Studies — TBD

**Biblical Counseling Director:** Dr. Howard Eyrich — earkie1@bellsouth.net

**Public Theology and Apologetics Director:** Dr. David Filson — dfilson@christpres.org

**Church Vitality and Multiplication Director:** Dr. Tom Hawkes — tomhawkes.th@gmail.com

**Chaplaincy Director:** Dr. Pete Sniffin (COL, USA Ret.) — Sniffin@bts.education

### Seminary Information

Birmingham Theological Seminary

2200 Briarwood Way

Birmingham, AL 35243

(205) 776-5650

admissions@bts.education

www.bts.education