**Frequently Asked Questions
St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute Doctor of Ministry**

**Costs / Finances**

**How much will it cost?** $16,500 is the total program price for those a) starting this academic year (2019-2020) who b) sign a PriceLock contract and c) finish in four years.

**Are there hidden costs?** No. You will need to buy your own books and cover any research expenses, and pay the graduation fee when you finish. We provide about 25 free meals during the program.

**Are deferred payment contracts available?** Yes. (Typically 33 equal monthly payments, but other intervals are possible, such as quarterly, annually, etc.) These PriceLock contracts lock in the current total program price.

**Are scholarships available?** No. (A need-based extended pay plan may be available to students with demonstrated financial need and exceptional potential for achievement.)

**Is the Ecumenical Institute’s partnership matching program available?** No, but institutional partners are welcome to support D.Min. students.

**Can I pay as I go?** Sure, no one is required to use the PriceLock contract. The pay as you go option will increase the total cost of the D.Min., because some costs increase annually (tuition, student services fees) and some costs (registration fees, program fees) increase occasionally.

**Curriculum and Courses**

**Does the D.Min. have a focus?** No, except for the focus of your ministry project. This is not a Doctor of Ministry in [*fill in the blank*]. Each student focuses on their own situation.

**How many classes are required for the D.Min.?** 6. You will also do 3 ministry modules and a ministry project (including a thesis).

**Are there different classes to choose / are there electives?** Not at this time. All students take the same six classes.

**Are the classes online?** No, not really. Classes will use our course management system (Canvas) to provide students with documents, but there are not online class sessions or posting requirements. However, there are separate online modules that teach ministry research.

**What are ‘Ministry Research Modules’?** These 3 sequential learning modules teach you how to do ministry research and develop your proposal for the ministry project.
Module 1 is fully online, and you complete it during your first year of study.
Module 2 is fully online, and you complete it during your second year of study.
Module 3 is hybrid, beginning online and ending in person.

**Will I be in a D.Min. cohort?** No. Because different students start in different terms, you will not have a closed cohort. You’ll be enriched by studying with some of the same students in every course you take, and also with new students in each course.

**Who teaches in the D.Min. program?** Look for the designation “D.Min. Faculty” on our Ecumenical Institute [Faculty page](http://www.stmarys.edu/ecumenical-institute/about-us/faculty/).

**How does the curriculum integrate head and heart?** Each of the 6 courses has spiritual formation elements integrated into class sessions. Each year D.Min. students also participate in an afternoon ‘mini-retreat,’ scheduled to precede an evening class session.

**Why should I do a D.Min. instead of a Ph.D.?** The D.Min. and the Ph.D. are very different degrees that involve very different amounts and kinds of work. Earning a D.Min. (like the Ed.D. and the Psy.D.) demonstrates an advanced level of proficiency in a particular professional field, and involves academic work that represents the development of that proficiency in a particular vocational context. The Ph.D. (or Th.D.) is an advanced research degree that is primarily used as a credential demonstrating the ability to teach and conduct academic research. The Ph.D. requires the ability to read multiple foreign languages as research in a particular field requires, involves extensive coursework usually pursued full time, requires the demonstration of comprehensive knowledge in a particular field, and involves the writing of a substantial dissertation that contributes meaningfully to the body of knowledge in that field. It is highly unusual to complete a Ph.D. in less than four years of full-time effort, and the process often takes several more years. The D.Min., on the other hand, is ordinarily completed in 3-4 years on a part-time basis.

**Schedule and Calendar**

**When are courses offered?** Fall, Spring, Summer are the D.Min. terms.
Fall and Spring courses meet once a month on Thursday evening+Friday (3 times, about a month apart). Summer courses typically meet for 4 consecutive days (Monday – Friday).

**Is a D.Min. term the same as a semester?** Basically. D.Min. terms give you 4 months to work on your course, from preparatory work before intensive class meetings to turning in the final assignment. Fall D.Min. term is Sept.-Dec. Spring D.Min. term is Jan.-April. Summer D.Min. term is May-August.

**Do you have to start in a particular semester?** No, you can begin D.Min. study at any point. If you start at the beginning of a D.Min. term, you start with the appropriate course. If you start in the middle of a D.Min. term, you can begin Ministry Research Module 1 as soon as you are admitted to the program.

**What if I need more time?** You have 6 years to complete all D.Min. requirements. So if you need to take a term off from study, you can. (You pay additional continuation fees for years 5 and 6, however.)

**Admissions requirements**

**What does “M.Div. equivalence” mean?** That you have enough master’s level coursework (at least 72 credits), and appropriate coursework in all three major areas of divinity (Bible, theology, ministry). Ecumenical Institute graduates holding the M.A.T. and the M.A.C.M. have M.Div. equivalence.

**What if I don’t have both of those degrees?** Those holding an M.A. in divinity/theology with another master’s degree in a related field (social work, counseling, M.B.A., education, etc.), or enough master’s coursework without a second degree, may find that their coursework fulfills M.Div. equivalence. The Dean will review your transcript to determine if you have M.Div. equivalence or if “backfill” coursework is required before starting the D.Min. program.

**What does “backfill” mean?** Taking additional masters credits to achieve M.Div. equivalence. (This might be because you need more credits to reach 72 and/or because there are major areas of divinity where you haven’t done enough coursework.)