

TRAINING AND MENTORING AT DENVER SEMINARY

SECTION 1

WHY MENTORING?

Denver Seminary's Vision

“Equipping leaders to think biblically, live faithfully, and lead wisely for a lifetime.”

Each year God brings together at Denver Seminary a fascinating community of people who have embarked on a journey toward ministry or further into ministry. As a student body, you have come from around the corner and around the world, from just out of college through retirement age. You have come from over forty denominations, and with backgrounds ranging from interior decorating to electrical engineering to music education. And, you have come to prepare for a wide array of ministry roles: counselor, pastor, intercultural mission, parachurch leadership, teaching, student ministry, ministry within the “marketplace,” and on and on. Against this tapestry, what is involved in *“Equipping leaders to think biblically, live faithfully, and lead wisely for a lifetime?”*

At Denver Seminary, we are committed to an educational process that intentionally addresses the whole person. God's Truth is both personal and propositional. There is no genuine knowledge of the Truth apart from obedient engagement with that Truth. There is no real preparation for ministry that does not somehow “get our hands dirty” and force us to rely upon the power of God for fruitfulness.

Psalm 78:72 says that David shepherded Israel “with integrity of heart” and “with skillful hands.” Exodus 31:1-6 speaks of those whom God filled with His spirit to work at their trades as they built the tabernacle. These texts vividly depict outcomes that guide the educational process at Denver Seminary.

The Training and Mentoring Process

Purpose and Values

Sadly, many Christians in ministry vocations have been left to find their own way once their formal education is complete. Highly motivated, well-intentioned and highly educated Christians may struggle and even flounder in ministry after receiving stellar academic training. Why? The reasons can be complex and varied, but some recurring causes can be identified.

First, we tend to minister according to the ways in which we have been trained. If our preparation for ministry addresses only one domain of our lives, we can experience increasing frustration and ineffectiveness by reducing people and their needs to the one dimension of our expertise. For example, if our education addresses or values only the cognitive domain, we may tend to see all of life's challenges as analytical or informational problems. Likewise, if our training values only the pragmatic or “how to” aspects of ministry, we may experience a superficial ministry and a growing disconnect between our theology and our actual practice. Failure to adequately the

affective or “heart” arena places us in peril of drying up in our relationship with God and others under the demands of ministry.

Denver Seminary’s Training and Mentoring (T/M) process exists to facilitate holistic growth in those who sense a call to some form of Christian ministry. Through intentional mentoring relationships in both individual and group settings and personalized learning contracts, you will have the opportunity and resources to grow in vital areas: Christlike maturity, healthy relationships, passion for ministry, sensitivity to human diversity, personal and ministry identity, and a variety of key ministry skill sets. We encourage you to engage your academic work as a spiritual act of worship as you also interact with questions of personal identity and ministry calling.

The various components of the T/M process integrate to create multiple, fertile environments in which the Spirit of God can bring about growth and transformation. This growth and transformation relate directly to our sense of ministry, ministry identity, and ministry calling. Our educational model is designed to prepare you for faithful, sustainable, and effective ministry in whatever ministry role or arena God places before you. This model requires rigorous work in the classical disciplines of Bible, theology, and church history, along with specific professional disciplines. It demands deliberate nurture of our relationship with God and courageous attention to the character traits necessary for weathering the demands of ministry. It calls for getting your hands dirty in the trenches of people’s lives so that you discover and sharpen your gifts. Yet, formation for faithful, sustainable, effective ministry involves more than merely working in each of these arenas. Each of these areas; content, character, and competence, must be linked in ways that allow them to shape each other.

The Training and Mentoring Process

Mentoring: The Integrative Catalyst

Purposeful mentoring relationships are catalysts that integrate and activate content, character, and competence in a life-giving combination!

The need for mentoring never goes away. Whatever your starting point, background, gifts, and calling, mentoring will be an integral component of your growth as a person. Only the form and focus of mentoring change over time. Throughout our lives we all need mentors who challenge, encourage, listen, provide feedback, and believe in us. We encourage you to begin seeking God’s direction now for the mentoring relationships you need in light of your ministry calling.

How does mentoring contribute to our growth? Relationships of openness and trust are vital, of course. However, there are many types of relationships and each offers a unique, formative contribution. Each of us needs intentional relationship with others who are committed to our growth in Christlikeness and our pursuit of God’s call. A certain amount of structure is necessary in order to keep us focused and moving forward. Yet, structure must be seasoned by a spirit of serendipity or openness to the unexpected so that we can sense God’s gracious involvement in our growth process.

A grove of aspen trees (which we enjoy a lot here in Colorado) is actually one organism. Though each aspen tree in a grove appears to be free-standing above ground, each is connected by a common root system. Similarly, content, character and competence can become almost seamlessly related as mentoring conversations uncover their interconnectedness. This is welcome relief for those of us who have suffered the *sterilizing* effects of a strictly information-driven approach to faith and ministry, or the *suffocating* effects of an obsession with character formation through rules, or the *exhausting* effects of an overemphasis on ministry technique.

What is Mentoring?

The word “*Mentoring*” captures much of what we see taking place in significant, formative relationships throughout Scripture: Moses with Joshua, Elijah with Elisha, Naomi with Ruth, Priscilla and Aquila with Apollos, Paul with Timothy, and of course, Jesus with the Twelve. The word can be used quite broadly to describe a variety of ways in which we intentionally invest our lives in others for the sake of their growth. Within Christian contexts, “*mentoring*” encompasses biblical functions such as discipling, nurturing, teaching, training, and equipping. The Apostle Paul places these expressions of mentoring at the heart of ministry in 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-8 and 2 Timothy 2:2.

“Just as a nursing mother cares for her children, so we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.” 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-8 (TNIV)

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” 2 Timothy 2:2 (TNIV)

The Theological Framework for Mentoring

Since mentoring has become such a familiar word in all kinds of settings, both secular and faith-based, we must look at mentoring theologically and ask, “What is unique about mentoring for Christians? James M. Houston, in *The Mentored Life*, speaks of mentoring as the formation of persons (not merely individuals) in community so that our lives and relationships reflect our Triune God (pp. 15-22). Mentoring facilitates personal growth with relational implications; not merely growth for the sake of fulfilling individual potential or achievement. For Christians, mentoring must intentionally help people reflect the image of God in all aspects of their lives. Whatever the focus of a mentoring relationship (character, skill, career choices, etc.), the process must be shaped by the ultimate objective of a life lived more fully for God and others.

As Houston suggests, the doctrine of the Trinity provides our theological framework for mentoring as a form of Christian ministry. God the Father calls us to a journey of knowing and delighting in Him. God the Son reconciles us to God and, through the Spirit, walks with us through the delights, detours, and dangers of the path, never leaving or forsaking us, and showing us what it means to reflect God’s glory in the world. God uses mentoring to help unfold this drama in other’s lives. What a privilege it is to be part of that eternal story!

Features of Healthy Mentoring

In The Mentor's Guide (p. xviii) Lois J. Zachary states that mentoring is a powerful growth experience, a process of engagement, and a reflective practice which focuses on the learners, the learning process, and the learning.

Here at Denver Seminary, we define mentoring (briefly stated) as a relational process by which a group of people help facilitate the development of another person toward spiritual maturity and effective ministry.

Effective mentoring demands four key traits in mentors: *intentionality*, *attentive discernment*, *vision*, and *responsiveness* (Don J. Payne, "Mentoring: Cutting to the Chase," in Denver Seminary Magazine [Spring 2006], 5-7). *Intentionality* models our God who is ever seeking to transform us. *Attentive discernment* involves active listening, not only to what a person says, but also to a person's life and how God seems to be moving in that life. *Vision* clarifies and maintains perspective (one of the first things to go when we are under pressure!). *Responsiveness* manifests a mentor's commitment to truly see a person; taking a person seriously enough to really get to know him or her, to take risks, to challenge, and to bless.

While many mentoring relationships are one-on-one, a community context is vital. Mentoring is fruitful when it involves multiple, interrelated relationships. We are committed to mentoring *in* community and *for* community, as embodied in our mentor teams, our spiritual formation groups, and the overarching culture of mentoring that we try to nurture at Denver Seminary. Mentors have their own unique styles, strengths and priorities. Each member of your mentoring team contributes something special and valuable to your preparation for the challenges and demands of ministry.

Mentoring provides a healthy context for learning from our experiences. Higher education has, for most of its history given priority to more abstract, analytical forms of learning. The type of knowledge gained in that fashion is suitable for application in some settings; however, it is also crucial to learn from hands-on experience in a setting where reflection and modeling occur.

M.I.T. social scientist Donald A. Schon contends in The Reflective Practitioner that we must learn to reflect on what we do in order to really learn from it. "[A]s a practice becomes more repetitive and routine, and as knowing-in-practice becomes increasingly tacit and spontaneous, the practitioner may miss important opportunities to think about what he [or she] is doing" (61). Mentors can facilitate such reflection on practice by asking fresh questions and suggesting new perspectives. Thus, practice can become a source of genuine knowledge. even if it is not the sole criterion for Truth.

Schon and other scholars emphasize that some of life's most important, truly *human* activities have an inherently artistic character. That is, they defy reduction to mere technique or science. Scientist and philosopher Michael Polanyi observes in Personal Knowledge, "An art which cannot

be specified in detail . . . can be passed on only by example from master to apprentice” (53). The journey toward Christlikeness and preparation for ministry are not exact sciences! Hence, we need mentors who will help us find our way in faithfulness, neither inventing our own ways from scratch nor thoughtlessly inheriting someone else’s methods as a manuscript for our own growth.

Mentoring may take many forms and have a variety of purposes, depending on our stage in life and the growth challenges we face. Yet, we never outgrow the need for mentoring. In their book, The Mentor Handbook, Robert and Richard Clinton clarify some of the unique mentoring needs that we have in different seasons of our lives. While preparation for ministry is the context for mentoring at Denver Seminary, seminary students come from all age groups, walks of life, and backgrounds, to follow God’s call to ministry. What each of us needs in order to follow that call varies as much as our fingerprints, but is always connected to a common core: a relationship with God that will endure the unique demands of ministry, character that is worthy of the Gospel, and the honing of ministry gifts for serving others well. Mentoring may take many forms and have a variety of purposes, yet no one ever outgrows the need for mentoring. Mentors, too, are shaped as they bring their lives alongside the lives of others, helping them grow toward completeness and fruitful ministry in Jesus Christ.

Why is Denver Seminary so committed to mentoring? The work of the Gospel calls forth from each of us what none of us alone can provide. Christ’s Church deserves and needs servant leaders whose lives embody the Gospel we proclaim, regardless of the ministry role. Becoming that kind of person, that kind of Christ-Follower, is a breathtaking endeavor. Good thing we’re in it together!

Recommended Resources

Here are just a few mentoring resources that we think are good. Not all come from an overtly Christian perspective but each is valuable in a particular way.

Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life, by Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton. NavPress.

The Heart of Mentoring, by David A. Stoddard.

The Mentored Life, by James M. Houston.

Mentoring Adult Learners, by Norman H. Cohen. .

The Mentor’s Guide, by Lois J. Zachary..

Spiritual Mentoring, by Keith R. Anderson and Randy D. Reese.

www.MinistryMentor.com, a free, on-line newsletter published by Tyndale House (sign up on line)

Section 2

Overview of Training and Mentoring at Denver Seminary

Connecting vision and implementation is essential to mentoring at Denver Seminary. We have just enough structure to support students and mentors as they work together toward a common goal. The following values are expressed in what we have found to be an appropriate structure for a healthy, sustainable mentoring environment.

THE VALUE: **Multiple Sources of Input**

Variety of perspective helps us understand ourselves and our experiences. We must have meaningful input from a variety of God's people in order to clarify, confirm, and focus our ministry giftedness in pursuit of God's call.

THE STRUCTURE: **Mentor Team**

A community context is vital. Mentoring is most fruitful when it involves multiple, interrelated relationships. Therefore, each student has a "mentor team." Each mentor team consists of mentors from within the seminary community and external to the seminary community.

Upon beginning the T/M process (T/M501ff), you will work with a mentor team comprised of mentors both internal and external to the seminary community.

1. Internal Mentors

a. *Training Center Director (TCD)*

Your Training Center Director is a faculty or adjunct faculty member who oversees your T/M experience. Your TCD is available to come alongside you in discerning God's activity in your life, then help you think personally and creatively about the design of your learning contracts and the selection of your mentors (see 3-5 below). Your TCD then performs the review, approval, and final evaluation of your learning contracts. He or she will meet with you and the other members of your mentor team every other semester for a midstream reflection on your experience, and is available to help you troubleshoot or otherwise keep your mentoring process moving in a fruitful direction. Your Training Center Director is generally assigned by the T/M office unless you request to work with a particular director.

b. *Faculty Mentor*

Your Faculty Mentor is a faculty or adjunct faculty member who facilitates your spiritual formation group. The group provides an essential setting for group mentoring toward objectives that are vital for ministry formation. Your faculty mentor is assigned by the T/M office when the spiritual formation groups are organized.

2. External Mentor

a. M.Div. and MA Professional Programs

[Counseling Ministries, Intercultural Ministry, Leadership, Youth and Family Ministry]

In these degree programs you will meet regularly with two external mentors. One mentor must be a person with significant experience in a ministry role or context toward which you sense God's leading. The other mentor must be a person from outside the vocational or ministry area that you envision.

These two mentors will walk alongside you as you develop and pursue learning contracts in ministry skill development and personal character/spiritual formation each semester. While each mentor should be involved with both learning contracts, the diversity of their backgrounds or experience will add essential breadth of perspective to your mentoring experience.

b. MA in Counseling Licensure, Biblical Studies, Christian Studies, Philosophy of Religion

In these degree programs you will meet regularly with one external mentor who may be from either a formal/vocational arena or not. Pursuit of ministry skill development occurs differently in these degree programs than in the M.Div. and MA Professional degrees. Thus, in these programs you will develop learning contracts primarily in character/spiritual formation.

Important Points to Remember:

- * You are responsible to locate and secure your external mentors. If you are new to the area or for other reasons do not have the relational network in which mentors can be found, one of the Training Center Directors can provide some networking assistance. Your local church home is normally the best source for mentor relationships. If you do not yet have a local church home, we strongly encourage you to make that a priority.
- * The selection of your mentors is critical to the quality of your mentoring experience. Look and pray for mentors who can draw you further along in key areas of your calling, your ministry skill, and your spiritual maturity.
- * In all degree programs, you should plan to meet with your mentor(s) weekly for a total of fifteen (15) hours over the semester. If you have two external mentors it is advisable to meet with them together if at all possible. If this is not possible, you may alternate weekly meetings them. Mentor meeting arrangements other than these must be approved by your training center director.

THE VALUE: Context-Based Learning

The shape and style of ministry are often influenced by our ministry context. "Hands on" experience in a specific ministry context allows us to develop nuance in our ministry skill sets and to ministry in ways appropriate to the culture, demographics, and other factors in a particular ministry setting.

THE STRUCTURE: **Training Centers** (see section 4)

You are encouraged to seek opportunities for ministry and learning within ministry contexts similar to what they envision after seminary.

Your TCD is also a resource person who can provide guidance and resources for contextualizing your learning contracts for specific ministry contexts.

THE VALUE: **Lifelong Learning**

A clearly focused and intentional approach to growth helps us get closer to core issues in our lives rather than merely deal with symptoms. A high degree of intentionality does not necessarily constrict the growth process but provides focus with which we can better recognize and respond to God's surprises.

THE STRUCTURE: **Learning Contracts**

Each semester of the T/M sequence involves one or two (depending on your degree program) personalized "learning contracts." First, each learning contract identifies and describes a key area of growth that you would like to pursue during that semester. Second, an appropriate and relevant goal is then identified. Third, focused, well-rounded strategies are developed for pursuing the growth goal. Each learning contract is a one-credit course for which you write your own syllabus. There are two types of learning contracts: those that focus on growth in **character/spiritual formation** (written by all students) and those that focus on **ministry skill** development (written by students in the MDiv and MA Professional degree programs).

THE VALUE: **Reflective, experiential-learning**

Much of our knowledge is gained through the medium of experience. Whether it's learning to ride a bicycle, love, or tell the difference between qualities of chocolate, we gain some types of knowledge prior to our ability to explain what we know. Experience must be accompanied by reflection so that we can build on what we learn and communicate it to others.

THE STRUCTURE: **Theological reflection**

Learning contracts, mentor relationships, and spiritual formation groups all involve reflection on our experience. We learn to interpret our experiences primarily in light of God's Word. Reflection also incorporates the wisdom of tradition and other people, as well as a variety of other resources. The T/M process involves the whole person by allowing you to experiment with new practices, disciplines, or approaches to life and ministry. It then asks you to reflect on what you learned, integrating with other courses and experiences.

SUMMARY:

Every degree-seeking student participates in the Training and Mentoring process according to the following sequence.

1. First semester: T/M500 - *Introduction to Christian Formation and Training and Mentoring*
 - a. Find a local church home (if you do not already have one).
 - b. Find and secure your external mentor(s).
 - c. Select a training center for the oversight of your T/M work (through the T/M500 Moodle site)

Note: If you are a special student, you may enroll in T/M500 but must complete nine semester hours of coursework and be fully enrolled in a degree program in order to continue with the mentoring experience.

2. Second semester and following (A Moodle site for learning contracts contains a full syllabus with instructions for writing learning contracts and details for the other components).
 - a. Register for the appropriate learning contract(s) on your degree program worksheet, beginning with T/M501 (also T/M502 for MDiv and MA Professional degrees).
 - b. Meet weekly with mentors.
 - c. Participate in a regular spiritual formation group with other students for three consecutive semesters.

Section 3

Training Centers

The value of context-based learning is expressed in the organization of the Training and Mentoring process around ministry training centers. A training center is a network of mentors and ministries in a particular ministry context. Each was established for the purpose of linking the seminary student with a local church or “front-line” ministry for more effective and integrated learning.

There are five training centers:

Chaplaincy

Church ministry - (optional specializations in church-planting, rural, suburban, and urban)

Counseling

Intercultural

Parachurch

- If you are in the *MA Counseling Licensure or Counseling Ministries (no concentration)* degree program, you must work within the *Counseling Training Center*.
- If you are in the *MA Counseling Ministries (chaplaincy concentration)*, or the *M.Div. (chaplaincy or pastoral counseling concentration)*, you must work within the *Chaplaincy Training Center*.

If you are in one of these degree programs but have a special interest in a ministry context represented by another training center, your training center director can help you network with other training centers to enhance your experience. If you are in any other degree program, you are free to choose any training center.

As part of T/M500 - *Introduction to Spiritual Formation and Theological Education*, you will be asked to select your training center. Selecting a training center should be based on your anticipated ministry context if you have one in mind. If you are not clear about your future ministry context, are interested in more than one context, or envision a ministry that is not represented among the training centers, you may indicate this in the selection mechanism on Moodle and you will be assigned to a center. Changing training centers is allowed if necessary, but you must first discuss this with your current training center director or the Associate Dean

Each training center has its own director(s). Your training center director will provide the oversight of your mentoring experience and help you as needed to custom-design the experience around your personal and vocational goals.

Training Center Directors (TCD)

Each training center has a director who serves as the point person for you and all members of your mentoring team. The director assists you as you integrate growth in content, character, and competence with your ministry calling.

Background

Each training center director has professional experience and expertise in his or her particular field or “center” as well as an understanding of how to develop effective ministry leaders through the mentoring process.

Responsibilities

- Provides oversight of training and mentoring process.
- Consults with you as needed each semester to develop learning contracts.
- Approves learning contracts.
- Provides training and resources for mentors.
- Meets as required with the entire mentoring team.
- Reviews your integrative summaries, time charts and evaluations.
- Assigns grades to learning contracts.
- Prays regularly for you and your mentors.
- Helps you integrate theory and practice.
- Encourages your growing self-awareness regarding God’s call.

Chaplaincy Training Center

Janet McCormack, Director

Jan is a retired lieutenant colonel who had a long and effective career as an Air Force chaplain. She is also an ordained minister. Jan received a BA from Lock Haven State College, an MDiv from Southeastern Baptist Seminary, and a DMin from Denver Seminary. She is the co-author of The Work of the Chaplain [Judson Press, 2006].

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Phone: 303-762-6947

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Counseling Training Center

Roger Cauthon, Director

Roger served as a pastor for thirty years and conducts a private practice in pastoral counseling and spiritual direction. He received an MDiv from Denver Seminary.

Office: Graber Administration Building, # 217

Phone: 303-762-6953 or cell 303-366-3008

E-mail: roger.cauthon@denverseminary.edu

Church Ministry Training Center

Don Payne, Director

Don served as a pastor in the Evangelical Free Church of America for eight years before coming to Denver Seminary. He received a BA from Tennessee Temple University, an MDiv from Denver Seminary, and a PhD from the University of Manchester, England. Don also serves as Associate Dean with overall responsibility for the Training and Mentoring process.

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Laura Flanders

Laura has been in pastoral ministry with her husband Dale for twenty-one years. She also spent seven years managing a leadership development program for a national industry organization. Laura received a BA from Seattle Pacific University and an MA from Denver Seminary.

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Bob Woolfolk

Bob has a broad range of experience in urban ministry and has been especially effective at forging partnerships between urban and suburban ministries. He is pastor of the Agape Christian Church in Denver and vice president of various ministry organizations. Bob received an MA degree from Denver Seminary.

Office: Graber Administration Building, # 229 Phone: 303-783-3129, 303-296-2454 (church)
or 720-253-7167 (cell)

E-mail: RobertW254@aol.com

Intercultural and Parachurch Training Centers

Terry Burns, Director

Terry has a broad range of experience as a pastor, missionary, and educator with CBInternational (now World Venture). He received a BS from the University of Idaho, and an MA and DMin from Western Seminary.

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T/M Coordinator

Susan Arnold

Susan serves in the Educational Programs office to coordinate many of the operational details and procedures for the T/M process. She received an AA from the Colorado Art Institute and a BA from Colorado Christian University. If you need to schedule an appointment with your Training Center Director or have other questions that are not addressed in this manual or a syllabus, Susan can help you.

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Section 4

Mentors

To be invited into another person's life as a mentor is an enormous privilege. Denver Seminary's vision to equip leaders who think biblically, live faithfully, and lead wisely can only be fulfilled through close partnerships with mentors who are committed to those same values. Gordon MacDonald reminds us that "virtually all training of the people of the Bible happened in the mentoring context" (foreword to The Fine Art of Mentoring, by Ted Engstrom, p. xi). Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton sharpen our understanding of the importance of mentoring by pointing out, "Mentoring can reduce the probability of leadership failure, provide needed accountability, and empower a responsive leader" (Connecting, p. 12). What's the bottom line? Only through active partnerships with mentors can Denver Seminary truly prepare people for effective, faithful ministry!

A mentoring relationship can also bring about significant personal and professional benefits for the mentor. Lois J. Zachary claims, "Mentoring can be a powerful growth experience for both the mentor and the mentee" (The Mentor's Guide, p. xviii). Her observation has been validated as we have consistently heard from Denver Seminary mentors that God is using their mentoring relationships to challenge, transform, and encourage them as much as the students.

Unfortunately, several misconceptions can inhibit many who would be wonderful mentors. Some prospective mentors are hesitant because they feel that they have little to offer. Others fear that they must "have it all together," or offer profound insights in each conversation. Unfortunately, these myths inhibit many individuals who would be wonderful mentors. Actually, the power of mentoring comes more from listening, walking alongside, asking good questions, and sharing struggles. The consistent testimony of Denver Seminary mentors is that they experience a renewal of their own ministries and spiritual lives even as they push through some of their initial apprehensions.

Though a mentoring relationship with a Denver Seminary student requires a significant time commitment and a willingness to invest, sometimes beyond your immediate circle of ministry relationships, (i.e., a Kingdom mind-set), most mentors experience several specific benefits from a mentoring relationship. Dr. Clyde McDowell, late president of Denver Seminary, described some of these.

It provides an unusual opportunity to multiply your own ministry.

Few joys can equal that of seeing others embrace some of your own passion and vision for ministry.

It provides accountability for your own life.

Students will help keep your own edge sharp when you invite them to ask probing questions about your life and ministry effectiveness.

It provides new opportunities for growth.

An intentional focus on developing a leader will push your own giftedness and vision to new levels.

It provides immense satisfaction.

Your heart will be thrilled and awed when you realize that God is using you to place a divine imprint on the life of a future leader.

Mentoring can also make a broad impact on your church or ministry organization.

When we cultivate in a community a willingness to mentor one another, that openness connects us more deeply to one another. The more people who are willing to share their lives with one another, the more our lives are held in common.

As others see you pouring your life intentionally and thoughtfully into another leader, their own values in ministry will be shaped. Your choice to mentor can literally become part of the transformation of culture in an entire ministry! Also, the quality and integrity of ministry will rise as those in leadership are constantly and consciously challenged toward excellence in their personal lives and ministries.

Basic Mentor Qualifications

Attend a Denver Seminary mentor orientation module.

This one-time, two-hour and fifteen minute session will provide you with an overview of the Training and Mentoring process, including its values and structure, your role and responsibilities as a mentor, some important mentoring skills, and tips for navigating the mentor relationship along the way.

Sign the National Association of Evangelicals statement of faith.

Denver Seminary is a multi-denominational, evangelical seminary with students from forty to fifty different denominational backgrounds each year. Mentors are expected to share the basic theological commitments that students affirm and that constitute the ethos of Denver Seminary. While the NAE statement of faith is not meant to reflect negatively on Christians of other persuasions, a certain basic level of theological agreement eliminates some unnecessary obstacles to the student's growth process.

Be supportive of Denver Seminary's vision and the structure of the Training and Mentoring process.

We ask all mentor team members to work supportively within the values and framework of the Training and Mentoring process. Additionally, all members of a student's mentor team are asked to mutually support one another, creating a strong, cohesive environment for training future leaders. Likewise, we commit to support you and your ministry in every way possible.

Read and agree to abide by the Training and Mentoring Code of Ethics and Policies and Procedures.

This document outlines procedural guidelines and ethical commitments that preserve the integrity of the process for all involved.

Be able to set aside the time necessary for weekly or regular mentor meetings with a student.

Coordinating schedules can be challenging. To minimize frustrations, be open to creativity while seeking to establish a regular place and time to meet. Early morning coffee, lunches or other

times that make minimal infringement on other commitments are often viable options. It can be helpful to get as many meetings as possible on your calendars in advance. If you find that your schedule is simply too full, be honest with the student before committing to a mentoring relationship.

Complete a Mentor Application Form.

The information you provide will allow us to contact you about news, resources, and events. It also helps us identify mentoring needs and trends.

Mentoring at Denver Seminary

Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

In many cases, discernment of God's call is the first step of the mentoring journey. Your role and influence as a mentor will reflect your own gifts, personality, and experiences. Mentoring should not be a "cookie-cutter" or "checklist" relationship. The overarching purpose of a mentoring relationship with a Denver Seminary student is to help the student prepare for effective, faithful ministry in line with God's calling.

Preparation for faithful, effective ministry involves *observation* of a student in ministry whenever possible and offering constructive *feedback*. It involves attending to a student's heart: passions, dreams, questions, struggles, and doubts. It demands that mutual trust be intentionally built and carefully preserved so that life-transforming conversations can be safely entered. It involves developing healthy mechanisms of accountability. One way to look at the purpose of a mentoring relationship is to envision someone you might one day hire for a ministry position. What interpersonal investments today would prepare them for that ministry position or role tomorrow? A good mentoring relationship will often create in students an enthusiasm for mentoring and lifelong learning that persists after graduation.

There are also limits or parameters on a good mentoring relationship. Mentors are neither expected nor encouraged to be counselors or therapists for students. Accordingly, it should not be assumed that a mentoring relationship is legally protected under the category of "clergy-penitent privilege" (see "Policies and Procedures") when information is shared that has legal implications. Please make sure that these boundaries and assumptions are clear at the outset of the relationship.

Denver Seminary's Training and Mentoring process utilizes several distinct mentor roles. You have been (or may yet be) asked to fill one of the following roles on a student's mentor team.

External Mentors

(required for students in the MDiv and MA Professional programs)

One external mentor for students in these degree programs is an individual, selected by the student, who exhibits a mature and growing Christian faith, has a heart for encouraging and equipping leaders, and who has significant experience in a ministry role or context similar to what the student envisions. When students are not entirely clear about the role to which they are called, this mentor should be a person who is experienced in the general aspects of ministry that are common to most ministries or in specific ministry skills related to a context that the student

envisions. This mentor will draw from her or his experience with the unique challenges, skills, demands, expectations, and other nuances of ministry. This mentor may also be able to open doors of opportunity for the student to experience “hands on” learning.

Responsibilities

- Offer input to the student during the crafting of a learning contract. This learning contract will address, on a personal level, a vital aspect of character formation and ministry skill in light of the student’s calling, gifts, experiences, and needs.
- Meet weekly with the student and lay mentor (together if possible) to support, encourage, and challenge the student by reflection on the student’s learning contracts and other life/ministry experiences. You will also, meet with the student and her or his entire mentoring team once every other semester to reflect on the student’s growth. Together you will examine the health of the mentoring relationships, share insights about future growth needs, and discern resources needed by any member of the team.
- Read the student’s integrative summaries and provide written feedback at the end of each semester.
- Communicate with the student’s training center director as needed.
- Pray regularly for the student.

The second *external mentor* is an individual, selected by the student, who possesses a mature Christian faith and has a heart for encouraging and equipping leaders, and is in a vocational arena other than the ministry arena that student envisions. This mentor assists the student in reflecting on ministry from perspectives other than the one offering the ministry. This mentor also offers an important source of modeling and support for the student’s spiritual growth.

Responsibilities

- Give input to the student for the design of personalized learning contracts that will address vital aspects of character/spiritual formation and ministry skill in light of the student’s calling, gifts, experiences, and needs.
- Meet weekly with the student and the other external mentor (together if possible) to reflect on the student’s learning contracts and other life/ministry experiences, support, encourage, and challenge the student.
- Meet with the student and her or his entire mentoring team once every other semester to reflect on the student’s growth, the health of the mentoring relationships, future growth needs, and resources needed by any member of the team.
- Read the student’s integrative summaries and give written feedback at the end of each semester.
- Communicate with the student’s training center director as needed.
- Pray regularly for the student.

Students in the MA Academic or MA Counseling Licensure degree programs meet with only one external mentor who may be either in a formal ministry role or in a different vocational setting.

Offering Evaluation in a Mentoring Relationship

Healthy evaluative feedback is among the most essential factors in any mentoring relationship that facilitates significant personal growth. Giving and receiving evaluative feedback can be difficult at times. Giving good feedback is a learned art. Look for the ways in which your mentoree can best receive evaluative feedback.

At the end of each semester, you will be asked to read the student's integrative summary or summaries and offer a brief written evaluation. These evaluations are read by the student, then passed along to his or her training center director. Your evaluative feedback, both written and verbal, should be done with obvious care and concern, and be based on concrete behaviors and indicators as much as possible. In view of this, if you are mentoring a student with a ministry skill learning contract, your feedback will be much more meaningful if you are able to have some first-hand exposure to the student's ministry. Arrange early to personally come alongside the student as they develop their skill.

Helpful feedback should take into account both areas where the student is strong and where growth is needed. For some, even positive feedback is difficult to receive and internalize, requiring a thoughtful approach from the giver. Yet, the evaluation process can be an opportunity for trust to grow between a mentor and mentoree. As William T. Pyle and Mary Alice Seals point out, nothing in written evaluations should surprise a student as long as "good, open, and honest feedback has occurred through the [mentoring] experience" (Experiencing Ministry Supervision, 130). When giving feedback, clarity, honesty, specificity, and a "solutions/growth orientation" can enrich your mentoring relationship for both of you.

Key Mentoring Skills

Mentoring is as much art as science. When the mentor's own style and strengths combine with the basics of effective mentoring, the life of a student can be powerfully impacted.

In Mentoring Adult Learners, Norman Cohen identifies and describes six essential emphases or skills in balanced, effective mentoring.

Relationship

Build relationships of trust and understanding in which a student feels safe to share personal experiences. How?

- Listen responsively.
- Make regular eye contact.
- Use appropriate facial expression, voice tone, gestures and posture.
- Use open-ended questions.
- Use "I am personally concerned" statements to express criticism.
- Restate the other's thoughts in your own words.

Information

Acquire adequate, specific data from a student so that guidance is appropriate and well-aimed. How?

- Seek information about the student's background, aspirations and abilities.
- Seek information about the student's knowledge base.

Facilitation

Guide a student through an exploration of alternatives as decisions are being made. How?

- Use hypothetical questions.
- Uncover the basis of student's assumptions.
- Offer a variety of experiences.

Confrontation

Challenge a student's explanations, decisions and actions when they are inconsistent with stated goals and objectives. How?

- Assess student's readiness to accept challenges.
- Express concerns about possible impact of criticism on the relationship.
- Aim comments to promote student self-assessment.
- Focus on strategies for change.
- Use the least amount of feedback necessary to make a point.
- Reinforce belief in student's potential for growth beyond the current situation.

Modeling

Share appropriate life experiences and feelings with a student in order to motivate toward necessary risks. How?

- Offer personal feelings about lessons learned from failures or difficulties.
- Use personal examples based on potential for motivational value.
- Communicate confidence in the value of appropriate risk-taking.
- Encourage student toward stated objectives.

Vision

Stimulate a student's thinking toward development of personal vision and growth habits. How?

- Encourage reflection on student's present attainments and future goals.
- Ask questions designed to clarify student's ability to manage change.
- Review student's choices based on options and resources.
- Affirm carefully processed decisions.
- Encourage student toward continued development and pursuit of dreams.

The Phases of Mentoring

Mentoring relationships will be even further enhanced as both you and the student give attention to the four phases of mentoring as identified and described by Lois J. Zachary in The Mentor's Guide (pp. 50-52).

Preparing

In the preparation phase, Zachary emphasizes . . .

- Exploring personal motivation and readiness to be a mentor.
- Assessing mentoring skills to identify areas for learning and development.
- Clarifying expectations and roles.

Negotiating

In the negotiating phase, Zachary encourages . . .

- Creating a shared understanding about assumptions, expectations, goals, and needs.
- Discussing confidentiality, boundaries, and limits.

Enabling

The enabling phase, Zachary states, includes . . .

- Establishing and maintaining an open and affirming learning climate.
- Providing thoughtful, timely, candid, and constructive feedback.
- Mutually monitoring learning process to ensure that the learning goals are being met.

Closure

The closure phase, according to Zachary, “involves evaluating, acknowledging, and celebrating achievement of the learning outcomes ” (p. 52).

Of course, when God is at the center of our growth goals, neither the process nor the outcomes can be fully controlled or predicted. The various structures involved in the Training and Mentoring experience exist to create environments that encourage openness and responsiveness to the Holy Spirit's transforming work. Sometimes the most transformative experiences come as a result of our growth plans going in a different direction than we envisioned. Sometimes God uses our growth goals as means of raising other issues and needs. In any growth scenario it is critical to encourage a flexible, open spirit as a student defines a growth plan and goals, then embarks on the journey with God.

Thus, prayer must be at the center of a mentoring relationship with a Denver Seminary student. Prayer can be a guiding factor in your mentoring relationship as you . . .

- Regularly ask God's guidance concerning the student's true needs.
- Model a prayerful approach to people and decisions.
- Pray with the student about issues that arise in mentoring and ministry.

Mentor Involvement with Student Learning Contracts

Denver Seminary has raised the value of intentional work in the areas of character/spiritual formation and ministry skill by integrating that work into the core curriculum of each degree program and granting graduate credit for these experiences. As a part of an accredited graduate degree program, this non-traditional, self-directed work is documented through personalized learning contracts that are written, implemented, and evaluated each semester.

Students in the Master of Divinity degree program write a total of ten learning contracts, one in the character/spiritual formation area and one in the ministry skill area for each of five consecutive semesters.

Students in the Master of Arts Professional degree programs (Counseling Ministries, Leadership, Intercultural Ministries, Youth and Family Ministries) likewise write one learning contract in each area each semester, but for a total of three consecutive semesters (six total contracts).

Students in the Master of Arts Academic degree programs (Biblical Studies, Christian Studies, and Philosophy of Religion) write one learning contract in the area of character/spiritual formation for each of three semesters. Normally, during the third semester there is one additional learning contract (T/M713) that has a skill focus but an academic orientation (usually related to teaching), thus totaling four contracts.

Students in the Master of Arts in Counseling Licensure program write one learning contract in the area of character/spiritual formation for each of three semesters.

The student is responsible to submit a draft of each semester's learning contract to his or her training center director by the end of the first full week of the semester. The draft is reviewed and returned to the student with comments incorporated into a final draft. The final draft must be submitted and approved by the training center director by the end of the third full week of the semester.

As a mentor, your input into a learning contract draft may be sought by the student. If so, look for the following indicators as you offer feedback.

A well-developed PERSONAL NEED ASSESSMENT

Each learning contract must have a singular focus based on honest self assessment. The growth need should be set in the context of the student's background, known strengths and weaknesses, and anticipated ministry calling. It should describe the need concretely and identify appropriate growth indicators.

Look for thorough reflection on these issues and indicators of willingness to stretch.

A specific, practical, achievable, managable and measurable GOAL STATEMENT

In one brief sentence the student should identify the growth that is envisioned.

Look for a clear, concise relationship with the personal need assessment. The goal statement should be Specific, Practical, Achievable, Measureable, and Manageable.

Balanced, objective LEARNING STRATEGIES

Strategies should be focused and relevant to the need and goal. There should be a healthy balance between strategies that address the knowledge, attitudinal, practical and relational dimensions of the student's goal.

Look for creative thinking about strategies to achieve the goal. Watch for the tendency to "load up" in an area where the student feels comfortable.

The Mentoring Session

The weekly mentoring session is a strategic opportunity for growth. Students are expected to take initiative in the relationship by scheduling meetings and coming prepared with questions or issues to discuss. Mentors and students share responsibility for the overall agenda of the mentoring session. Mentors make a powerful impact by listening well, helping students process their life and ministry experiences, providing appropriate accountability and support, and being honest and transparent with their own lives, sharing helpful insights and perspectives, and asking good questions. Of course, the student's learning contract(s) will provide a starting point for conversations but healthy mentoring conversations flex in response to the student's needs and situation.

Suggestions for getting started:

- Get to know each other's spiritual journeys, personal interests, ministry goals, etc.
- Discuss mutual expectations of a mentoring relationship.
- Discuss unique growth needs and resources you each bring to the relationship.
- Establish lines and means of communication.
- Set appropriate levels of confidentiality. (see chapter 7)
- Agree on means, purpose and level of accountability.
- Decide on a regular time and place for meeting if possible.
- Pray together and commit to praying for the relationship between meetings.

Suggestions for what to include in weekly sessions:

- Sharing and prayer.
- Student's agenda and mentor's agenda.
- Review of student's recent ministry and learning contract progress.
- Theological reflection on what student is experiencing in ministry, especially in view of courses being taken at the time (see "Theological Reflection" below).

Helping students get the most out of mentoring:

- Assist the student in relating what was gleaned from the initial assessment process with their growth goals. This can help students interpret and respond to their experiences. The assessment process can also shed light on the skills and traits that would be most relevant for the student to address in future learning contracts (see chapter 3)

- Draw attention to and celebrate God's transforming work in a student's life, especially in the little things that might easily go unnoticed.
- Encourage students to build on what they learn by stretching their comfort level beyond where they currently are each semester.

Additional tips:

- Vary the routine in order to keep the mentoring sessions interesting and worthwhile.
- Abandon or alter the normal agenda when special situations or needs arise.
- Occasionally enjoy a meal or other recreation together, including spouses of married students, if desired.
- Keep brief notes of the weekly sessions as a means of reflecting on growth.

Mentors make the greatest impact on students when they LISTEN to them, LOVE them, and BELIEVE in them!

Suggested Mentoring Discussion Questions

Overall, how is ministry affecting your relationship with God?

In what ways is your faith growing or being challenged?

How is your sense of God's call being shaped?

What kind of ministry identity is being formed in you?

Where are your ministry skills being tested?

Where is your character being tested?

How is ministry comparing to what you anticipated?

Where are you sensing indicators of God's presence and power in your ministry?

How is your coursework this semester contributing to your growth goals this semester or to other areas of your life and ministry?

What vision for ministry is emerging in your heart?

How is your relationship/communication style impacting your ministry?

How are people responding to you in ministry? What patterns are you discovering in your reaction to praise, to resistance, to criticism, to apathy, and other responses?

If you have two learning contracts this semester, how are they relating to each other?

Theological Reflection

The seminary bears primary responsibility for equipping students with essential biblical, theological, and professional constructs for ministry. However, students sometimes struggle in knowing how that knowledge relates to life and the practice of ministry. Mentors can play a strategic role in helping students learn to examine life from a theological perspective and to make decisions based on solid theological values. Thus, mentoring for effective ministry involves

regular theological reflection on life and the practice of ministry. Healthy theological reflection leads us to fresh and creative, yet faithful responses to the decisions we must make. It allows our theology to come to life!

A simple process for facilitating theological reflection with a student is as follows.

- Ask the student to describe an experience or ministry incident as concretely as possible.
- Articulate the possible learning points in the scenario.
- Identify where and how the student seems personally invested. What does the student appear to have at stake?
- At what points in the scenario does the student appear uncertain about how to respond, unclear about the best criteria for response, or seem to be operating from questionable assumptions?
- Identify as many critical factors as possible, including those related to context, relationships, and decisions that must be made.
- Discuss the theological assumptions the student seems to be making, whether they are conscious or implicit.
- List key Scripture texts and theological themes that might have implications for the situation.
- Search for possible responses to the situation that are faithful to Scripture and consistent with a healthy philosophy of life and ministry.
- Develop a specific response, if needed, along with appropriate measures for accountability, follow-up, and contingencies.
- Ask debriefing questions that will help the student clarify her or his understanding of God, self, others, ministry, calling, etc.

Sample Incident for Theological Reflection

Your student recently made a follow-up call on a young married couple who has visited your church several times. During the conversation the student discovered that they both became Christians in high school and have been active in church ever since. They were disciplined fairly well in the basics of the faith and gradually grew into leadership roles.

In their previous church, however, they became unwittingly involved in an intense controversy among key church leaders. Long-standing friendships were shattered. They perceived a breach of trust by leadership. The results? Every sermon felt to them as if it were laced with the poison of hypocrisy. Worship felt hollow and contrived. The wife came to the point of not even being able to go inside a church building without crying. They left the church not knowing if they would ever be emotionally capable of attending church again.

After several months without attending church at all, they decided to try again but in another place. They liked the services and the sermons in your church but still find it

incredibly difficult. Old memories are triggered easily. They don't know if they can ever be really involved again. Not only do they fear a repeat experience, but they fear the further disillusionment of discovering that the leaders at your church are flawed people, too.

Since becoming Christians God has worked in their lives in some powerful ways. Yet they now find themselves angry at God for allowing such loss, confused at why the conflict could not be resolved by seemingly godly people, and frustrated that the pain just goes on and on. Frankly, they admit, it was all they could do even to speak one-on-one with someone in a church leadership position. They even went so far as to express to the student (though kindly) their skepticism about what he or she might say to them about all this. After the conversation the couple seemed grateful for the chance to express their pain, yet they were a bit uncomfortable with having done so to a stranger (who is also another church leader). The student perceives that the door might be slightly open for future contact but is unsure how to proceed.

How would you lead a student in theological reflection on this issue? Here are some sample questions.

- What is the nature of the couple's loss?
- What are the assumptions the couple seems to have about faith, God and church? What is the role of a pastor in hearing a story like this?
- How does the gospel give hope to them?
- What would be an appropriate "next step" for them and on what theological basis?
- How would you define your pastoral goals for them? How would you pursue those goals?
- What scriptural models/metaphors of leadership best fit this type of situation?
- How does this type of experience relate to a maturing faith?

The Mentor Team Meeting

The first semester in the T/M sequence (T/M 501 and 502) and alternating semesters thereafter, the student is responsible to schedule one session (no longer than one hour in length) in which the entire mentor team comes together: student, ministry professional/lay/external mentors, faculty mentor, and training center director.

The mentor team meeting provides an important occasion for relationships to be built between the various members of the mentor team and mid-stream reflections on the student's mentoring process. New challenges and affirmations can be offered. Learning is expanded and reinforced. Encouragement and fresh perspectives facilitate the momentum and focus of the mentoring experience.

The purposes of this meeting are;

- (1) to briefly review student's progress on learning contracts
- (2) to gain feedback from mentors on student's growth and challenges

- (3) to gain feedback from student and mentors on the health and direction of the mentoring relationship
- (4) to engage the student in theological reflection on learning experiences during the semester
- (5) to consider next steps or new directions for growth
- (6) to obtain feedback that will inform and enhance the Training and Mentoring program, such as questions or problems, ways the seminary could serve them better, specific benefits or growth they have experienced so far, etc.
- (7) to recognize and celebrate God's work
- (8) to pray for the student and mentor team

This meeting replaces the student's normal weekly mentor meeting and nurtures the vital partnership between the seminary and the church in ministry training.

The student should take the initiative to schedule this session by first consulting the schedules of the faculty mentor and training center director, many of whom allocate certain blocks of time for these meetings.

Since the scheduling process can be challenging, students should begin coordinating their mentor's schedules as early as possible in the semester. Time spent arranging this meeting may be counted toward the time required for one of the learning contracts.

The learning contract Moodle site and syllabus will specify the deadlines for scheduling and conducting the mentor team meeting. Failure to schedule and conduct the mentor team meeting by the posted dates will result in grade deductions. The training center director will lead the meeting.

To help you prepare for the Mentor Team Meeting, here are some discussion questions that may be asked.

For the Student:

- How are your learning contracts coming along?
- Are your strategies on pace?
- Are your strategies contributing to your goal as you hoped?
- Have you sensed the need to make any adjustments?
- What frustrations have you had so far?
- How well is your mentoring relationship contributing to your learning goals?
- What have you learned about yourself as a mentoree?
- What are the unique contributions each mentor has made to your life so far?

For the Mentor(s):

- What do you see in the student so far that needs to be affirmed and called forward?
- What do you see so far in the student to which he or she will need to give some extra attention?
- How would you describe the growth phase/maturity phase the student is in right now?
- What have you learned about yourself as a mentor?

For the Mentor(s) and Student:

- Describe your mentoring relationship(s).
- Do you get enough time together for in-depth conversations?
- Would you describe your relationship as open and authentic?
- What are some of the more significant topics you have discussed?
- What might strengthen the relationship?
- How clear is everybody about roles and expectations?
- Is healthy accountability functioning in the relationship?
- How have you cultivated trust and accountability?
- What further resource or training needs have you become aware of while in this mentoring relationship?
- How has your mentoring relationship changed over time? How would you describe the phase it is in right now?
- Where has your mentoring relationship been tested so far?
- (If last meeting) How do you plan to bring closure or transition to your mentoring relationship?

For Theological Reflection

- Discuss the most challenging, troubling or otherwise significant aspect of your ministry experience during this term.
- What Scripture texts seem to be most relevant to this situation?
- What were the critical issues, questions or decisions for you in this situation?
- What difference would you expect God to make in a situation like this?
- Are there new theological questions or challenges that arise for you because of this experience?
- How has God surprised you? Why?
- Where has this challenged your understanding of who God is, how He works, what difference salvation makes, etc?

- How is your own sense of giftedness and calling being affirmed or challenged by this situation?
- What would you do differently (if anything) next time and why?

Mentor Appreciation Benefits

As a mentor you are an integral part of Denver Seminary's mission! Your committed participation in the Training and Mentoring Program takes the preparation of future leaders to an entirely new level. We recognize the significance and cost of your investment with Denver Seminary.

To show our appreciation, the following benefits are available to you while serving as a mentor:

Bookstore Discount

As a mentor you are entitled to a 30% discount (off list) on the majority of books carried in our bookstore, and a 10% discount on those marked "net."

This discount is available for the mentor's personal use only, please.

Library Privileges

As a mentor you may hold a Denver Seminary library card for the academic year in which you are mentoring a student.

Lectureship Invitations

Each year well-known guest lecturers are brought in to minister to the seminary community. You are invited as our guest to these lectureships. Watch mentor newsletters for information on these special lectureships.

Continuing Education

As a mentor you may audit up to two master's level classes during each academic year in which you are mentoring a student. There is no charge whatsoever, unless books or other materials are purchased. All audits are contingent upon the professor's approval.

- Classes must be taken in the year they are earned and may not be accumulated.
- Audits will not be transcribed.
- Applies only to classes offered during the fall and spring semesters.

Contact the Educational Programs office at 303-762-6917 for details on obtaining these benefits.

Chapter 5

Training and Mentoring Guidelines

Code of Ethics

Denver Seminary is committed to training leaders who are fit for ministry, that is, leaders whose lives are “worthy of the Gospel” (Philippians 1:27). Thus, completion of academic requirements does not by itself guarantee graduation from Denver Seminary. The faculty and board of trustees approve each candidate for graduation based on their overall experience during seminary as indicating fitness for ministry. The Training and Mentoring experience is designed to provide opportunities to develop the character traits and ministry competencies that are vital to this fitness. In service to this goal, all participants in the Training and Mentoring process are asked to abide by the following Code of Ethics as expressing our mutual commitment to the integrity of the Gospel ministry in all its forms.

- **I will strive at all times to exhibit the character qualities outlined for Christian leaders in 1 Timothy 3:1-12 and Titus 1:6-9 and the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23.**
- **I will conduct myself in ways that build trust in our relationship,**
 - Representing myself accurately.
 - Appropriately protecting all confidential or sensitive information (see Policies and Procedures, 5.3 for guidelines to appropriate confidentiality).
 - In all communications, being measured, precise, and accurate, and avoiding exaggeration and speculation.
 - Giving others the benefit of the doubt as far as possible.
 - Seeking to resolve conflicts in a redemptive manner.
 - Exhibiting a sensitive, forthright, and constructive spirit when confronting problems.

Additionally, for mentors:

- **I will recognize, appreciate, and develop the unique gifts of those I mentor,**
 - Facilitating their maximum effectiveness and motivation in ministry.
 - Encouraging lifelong growth.
 - Delighting in God’s glory as it shows through each person’s uniqueness.
- **I will use my influence for the benefit of students and never for unfair advantage.**
 - Seeking to provide meaningful opportunities for ministry.
 - Helping them to go further than I have gone and further than they could go on their own.
- **I will strive to be sensitive to students’ unique mentoring needs based on their life-stage, experience, circumstances, and other personal factors.**

Policies and Procedures

1. Mentors’ relationship to Denver Seminary

- 1.1. Mentors of Denver Seminary students are not considered to be employees of or under legal contract with Denver Seminary. “Mentor appreciation benefits” are provided gratis and should in no way be construed as remuneration for services rendered or as constituting a contractual relationship with Denver Seminary.
 - 1.2. All mentors must participate in a mentor orientation module and give signed agreement with all policies, procedures, expectations, and the code of ethics of the Training and Mentoring program, as well as the National Association of Evangelicals statement of faith. However, such participation and agreement does not guarantee approval or participation as a mentor in the Training and Mentoring program.
 - 1.3. Denver Seminary reserves the right to withdraw the “approved” status of any active mentor at any time.
2. Students’ relationship to Denver Seminary
 - 2.1. Denver Seminary students are not to be considered as official representatives of Denver Seminary when serving in formal or informal ministry capacities.
 - 2.2. Students assume responsibility to seek and engage in mentoring relationships and ministry activities that will fulfill the requirements of the Training and Mentoring program and that correspond to honest self-assessment in light of personal and professional growth needs.
 - 2.3. Students are to give signed agreement to the Training and Mentoring code of ethics. Graduation from any Denver Seminary degree program is based on “faculty determination that the student is theologically, psychologically, spiritually, morally and academically fit as a candidate for some phase of evangelical ministry. This is based on the student’s total seminary experience” (Denver Seminary catalog). The character traits delineated in 1 Timothy 3:1-12 and Titus 1:6-9 are expected of all Denver Seminary students as partial indicators of this fitness. In all situations, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner “worthy of the Gospel” (Philippians 1:27).

3. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

Mentoring at Denver Seminary is a form of ministry that often involves sensitive, privileged communication. The integrity and effectiveness of the mentoring relationship depend on individuals maintaining the utmost trust with each other, especially when handling sensitive information.

Mentors should appropriately respect and protect all confidential or sensitive information obtained through the mentoring process except to the extent they may be responsible to share information with the Seminary as to a student’s progress, and to the extent that they may have a legal, professional or moral duty to report to others, such as when they become aware that the disclosing party is causing or about to cause injury to self or others.

A prayerful concern for the other person and the relationship must undergird the uncertainties and awkwardness of handling sensitive information. Concerns about students or mentors as well as questions about procedure and propriety can be discussed with the student’s training

center director. Thoughtful, proactive commitments in this area can contribute to the benefits realized by both mentor and student.

Mentors and students should be aware of the T/M department's policies regarding confidentiality. Though not every possible situation can be anticipated, decisions regarding confidentiality should respect the following guidelines.

- 3.1. At the outset of the relationship mentors and students, as well as T/M spiritual formation groups, should discuss the parameters of appropriate confidentiality, that is, the types of information that would be appropriate to share (1) with anyone, (2) with other mentors only (3) with each other only, or (4) that may need to be shared with the seminary and/or legal authorities. All participants in the Training and Mentoring program at Denver Seminary should be aware that legal obligations attend the sharing of certain types of information. For example, pastors and all others in any type of ministry leadership position must report any form of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or instances in which there is a risk of injury or harm to the person concerned or to others. Thus, absolute confidentiality may not always be possible. When in doubt about whether information should be shared, counsel should be sought until there is clarity and certainty about how to proceed.
- 3.2. If an individual wishes confidentiality beyond the norm of the relationship, that should be requested and respected within legal parameters.
- 3.3. As stated in the Denver Seminary student handbook, students must be aware that if they discuss a personal matter with a faculty or staff member, they cannot be assured of confidentiality when the issue discussed is of such a nature that the faculty or staff person has institutional, legal or professional responsibility to report the matter to the appropriate authority.
- 3.4. The legal category of "clergy-penitent privilege" does not necessarily apply to conversations held in the context of the Training and Mentoring process.
 - 3.4.1. Conversations held in a Denver Seminary mentoring relationship or spiritual formation group are not to be considered legally protected.
 - 3.4.2. Students counseling individuals in a ministry setting should not guarantee complete confidentiality. Students cannot assume that they are protected by "clergy-penitent privilege" simply because they are serving in a ministry setting, are working under the supervision of an ordained minister, or because they are preparing for ordained or other vocational ministry. Students should be up-front with those to whom they minister about their ministerial status and any limitations that may apply to their role, especially when those persons may assume that the student is a clergy person.
 - 3.4.3. Any participant who has reason to believe that another participant poses a threat to the physical or emotional well-being of others should communicate those concerns to a representative of the T/M department.
 - 3.4.3.1. Students are required to provide mentors with certain forms of information (e.g. integrative summaries) as stated in the T/M manual. Once these and other

documents become part of a student's T/M file, they are treated as educational records and protected under the guidelines of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Except for faculty or staff of Denver Seminary with a need to know, or as may be otherwise allowed or required by law or regulation, information in a student's file is not available except with the student's written permission.

- 3.4.3.2. Each semester all training center directors report to the Denver Seminary faculty regarding students about whom there are concerns for their potential fitness for ministry. The faculty is committed to a preemptive and redemptive approach to such concerns so as to provide all reasonable possibility for students to successfully complete their courses of study at Denver Seminary and engage in credible, effective ministry within the evangelical community. Students and mentors should be familiar with the seminary's criteria for "fitness for ministry," (see the Code of Ethics) upon which final approval for graduation from Denver Seminary depends. Mentors should be accurate, concrete, and constructive when giving evaluations on student progress. Input from the Training and Mentoring program may be sought in order to inform the faculty's assessment of student fitness for ministry. However, apart from legal obligations, mentors are not required to give to Denver Seminary any input regarding a student unless they wish to do so.
- 3.4.3.3. Mentors who have concerns about a student's potential or fitness for ministry may first address those concerns directly with the student. The mentor may also choose to go first to the student's training center director, the Associate Dean responsible for the Training and Mentoring program, or the Vice President/Dean of the seminary. Mentors should understand that any area of discussion or interaction can have an impact on the assessment of whether the student is fit for ministry.
- 3.4.3.4. Students who have concerns about a mentoring relationship or spiritual formation group may likewise discuss those concerns first with the individual or individuals involved, but are not required to do so. If the concern is of such a nature that the student needs counsel prior to addressing the individual(s) involved, such concerns may first be discussed with the appropriate training center director. The student may also follow the grievance process provided for in the Student Handbook as applicable to the situation at hand.
- 3.4.3.5. All communication about another participant in the Training and Mentoring process should be as accurate and precise as possible, and exaggeration or speculation avoided.
- 3.4.3.6. Each student's learning contract documents are destroyed after graduation, unless there have been specific reasons for retaining them.

National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) Statement of Faith

The National Association of Evangelicals takes its stand on the changeless Word of God as expressed in the following Statement of Faith:

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

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