

The Pacific Union Conference and the SECC seeks to support their workers by providing assistance to a limited number of pastors pursuing the Doctor of Ministry (D. Min.) degree, or other approved doctoral ministry-related degrees.

I. CONFERENCE APPROVAL

Initially the pastor must make application through his/her conference Ministerial Department. The pastor will be asked to prepare a paper telling about the degree sought, its cost, and benefits to their ministry. The application will be reviewed by the conference administrative committee. This committee will consider the qualification and eligibility of the pastor using the guidelines provided below. If the request meets the guidelines, the administrative committee will make a recommendation of support to its Conference Executive Committee who in turn with approval will pass it on to the Pacific Union Conference. It will again be reviewed by the President's Council and ultimately approved by the Union Conference Executive Committee.

II. GUIDELINES FOR ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

1. The pastor must have demonstrated superior leadership in keeping a church united, organized, and growing. *Supporting data will be required with application.*
2. The pastor must explain how he/she feels the degree desired will improve pastoral skills.
3. His/Her health must demonstrate the capacity to carry a full pastoral load.
4. The applicant should have completed at least five years in pastoral ministry and have served at least three years beyond ordination in good and regular standing.
5. He/She should be at least thirty years of age but not over fifty-four.
6. The applicant must have a Master of Divinity or Bachelor of Divinity degree or its equivalent.
7. He/She must not have another doctoral degree or be near completion of a doctoral degree in some other discipline.
8. Degree requirements must be able to complete within a five-year period.

III. INSTITUTIONS AND AREAS OF STUDY

1. The doctoral degree can be taken at any school approved by both the SECC and the Pacific Union Conference. The specific doctoral program, as well as the school itself, must be approved.
2. To be eligible for financial assistance, the pastor should limit his/her major field of study to areas directly related to pastoral ministry.

IV. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

1. TUITION AND FEES for the D.Min. degree doctoral program will be paid as follows:
 - a. One-third by the candidate.
 - b. One-third by the local conference.
 - c. One-third by the Pacific Union Conference.

2. RESIDENCY and TRAVEL EXPENSE

The pastor, Conference and Union will share in reasonable residency and travel expenses incurred while pursuing the degree. This subsidy applies to expenses incurred for attending classes. It does not include assistance for attending the graduation/commencement exercises.

3. DISSERTATION EXPENSE

The total cost of the dissertation expense, including necessary travel, microfilming, typing, and binding, shall be shared equally by the employing Conference and the Pacific Union Conference, up to a total cost of \$1200.

4. OTHER UNIVERSITY D.MIN. PROGRAMS

Pastors enrolled in doctoral studies in a university other than Andrews University shall be eligible for the same financial provisions and support up to, but not exceeding, assistance given to Andrews D.Min. students.

5. CONTINUATION

After completion of classes and during the writing of the project or dissertation, the student may be required to register for continued enrollment. Only two years of continued enrollment will be covered as per policy. Expenses related to continued enrollment after a two-year period will be complete responsibility of the student.

V. AMORTIZATION

1. A pastor who has been approved for the D.Min. degree by the Conference Executive Committee and the Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee, shall be under obligation to serve the Conference one year for every eight semester hours or 12 quarter hours of graduate study.
2. In case a call is placed for the pastor before the obligation is fully amortized, the amount uncared for shall be assumed by the calling organization. In case the call is to overseas service, this provision may be waived.
3. In the case of accepting a call from a non-Adventist institution or leaving SECC prior to the 5-year period, the pastor will be obligated to pay SECC back the portion SECC has contributed.

VI. STUDY LOAD LIMITS

A pastor who is employed full time serving a congregation and is enrolled in a Doctor of Ministry program is limited to the following credit hours he/she may take each year:

→ 8 CREDITS PER YEAR- on Semester System.

→ 12 CREDITS PER YEAR - on Quarter System.

These are the limits for those who take graduate study programs while they are receiving full pay for full-time work.