

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS

Supervised Ministry Practicum Beeson Divinity School, Samford University

Qualifications

An acceptable candidate to serve as a ministry mentor to a Beeson student:

- Is engaged in vocational Christian ministry on a full-time basis or bivocationally, OR is retired from full-time or bivocational ministry;
- Possesses appropriate credentials and/or experience in ministry. The minister must hold a graduate theological degree, plus three years of full-time or bivocational ministry experience beyond completion of the graduate theological degree, OR, if lacking a graduate theological degree, he or she must have served in vocational Christian ministry for at least 10 years;
- Sees mentoring as a part of his or her ministry;
- Is able and willing to accommodate the student in his or her schedule and work;
- Affirms the Christian faith as expressed in The Apostles Creed.

Expectations

- **Model ministry for the student.** The most effective teaching you will do will be by your own example as a minister.
- **Provide new ministry opportunities for the student.** The point of a supervised ministry practicum is not experience for experience sake alone. Nor is it about just any kind of ministry experience. Students preparing for Christian ministry must be given ample opportunity to engage in a wide variety of common ministry activities, including those for which they are not yet fully prepared. (Were you ever really prepared for some of your first experiences?!) Furthermore, these ministry experiences must be undertaken with an intentional view to learning. The mentor is a vital partner in the learning process – accommodating the student’s participation in ministry and facilitating the learning process before, during and after the various ministry experiences.
- **Give feedback and direction to the student.** Learning, the right kind of learning, should not be left to chance. You must be intentional about leading the student to make important discoveries that will have a helpful impact on his or her personal and professional formation for ministry. Ministry experience provides the raw material with which to assist the student to engage in theological reflection, i.e. Where is God at work in these situations? In the light of biblical revelation and the faith we profess, what does faithful pastoral ministry look like in these situations? What would God have me to learn about myself? About God? About the church? About the life and work of gospel ministry?
- **Provide an honest and helpful evaluations of the student.** Students don’t need flattery; they need helpfully critical feedback from people who care about them and know what they’re doing. Your role as a mentor is an investment – in the life of the student, in his or her years of ministry, in the kingdom of God, in eternity. Make it count.

Requirements

- **Attend a mentors orientation workshop (required of those who have not previously mentored a Beeson student, or who have not done so since any changes were made to the SMP process or requirements).** The workshop is offered annually, in mid-August, and requires a three-hour time commitment.
- **Assist the student in formulation of learning goals for the SMP.**
- **Meet with the student bi-weekly for supervision and reflection.** During this time, the student should relate his or her experiences, ask questions, and be open to the counsel of the mentor. Likewise, the mentor should use this time to keep abreast of what the student is doing in ministry, to probe and discover what he or she is learning, and to give encouragement and instruction.
- **Submit progress reports on the student by the dates specified in advance by the MLD Office.**
- **As the 35-week practicum is drawing to a close, complete and submit a summative evaluation of the student.**