

Doctor of Buddhist Ministry

The Doctor of Buddhist Ministry is an advanced professional degree culminating in a dissertation project. This selective program enhances the practice of ministry for religious leaders who already hold a Master of Divinity or equivalent degree by cultivating their understanding and application of:

- A. the nature and purpose of ministry in relation to the world,
- B. competencies in self-reflexive and ministerial skills,
- C. competency in research methods appropriate to engaged Humanistic Buddhist work,
- D. spiritual and self-defined ethical perspective,
- E. professional ethics through humanistic engagement with diverse cultural, religious, and linguistic contexts.

The program applies a Buddhist perspective to ministerial issues facing practitioners in the contemporary world. Students gain a deeper understanding and commitment to the dharma (Buddhist teaching), while refining their ministerial application. Students develop research, writing, and communication skills to the level necessary to participate in professional academic discourse and practice-oriented domains of religion and service.

A Doctor of Buddhist Ministry degree is awarded on the basis of evidence that the candidate possesses knowledge of a broad field of applied learning and mastery of a particular area of concentration within it.

Honor Code

Buddhist ministry students are held to the highest standards of personal and professional conduct and ethics. By engaging in the study of Buddhist ministry, students assume a role of spiritual leadership within the campus community. Serving in this role, it is essential that ministry students model respect for all others informed by Buddhist wisdom and practices. Honoring the expression of differing opinions is not only a hallmark of good education but also a requirement for genuine interfaith work.

Therefore, ministry students are expected to engage in conduct that builds character, compassion, and community. Most significantly, they are expected to refrain from any conduct that would hurt, deride, or belittle another. Students who fail to uphold the values and codes of conduct of the Department of Buddhist Chaplaincy or the university are subject to disciplinary action based on the severity of the misconduct. Possible action may include suspension up to expulsion. Students may be placed on administrative leave for a specified period. During this time, students are expected to engage in self-reflection to decide if Buddhist ministry continues to be a good fit for their career aspirations. At the close of this period, students may petition for reentry into the program. Reentry is subject to university approval.

Admission Requirements

In addition to UWest graduate admission requirements, the following are required for admission to the Doctor of Buddhist Ministry program:

1. Statement of Purpose: Statement should describe how enrollment in UWest's DBMin program will further the applicant's personal goals and aspirations, achievements, and education and career objectives.
2. Completion of MDiv or MA in a related field with GPA of 3.0
3. One unit of Clinical Pastoral Care (CPE) with evaluation letter from CPE supervisor or three years of ministerial/temple work after completion of MDiv or MA
 - A. CPE Evaluation letter must assess written communication, emotional and spiritual development
 - B. One year of CPE Residency is highly recommended
4. Four letters of recommendation, including
 - A. two letters from academic sources such as advisor, dean, chair
 - B. one letter from peer such as dharma brother or sister
 - C. one letter from pastoral supervisor or master
 - D. Letters must address communication skills, spiritual practice, precept practice, community service
5. Interview, either in person or by telephone

Program Learning Outcomes

Students who graduate with a Doctor of Buddhist Ministry will be able to:

- recognize and express the nature and purpose of their ministry in relation to the world.
- engage in and demonstrate self-reflexive skills.
- identify and demonstrate competency in research methodologies appropriate to engaged Humanistic Buddhist work.
- skillfully articulate a self-defined ethical perspective.
- demonstrate professional ethics through humanistic engagement with diverse cultural, religious, and linguistic contexts.

Program Requirements

Area	Required Units
Core Courses	12
Practica	3
Electives	36
Candidacy Portfolio	0
Research Training	12
Total	63

Curriculum

Core Courses: 12 units required

Students complete the following foundational courses.

Courses	Prerequisite(s)	Units
BMIN 600 Seminar: Buddhist Issues & Frameworks	MDIV 650	3
BMIN 607 Research Methods I	Graduate Standing	3
BMIN 608 Research Methods II	BMIN 607	3
BMIN 610 Ethics in Buddhist Ministry	MDIV 670	3

Practica: 3 units required

In consultation with their advisors, students choose one course from the following list.

Courses	Prerequisite(s)	Units
BMIN 620 Engaged Compassion	MDIV 655	3
CONT 510 Topics in Comparative Contemplative Practice*	Graduate Standing	3
CONT 520 Topics in Contemplative Practice*	Graduate Standing	3
REL 521 Buddhist Meditation Practicum	Graduate Standing	3
MDIV 590 Service Practicum	Graduate Standing	3

Electives: 36 units required

In consultation with their advisors, students select 12 units of elective courses from each of these three areas.

A. Ministerial & Applied Approaches (12 units)

Courses	Prerequisite(s)	Units
MDIV 510 Communication Skills for Chaplaincy	Graduate Standing	3
MDIV 515 Privilege, Power, & Difference	MDIV 655	3
MDIV 530 Interfaith Rituals for Chaplaincy	MDIV 645	3
MDIV 565 Buddhist Homiletics: Writing & Giving Dharma Talks	MDIV 655	3
MDIV 645 Spiritual Care & Counseling	MDIV 510v	3
MDIV 650 Pastoral Theology	MDIV 655	3
MDIV 655 Spiritual Formation for Buddhist Chaplains	MDIV 645	3
MDIV 670 Spiritual Leadership	MDIV 515	3
PSYCH 505 Buddhist & Multicultural Community Mental Health	Graduate Standing	3
PSYCH 600 Group Psychotherapy	Waived for DBMin	3
PSYCH 614 Religion & Psychology Seminar	Waived for DBMin	3
PSYCH 617 Application of Mindfulness in Western Therapy	Waived for DBMin	3
PSYCH 551 Theories II: Buddhist-Inspired Evidence-Based Practice	Waived for DBMin	3

B. Buddhist Studies (12 units)

Courses	Prerequisite(s)	Units
CONT 520 Topics in Contemplative Practice	Graduate standing	3
CONT 550 Contemplation: Chinese Canon	Graduate standing	3
MDIV 640 Seminar in Buddhist Ministry	MDIV 515	3
REL 505 Women in Buddhism	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 506 Buddhism & Gender	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 521 Buddhist Meditation Practicum	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 530 Topics in Buddhist Meditation	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 540 Buddhist Hermeneutics	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 627 Buddhism & Ritual	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 630 Seminar: Buddhist Texts in Canonical Languages	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 636 Seminar: Buddhist Texts in Translation	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 639 Topics in the Study of Religion	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 640 Topics in Buddhist Studies	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 645 Seminar: Regional Buddhist Traditions	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 653 Vajrayana Buddhism	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 655 Perspectives in the Study of Chan/Zen Buddhism	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 657 Humanistic Buddhism & Current Issues	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 659 Buddhism in the United States	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 670 Spread of Buddhism to Central Asia/ China	Waived for DBMin	3

C. Interdisciplinary & Interfaith Studies (12 units)

Courses	Prerequisite(s)	Units
MDIV 540 Sacred Abrahamic Texts in Spiritual Care & Counseling	MDIV 510	3
MDIV 675 Advanced Topics in Professional Chaplaincy	MDIV 645	3
MBA 560 Managing Nonprofit Organizations	Graduate standing	3
REL 515 Religions of China	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 520 Religions of India	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 545 Sacred Time & Sacred Space in the History of Religions	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 590 Comparative Study of Religion	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 603 Seminar: Philosophy of Religion	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 610 Seminar: Religion & Ethics	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 640 Topics in Comparative Religion	Waived for DBMin	3
REL 660 Seminar: Buddhist-Christian Dialogue	Waived for DBMin	3

Languages: optional

Students may apply up to 12 units of graduate language study in Pali, Sanskrit, Classical Chinese, or Tibetan. A maximum of 6 units each may be applied to B. Buddhist Studies and C. Interdisciplinary and Interfaith Studies. Language study is recommended during the first year of coursework or as soon as the relevant courses are offered.

Candidacy Portfolio

Upon completion of the 51-unit course requirement, students must petition to submit the candidacy portfolio. Students may enroll in BMIN 705 for one term while preparing and passing portfolio. With the chair's approval, BMIN 705 may be repeated one time only. Credit is not applicable to graduation.

Course	Units
BMIN 705 Candidacy Portfolio	3

Research Training: 12 units

Upon being granted candidacy status, the candidate enters the dissertation project phase. Students should be able to engage in advanced graduate level research, writing, and communication. Candidates register for BMIN 698A, 698B, 710, or a combination of these courses for a total of 12 units while engaged in the dissertation project process.

Course	Units
BMIN 698A Proposal Writing	3
BMIN 698B Dissertation Writing	3
BMIN 710 Research Training	3

Continuous Enrollment

After completing the 12-unit research requirement, candidates must maintain enrollment through successful submission of the dissertation project by enrolling in BMIN 715 each fall and spring semester. Enrollment in summer semester is not required. Credit is not applicable to graduation requirements.

Course	Units
BMIN 715 Continuous Enrollment	1

Candidacy Portfolio: After students have completed a minimum of 51 units of doctoral coursework, they must petition to submit their candidacy portfolio. The candidacy portfolio includes a series of short papers illustrating the student's ministerial development as well as their proposed project's development, including a literature review. Refer to the DBMin Handbook for more information.

Students are also expected to consult with their doctoral course professors and the DBMin Program Advisor to determine the focus, direction, reading, and research for each of the Candidacy Portfolio papers.

Notes:

- The Candidacy Portfolio must be compiled, revised, and submitted by May 30th of the spring semester the student completes 51 credit hours (including the 12 credits of required DBMin Core Courses and 3 credits of Pactica).
- Check with the DBMin Program Advisor for submission date if you reach 51 credits during the fall or summer).
- If the portfolio is not submitted by the May 30th deadline (or the fall/summer deadline as described above), students must register for DBMin 705 during the following semester to complete the portfolio. These credits do not count towards the degree plan.

The candidacy portfolio is graded on a passed/not passed basis. If the candidacy portfolio is deemed not passing, the committee decides if and when it may be resubmitted. Additional course work may be required before the student is eligible to resubmit the portfolio.

A student advances to candidacy status upon successful completion of the candidacy portfolio requirement and payment of the candidacy fee. Candidacy status lapses automatically if the student loses graduate standing by academic disqualification or fails to comply with university policy on continuous registration. A readmitted student who was a candidate must again advance to candidacy and thereafter enroll as a candidate for at least one academic semester before the degree may be conferred. Readmission after a break in enrollment is not guaranteed.

Research Training (Applied Doctoral Project): Upon advancing to candidacy, the candidate enters the doctoral project phase and is eligible to undertake advanced graduate-level research, writing, and communication. While engaged in the doctoral project process, candidates are required to register for BMIN 698A, 698B, 710, or a combination of these courses for a total of 12 units.

Candidates are expected to begin work immediately on the applied doctoral project (ADP) proposal, outlining their intended ADP. This project is expected to be original, related to Buddhist Ministry, include significant research, and make a relevant, ethical, ongoing contribution to a particular community agreed upon by the student and doctoral committee. Candidates are encouraged to propose alternative and creative forms of presentation that includes an academic project document. The document must contain a relevant academic literature review, a substantial amount of written analysis and reflection, and be deemed equivalent to the standard dissertation model in terms of critical apparatus and engagement with scholarly sources. The mode of presentation must be clearly outlined in the ADP proposal and approved by the doctoral committee.

The completed proposal is reviewed by the doctoral committee, after which candidates are asked to present their proposal and respond to questions from the committee at the proposal defense. During the defense, the committee decides whether the proposal is accepted, accepted with revisions, or rejected. Candidates are expected to submit the dissertation project proposal during the semester following their advancement to candidacy.

The doctoral committee supervises the student's program, approves the ADP, and conducts the oral ADP defense. Ordinarily, students defend the ADP just prior to its completion. Students must be in residence when defending. The defense should be scheduled during fall or spring semester and is open to all members of the academic community. Following the defense, the doctoral committee awards the dissertation project a pass, pass with distinction, or not pass.

After the dissertation project is passed by the doctoral committee, the student makes all necessary revisions and submits the final version to the library in accordance with the library's formatting guidelines. The revised dissertation project must be accepted by the library no later than one semester after the dissertation project defense. During this term, students are required to maintain continuous enrollment by enrolling in BMIN715.

In addition to these requirements, students must submit a portfolio of their work to the department for assessment and review. (Portfolio guidelines are found in the Buddhist Ministry Graduate Student Handbook.)

Important guidelines and procedures regarding the composition of the doctoral committee, dissertation project proposal, dissertation project defense, and final submission of the dissertation project can be found in the Buddhist Ministry Graduate Student Handbook.

Graduation Requirements

Students must successfully fulfill all of the following requirements to graduate.

- 51 units in graduate courses as specified for each candidate by the doctoral committee appointed by the department chair or graduate advisor;
- 12 units in research;
- minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0;
- candidacy portfolio requirement;
- applied doctoral project.

Degrees are awarded at the close of the semester in which all requirements have been fulfilled, the applied doctoral project has been accepted by the library, the Petition to Graduate form has been filed with the Registrar's office, and the graduation fee has been paid.

Minimum Grade Requirement: Students must earn a minimum grade of B in all core courses and a minimum grade of C or P in elective courses. Students who do not earn a passing grade as specified may repeat that course one time only to achieve a passing grade.

Credit Limits: Students may apply no more than 6 units (two courses) of Directed Reading & Research and 6 units (two courses) of independent study towards graduation. Students are allowed no more than 12 units of unfinished coursework (i.e. incompletes and withdrawals) over the duration of the program.

Transfer of Credit from Other Institutions: Students may be granted a maximum of 30 units of transfer credit for applicable graduate-level coursework towards the 51-unit course requirement. Courses with a B (3.0) or higher are eligible for consideration. Applicability is determined by the department chair or advisor.

Application of Credit from Prior UWest Enrollments: Students may apply up to 36 units of applicable coursework completed at UWest in a master's program or under open enrollment toward the 51-unit course requirement, including transfer credit granted from other institutions. Courses with a B (3.0) or higher are eligible for consideration. Applicability is determined by the department chair or advisor. Only graduate level coursework will be considered; graduate courses previously applied to a bachelor's degree cannot be applied to graduation.

Continuous Enrollment: After finishing all coursework, but before submitting the ADP, students must maintain continuous enrollment until the project is successfully defended, submitted, and accepted by the library. Failure to register and pay the associated tuition and fees may interfere with residence requirements and lead to lapse of candidacy status.

Residence Requirement: The Doctor of Buddhist Ministry requires a minimum of three years of full-time graduate study or the equivalent in part-time study in addition to time to prepare the dissertation project.

Time to Degree: Students are expected to advance to candidacy within four years from their original start date, and to complete all degree requirements, including submission of the applied dissertation project, within seven years from their original start date. The maximum time to degree allowed after all approved extensions is ten years from the original start date. The time allowed for coursework is reduced by one term for each 9 units of transfer credit received. The maximum time to degree Details are provided in the Graduate Handbook.

