



Interacting With Your Biblical and General Advisers: *What to Expect, and How to Make the Most of This Important Relationship*

Choosing Your Adviser

- At some point during your Project Design class, you will submit names to the D.Min. Committee of individuals you feel might be suitable advisers. (In some cases, where a general adviser is qualified to also advise you on your biblical-theological chapter, a separate biblical adviser may not be necessary.) If you are choosing someone outside the AGTS teaching network, please submit the potential adviser's résumé/CV.
- If you do not have an adviser in mind, the D.Min. team can suggest names of individuals who might be willing to serve in this capacity for you.
- You will know by the end of the Project Design week if your adviser recommendations have been approved. Advisers must have terminal degrees, be available and willing, and have adequate expertise in your area.

Contacting Your Adviser

- It is then *your* responsibility to contact your adviser(s) to ascertain their availability and willingness to work with you. This will *not* be done by the D.Min. team or committee.
- If your adviser(s) are unavailable or unwilling, you will need to run some additional names by the D.Min. Project Coordinator for approval.
- Assuming they are available and willing, it is best to e-mail your adviser(s) as soon as possible. Provide for him or her:
 - the expected timeframe for the execution of your project;
 - a copy of your approved prospectus;
 - a clear description of your project's focus and expected time constraints;
 - all your current contact information; and
 - a copy of the D.Min. project template and/or project outline so the adviser is aware of the purpose of each chapter and the approximate page limits for each chapter or section.
 - Inform your adviser that AGTS will be sending them additional information regarding the role and responsibilities of the adviser.

Relating Well With Your Adviser(s)

- It is beneficial to establish a good relationship at the beginning of the process rather than making assumptions or having unrealistic expectations and then becoming disappointed or frustrated at the end. Do your best to determine early on how involved your adviser(s) intend to be. Communicate openly (though briefly) with them about the nature of your working relationship and what you both feel will work best for both

of you. Some D.Min. participants prefer an adviser who will “hold their feet to the fire,” and some prefer a lighter approach.

- Always be courteous, respectful, and appreciative, but do not be afraid to be open and firm if there is a point that you feel you cannot compromise on in your project. Your adviser is there to give *advice*, and most often you will do well to heed that advice. However, remember that ultimately, this is *your* project.
- Be patient with adviser (and editor, and coordinator, and reader!) recommendations for change to your project. The D.Min. team is here to serve as a vital support and resource to you to help make this project the best it can possibly be. Let any “red ink” be a reminder to you that a caring community committed to your success surrounds you. Guard your ego from taking any critique too personally, and do your best to greet the next round of changes with ready anticipation and appreciation!
- If necessary, consult with the D.Min. project coordinator regarding any questions regarding your working relationship with advisers. A good dose of wise experience and patient understanding will go a long way in helping you gain perspective, especially when you are feeling the pressure of project completion.
- *Tip:* If you e-mail files back and forth to your adviser(s), include the date in each document’s file name (ex. Ch1_1.29.06.doc) so as to avoid any confusion or working off of incorrect versions.
- Do not be afraid to communicate with your adviser as to your time constraints. It is *your* responsibility to meet the writing deadlines on the checklist, and this may necessitate a friendly, polite inquiry to them if they have held on to your material too long. This is especially important as the final deadline nears, as the holiday season is a busy time for everyone. *Rule of thumb: If you hold fast to the writing deadlines in the checklist, you can avoid frustrations due to deadlines. Give yourself and your adviser plenty of time to work with.*
- Though your adviser does receive an honorarium from AGTS, plan to express your gratitude to your adviser in some small way (besides including them in your Acknowledgements section). A snail-mailed thank you card will assure them you appreciate the important contribution they have made to your (current) *magnum opus!*