INTRODUCTION TO

APPLIED MINISTRY PROGRAM

A Guide for Students

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# **INTRODUCTION**

Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ. – Galatians 6:2

One of the heartbeats of counseling education espoused by Westminster’s MAC program is that the Christian life is not lived in isolation but in community. Brothers and sisters in Christ are called to do life together. This is why ministry, in the context of community, is a cornerstone of the counseling curriculum here at Westminster.

The Applied Ministry Program is designed to formalize a relationship and a ministry context for you as an MAC student to implement what you’ve learned in classes, to receive encouragement and constructive feedback from a ministry “partner” and to track progress–to stop and identify how much you have learned through the program.

We call the one who comes alongside you a “partner.” This title simply signifies that the one who enters into your learning process is taking a vested interest, making a commitment to support and encourage you along the way. For some, the actual relational context may look more like a brother/sister checking in than a mentor/mentee relationship. For others, that mentoring dynamic may and should be in place. The bottom line is: the relationship between the student and partner is one of intentionality. Your partner will come alongside you, encouraging you to successfully apply what you are learning in your lectures and small group discussions.

The purpose of this guide is to give you an orientation to the Applied Ministry Program at Westminster and to encourage you as you build an intentional relationship with your AMP Partner.

## **WHY PARTNERED MINISTRY?**

### We use the term “partner” because partner-ship implies commitment. You are asking a partner to commit time, energy, and wisdom to help enrich your training for ministry. The Applied Ministry Program is designed to provide you another set of eyes, ideally in a personal relationship, as well as a meaningful commitment from your partner to help you grow in grace and ministry potential.

## **STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

## **FORMS AND DEADLINES**

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| **Forms** | **Deadlines** |
| Partner Registration Form | Should be submitted for approval before the student enters the final year of courses and before the student submits the Student Proposal Form |
| Student Proposal Form | Should be submitted for approval before the student enters the final year of courses and prior to any hours intended for completion of 100 hour requirement |
| Student Final Evaluation Form | Should be submitted before the final term of courses |
| Partner Final Evaluation Form | Should be submitted before the final term of courses |

## **THE PLANNING PHASE**

### **1. Partner Registration**

If your partner has never participated in the Applied Ministry Program with a Westminster student, he or she will need to complete the partner registration form for the Dean of Online Students’ office.

**2. Ministry Proposal**

The ministry proposal is an opportunity for you and your ministry partner to meet together and prayerfully determine the parameters and goals for this ministry period as you complete the Student Proposal Form.

You and your ministry partner will need to agree on beginning and end dates for this particular ministry period. A typical ministry period may last a semester, an academic year, or a summer.

Summary of Ministry Proposal

The Student Proposal Form will ask you to summarize the tasks and responsibilities that will fulfill your 100-hour requirement. You will also be asked to estimate how many hours per week you plan to spend while fulfilling your AMP.

Learning Goals

You and your partner should also discuss your learning goals for this ministry period. It is desirable to keep a comprehensive picture of ministerial formation in mind, while at the same time giving concrete, specific areas for targeted growth. By being specific, the hope is for visible, measurable growth by the end of the agreed upon period of application and partnership.

 Commitment

At the conclusion of the ministry proposal, both you and your partner should sign the Student Proposal Form. Your signature affirms that you understand the guidelines and learning goals for your Applied Ministry Program outlined in this Student Guide.

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## **THE SUPPORT PHASE**

### **Speaking into ministry experiences**

After the planning phase comes the support phase—the actual ministry experience. The partnership has already begun as you have spent time with your partner planning this phase of the process. At this point it is important to prepare yourself well for the conversations and constructive feedback you will receive from your partner. The following outlines what you should expect from your partner in these conversations.

At a minimum, dialogue about ministry will be the heart of the partnership. Your partner will engage you in the ministry you are doing. Your partner should be growing in visibility, entering into your ministry context and finding ways to support and encourage you. Here is a simple guide to what you might talk about as you discuss how ministry is going:

1. How are you doing personally in your ministry context? What might be a recent highlight? lowlight? How can your partner support you?
2. How can your partner help you grow for current or future impact?
3. How are we doing? Is there something your partner can do to better support your ministry?
4. [If applicable/appropriate] Do you have any feedback for your partner? Are there ways your partner can improve in ministry effectiveness?

Prayer for one another should be a regular element of these times together. Praying together enables you to witness your ministry partner’s heart for the Lord and for His people while at the same time sharing your own.

## **THE EVALUATION PHASE**

As you have already seen above, dialogue and feedback should be ongoing throughout the partnership. However, the final evaluation phase is designed to reflect on the experience as a whole at the conclusion of the partnership. Specifically, this is when you and your partner review the progress made toward achieving the learning goals agreed to in the ministry proposal. There are two evaluations to be completed:

### Evaluation: Student

This provides an opportunity for you to summarize strengths and weaknesses in your ministry application. Honesty and transparency are key as you complete the evaluation of your ministry partnership. As you think through the parts of the experience that were truly formative you’ll continue to learn and solidify the ways in which you are most helpfully grown and stretched in community. Our desire is that this learning experience would benefit the way you seek evaluation and mentorship in the future too. The form also provides an opportunity for you to give feedback on the partnership process. Be honest in this as well! If your partner serves this role again for another Westminster student, they will both benefit from your specific, constructive feedback.

### Evaluation: Partner

This is your partner’s opportunity to reflect on the overall ministry experience. Your partner will continue the theme of constructive feedback and encouragement, but will synthesize the entire ministry experience in doing so.

A final mentoring session should be planned to share these evaluations with one another. You should probably plan a longer meeting so that you can take your time in discussing what each of you have written. You will both have to assent to the fact that you have reviewed each other’s evaluations. These evaluations are completed on the AMP website: online.wts.edu/amp.