



First Summer Residency

A Guide for Incoming Students

Entering into a doctoral program brings both anxiety and excitement. One way to reduce the anxiety and give scope to the variety of activity that will lay the foundation to your doctoral study is to offer an overview of what your initial residency sequence looks like. Your first time on ACU's campus as a D.Min. student will draw together a wide variety of activities that are designed to fulfill the carefully framed elements of the learning outcomes. These activities possess social, academic, spiritual, and communal dimensions.

Orientation Weekend

Beginning on Saturday of the weekend prior to the first seminar class, students participate in BIBM 701: Doctor of Ministry Orientation. Shared meals, introduction to the program, tours of the campus and library, meeting your faculty, and exploring personal and ministerial strengths make the weekend a time of community-building and, well . . . orientation!

Required Opening Courses

Entering students' first residency includes a two-week, six-credit course, BIBM 716: Theological Foundations for the Practice of Ministry. This course will introduce you to many of the faculty in the Graduate School of Theology and will deepen your resources in many disciplines from biblical theology or historical theology to the interpretive work of understanding context and culture in your ministry setting. In the subsequent January term, you will take BIBM 724: Project/Thesis Seminar 1 and begin the important work of framing what your doctoral project might look like.

Before you arrive on campus you will have read a lot and will have completed several writing projects. However, these two weeks are full of classroom time and remarkable conversations with faculty, peers, and mentors. Your imagination and spirit will be animated by lively dialogue and ideas that spark new possibilities and constructs for your practice of ministry.

Spiritual Formation Retreat

As ministerial leaders, most D.Min. students offer much to assist others in their spiritual formation. But when do ministers get to slow down and reflect? As a part of your D.Min. program at ACU, the weekend between the first and second weeks of residency will include a spiritual formation retreat.

There is nothing to prepare; it will be a time to simply be. Led by experienced retreat directors, these 24 hours will function as an invitation to enter into the rest of God. The costs of the retreat are built into the program fee, and as a D.Min. student, you will participate in at least two retreats throughout the program.

Remember

At ACU, your D.Min. program is not merely about education. Your program is an entry into a deeper way of understanding your vocation and call as a ministerial leader. It is a place where academic rigor, theological reflection, increased skill in practices, and spiritual wisdom meet. And the opening residency in the program lays the foundation for what will be an extraordinary journey for you and your peers!