

Doctor of Missiology (DMiss) Handbook

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Welcome

This handbook is designed to give succinct guidelines on policies and procedures related to the study and progress in the DMiss program. If you have more questions, contact us, we are committed to helping you.

The handbook's contents may be changed at any time by vote of the DMiss committee. Students should verify policy questions with the DMiss personnel.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the DMiss program is to advance theologically competent mission leadership for the global church. Although graduates may be asked to teach missions, this degree is not primarily a teaching degree but a professional one. The emphasis of the degree is on knowledge, skills, and mission research, which result in practical applications for effective mission. This degree is not earned by the mere accumulation of credits. It is conferred on those who demonstrate advanced knowledge in missiological themes and the ability to integrate theology and social science research into actual mission leadership and ministry.

About the Program

The Doctor of Missiology (DMiss) program equips practitioners, leaders, and trainers who minister in cross-cultural mission situations through focused study and research in social-science and theological fields of study.

The DMiss degree is pursued while engaged in ministry. The curriculum is cohort-based and designed to be completed in four modules. Modules will include 1) pre-session reading, field research, application activities, and online discussions with the cohort group, 2) a residential period of at least 4 weeks on the campus of Andrews University or other approved off-campus location, and 3) post-session projects and assignments. All credits given will adhere strictly to the minimum total study time of 60 hours (in class and out of class) for each credit as outlined in Andrews academic policies.

Admission to the Program

Minimum Requirements for Acceptance into the Program

For acceptance into the DMiss program the applicant must fulfill the following minimum requirements. Fulfillment of these minimum requirements does not assure acceptance into the DMiss program.

- Hold the MDiv degree or its educational equivalent, or other advanced master's-level degrees in the related cognate discipline with a GPA of at least 3.3 on a 4-point scale.
- Have a minimum of 15 semester credits of mission-related course work.
- Pass the TOEFL test for English proficiency with a minimum TOEFL score of 85 (iBT) or 565 (paper based) if Secondary and Undergraduate schooling was not in English or if requested by the DMiss Program Committee.
- Have significant work experience (typically three years or more) in a cross-cultural ministry context.
- Show high promise of future usefulness in the mission of the church.
- Have completed GSEM 620 Research Methods or equivalent.

Application Done On-Line

Application to the DMiss program is done on-line at www.andrews.edu/grad/programs/missiology or www.andrews.edu/apply

All documents for application are submitted in pdf format at these sites. The documents required for your application to be complete are as follows:

- Application form.
- All official undergraduate and graduate transcripts from all schools attended
- 3 recommendations – one of them must be from a church leader from a cross-cultural/mission setting.
- 1000-word personal statement which expresses the applicant's philosophy of mission – including religious, cultural, and ethical considerations in doing mission. In addition, it must include the personal aspirations of the applicant for future ministry and how this degree will contribute to that mission.
- A significant research paper (term paper or thesis), normally written during MA or MDiv studies. This paper should show the applicant's ability to carry out research and to present the results and conclusions of such work with correct English and acceptable style. The topic of this paper should be in an area related to mission if possible.
- Detailed description of applicant's cross-cultural ministry work and experience.
- Financial plan.
- TOEFL and Visa for international students.

Deadlines for Application

All documents for application should be submitted at least 9 months before the start date for module 1 of the cohort being applied for. Apply online: www.andrews.edu/grad/programs/missiology or www.andrews.edu/apply/

How Your Application Is Processed

Your application is submitted to the Graduate Admissions office on-line as noted above. The Graduate Admissions office processes your documents and communicates with you concerning any missing items. It is your responsibility to insure that all documents are submitted and in order for your admissions record to be complete.

After Graduate Admissions has a complete application folder they process it and send it to the DMiss director in the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, who reviews the documents and brings them to the DMiss admissions committee. Following this, the DMiss committee analyzes the application and makes a decision. Each application receives careful review. The admission decisions of the DMiss committee are based on prayerful consideration of the applicant's demonstrated capabilities.

The DMiss committee has the final authority to accept or reject applications to the program. The DMiss committee can also suggest further requirements in order to reconsider the application. All preparations for application, further study, or other degree work do not assure acceptance into the program.

The DMiss program director informs the applicant by letter of the committee's decision regarding your application.

After You Are Accepted to the Program

Finances

As part of the application process applicants prepare a financial worksheet detailing their estimated expenses for their first year of study. It is important that you prepare for the costs of graduate education. Otherwise, it becomes quite challenging to focus on studies.

The DMiss program might have scholarship funds available for students at times. The student will have to check this possibility. The scholarships will be given on the basis of need and merit.

Visa

International students must have an appropriate visa for studying in the program. Two main types of visas exist for this purpose, the F-1 Visa (for unsponsored students) and the J-1 Visa (for sponsored students). All international students must have a student visa (either F-1 or J-1). Even when it is only for cohorts, there are no exceptions. Everyone has to plan ahead.

Admission Status

When a student is accepted into the DMiss program they are informed of their status.

Provisional status indicates that you are accepted into the program but that you have prerequisite courses which must be taken in the first 3 semesters of study (one calendar year).

Regular status indicates that you have completed all prerequisite courses. If your status is provisional when you enter the program then regular status is voted by the DMiss committee upon completion of the prerequisites and deficiencies.

Time Limits

Since the program is cohort-based, the student is expected to finish all modules as scheduled for the cohort. All degree requirements, including the dissertation must be finished within ten years of initial registration.

Extensions of time limit for completing the dissertation are made by petition through your adviser to the DMiss committee.

Program Requirements

Core Requirements

Modules

The DMiss program is cohort-based. Each cohort will consist of a specific course schedule during 4 annual modules. All cohort members will take the 42 credits of those specific modules and its listed courses. A Dissertation of 6 credits will also be completed.

Grade Point Average

Students are expected to hold a minimum GPA higher than 3.00 (B). If the GPA falls below 3.00, the student is placed on academic probation and can regain regular standing only after having again reached the 3.00 (B) level. A student who accumulates more than three grades of C or below (2.00 or below) is not allowed to continue in the program.

Transfer Credits

The DMiss program is cohort-based. Therefore, it is expected that all students will complete all activities as a cohort.

Adviser

The student's adviser in the beginning of the program is the program director or another professor designated by the director.

Dissertation Committee Role

The dissertation committee will guide you in the preparation of your dissertation proposal and then mentor and guide you in your doctoral research and dissertation writing.

The DMiss committee votes on the appointment of each student's dissertation committee and informs the student of the committee's action. Once your dissertation committee is appointed your committee chair becomes your adviser.

Dissertation Adviser's Role

- Be available to the student for consultation and guarantee a turn-around time of no more than 21 days for each item submitted by the student.
- Conversations regarding the proposal and each subsequent chapter are generally no longer than 20 minutes. A student should anticipate one conversation regarding the proposal and one for each chapter.
- Guide in the development and preparation of the dissertation proposed by ascertaining that the proposal is in finalized form.
- Provide counsel with respect to methodology and resources for the dissertation.
- Monitor each stage of the dissertation to ensure professional relevance and academic discipline according to the standards of doctoral study at Andrews University.
- Make certain, when the nature of the dissertation requires it, that appropriate components of data gathering, analysis, and evaluation are included.

- Make certain that the candidate writes well and follows regulations governing format according to *Andrews University Standards For Written Work*.
- The adviser is not to do the work of the student. He/she is to ask the student to revise or edit when appropriate.
- See that the candidate confines the written document to the appropriate length.
- Inform the program representative when the dissertation is ready for defense.

Dissertation

Dissertation Proposal

Proposals for the dissertation will be accepted following the completion of the second module. Under the guidance of the Program Director and the student's dissertation adviser, the student will write a proposal. The final proposal must be approved by the student's committee and the DMiss Program Committee.

The proposal must contain a basic survey of pertinent literature, a clear statement of the problem, a succinct purpose statement, a description of the methodology to be employed, a list of tentative chapters and subsection titles, and a preliminary bibliography.

Following the fourth module and the proposal approval, the student registers in MSSN 899 DMiss Dissertation for 3 credits for each of the following two semesters. If the dissertation is not completed after one year, the candidate must register for MSSN 888 (DMiss Dissertation Continuation) every semester, and pay a continuation fee until the dissertation is completed and the defense held, or until the time limit has expired.

Writing the Dissertation

The approval of the proposal marks the beginning of the research process. Closely following the approved proposal and under the supervision of the adviser, the student carries out the needed research, both theoretical and field-oriented. This portion of the program requires above all good time management.

Once the research has been completed, the writing follows. As soon as a chapter is written, the student submits it to the adviser and committee members for revision and approval. Normally, the adviser requests modifications, which the student must make before resubmitting the chapter. The process usually takes at least three rewrites.

The dissertation prepared by the DMiss candidate must:

- Demonstrate the candidate's competence to do independent research.
- Reveal the candidate's familiarity with and proficiency in handling the pertinent literature.

- Present a logically organized, methodologically sound, and readable account of the investigation, findings, conclusions, and implications of the study.

The adviser and reader should consult on the document, determining together when it is ready for defense.

Dissertation Defense

When your dissertation is complete to the satisfaction of your dissertation committee the chair informs the DMiss program director. The finished product is submitted to the university dissertation secretary for style and formatting review. The dissertation secretary oversees review of many dissertations. It depends on how many are ahead of yours and how many corrections your dissertation needs as to when the process will be complete. The dissertation secretary will communicate with you about any revisions. You make the revisions and submit the revised copy to the dissertation secretary.

When the dissertation secretary informs the DMiss secretary that the dissertation is ready for defense a minimum of 6 weeks must elapse before the defense.

The defense is set for a day when the dissertation examination committee can all be present. Two hours are allocated for the oral defense.

You should arrive early for the defense and be dressed professionally. The DMiss director chairs the defense and will direct where you will be seated. A dissertation defense is a public event. Other individuals may attend and quietly sit in the audience during the defense. Once the defense begins no one is admitted to the room.

The defense begins with announcements and opening prayer. The defense chair is the DMiss program director. You will have an opportunity for a brief 5- to 8-minute opening statement or presentation. There will then be two rounds of questioning, the first consisting of 15 minutes for each group member and the second for follow-up questions, 10 minutes per person. The group members excuse themselves for deliberation and return in a few minutes to communicate their decision to you. The result can be one of the following:

- Dissertation accepted without revisions
- Dissertation accepted with revisions
- Dissertation rejected

Completing the Dissertation

If your dissertation is accepted you make any necessary corrections and modifications under the direction of your dissertation committee chair. Submit the corrected copy to the DMiss office which will submit it to the dissertation secretary for

review. The dissertation secretary will inform you of any needed modifications. When the corrections are made you submit the corrected copy to the DMiss director for review. This copy is also reviewed by the dean of the seminary. When they are satisfied with the corrections they sign the dissertation approval sheet where the dissertation examination committee signed.

Your dissertation defense must be a minimum of 4 weeks before your planned graduation date. The final dissertation draft with signed approval must be submitted to the dissertation secretary no later than 2 weeks prior to your planned graduation date.

Graduation

Application for Graduation

It is your responsibility to obtain and file an “Application for Graduation” or an “Application to March without completion” request with the Records office (1-269-471-6230). Graduation ceremonies are in May and August; there is also a December graduation when degrees are conferred, but students do not march. Consult the academic calendar in the bulletin for application deadlines, which are 3-4 months in advance of graduation.

Graduation Application Deadlines

View the Andrews University Academic Calendar for Graduation Application deadlines. (Note: This is in Adobe PDF format.)