



Learning Goals Guidelines

The Practice in Ministry and Mission program at Wesley Theological Seminary creates opportunities for seminarians to prepare for ministry in diverse settings through a model of action and reflection. Through field education experiences, seminarians develop proficiency in several key areas of ministry: mission, administration, leadership, teaching, pastoral care, and preaching and worship in congregational settings or written and oral communication in other settings.

As a basis for the internship's Learning Agreement, seminarians will develop concrete learning goals in three of these areas. The goals should make explicit the expectations and objectives of the seminarian, but they should also realistically reflect the goals of the field education setting. The goal should also build on the seminarian's competencies. For example, a learning goal for a seminarian with little experience in preaching may be to preach contextually appropriate sermons for those inside and outside of the faith community. However, a seminarian with preaching experience who wants to become a more effective preacher may aim to develop sermons that illustrate comprehensive exegetical work while still being contextually appropriate for those inside and outside of the community.

Descriptions of each key area are provided below to help seminarians formulate their learning goals.

Mission

In mission, interns explore God's ongoing work of transformation in the world through engagement with individuals, congregations, and local communities. Mission practices include discipleship, education and formation, evangelism, and social justice.

Competence in this area is demonstrated by an ability to accompany individuals and communities in spiritual journeys through the study of scripture, prayer, spiritual disciplines, and worship, and also being able to turn outward to transform others through evangelism, social justice, advocacy, and public witness.

Excellence is reached when one integrates these abilities so that in one's service in creating disciples becomes instrumental in communal transformation and, likewise, laboring to transform the world is a means of helping others attain deeper faith and spirituality.

Administration

In the administration area of ministry, interns participant in God's transforming work through managing the daily work of the organization. This area includes such practices as time management, institutional knowledge, and ability to collaborate with others.

Competence in this area is demonstrated by comprehending the inner workings of the institution

and working with others efficiently and productively. Fulfilling the mission of the organization is approached as an essential part of vocational ministry.

Excellence is demonstrated by competently engaging in the day-to-day life of an organization with compassion, grace, and adeptness and by managing and understanding administrative activities as ministry that impacts the lives of those inside and outside of the faith community.

Leadership

In the leadership area of ministry, interns develop discernment of God's work in their lives and the lives of others within the congregation or organization and in the community surrounding it. It requires one to cultivate an awareness of one's own gifts as well as the gifts of people in the community. Leadership includes such practices as self-awareness, self-motivation, adaptive thinking, visioning, and innovation.

Competence is demonstrated by ability to use one's gifts for ministry to empower the community to live into God's calling. This ability depends upon an ongoing exegesis of the organization and the broader community.

Excellence is demonstrated by leading others to exegete the organization and broader community to discern God's calling and to embody the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Worship and Preaching (a congregational internship option)

In the worship and preaching area, interns explore how to effectively communicate the gospel through the written and spoken word. It develops skills in leading worship, preaching, and writing appropriate liturgies for the community.

Competence in this area is demonstrated by ability to use sermons, prayers, reflections, and other liturgical methods to create worship experiences that are clear, meaningful, and useful in communicating the transforming power of the gospel inside and outside of the faith community.

Excellence is attained by finding one's own voice in preaching and worship leadership, by engaging the diversity within the community one serves, and by writing original liturgies that blend various worship styles appropriate for the community. It also demonstrates mature sermon development that draws from a deep well of biblical and theological sources.

Public Communication (a nonprofit internship option)

In the public communication area of nonprofit ministry, interns develop and hone skills used in sharing the mission of the organization through public speaking and writing, leading, and speaking at group gatherings as well as producing written communication to use within the organizational setting.

Competence is demonstrated by communicating effectively on behalf of the organization, constructing meaningful speeches and written documents that illustrate solid research and clear intent to be delivered to those inside and outside the organization, thereby advancing organizational goals.

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Excellence is demonstrated by finding one's own voice, by highly effective writing and speaking that conveys authenticity, clarity of thought and expression, trustworthiness, conviction, and empathy with the listener or reader. It also means ability to communicate the mission of the organization to a broad constituent base.

Teaching

In the teaching area, the intern is both teacher and learner, creating opportunities for learning to take place in their ministry site and to develop teachers who will transform the hearts and minds of those in the community.

Competence is demonstrated by facilitating thoughtful dialogue and reflection, by demonstrating teaching skills, including thorough preparation, planning, and listening as well as striving to improve their own understanding of the subjects they seek to teach.

Excellence is demonstrated by versatility in choosing pedagogical methods, by creating theologically coherent studies rather than rely on less suitable educational materials on hand. It is demonstrated by trusting, productive relationships and a sense of community and belonging among members of the learning group.

Pastoral Care

In the pastoral care area, interns develop and use pastoral care skills and learn to embody a pastoral presence appropriate for their congregation or organization and the community being served. Pastoral care also involves practices of self-care.

Competence is demonstrated by a deep love of God and neighbor shown through empathy, sympathy, and compassion and by personal integrity and trustworthiness. It is also shown by remaining aware of one's personal well-being while caring for others.

Excellence is demonstration of emotional intelligence, by courage to journey with others during difficult moments and personal tragedies including sickness, heartbreak, and imminent death, and by knowing one's own limitations and ably procuring appropriate care and services from other professional practitioners.