

Field Education Supervision

Updated August 2018

Each seminarian in field placement has an identified supervisor. For students in the MDiv or Certificate of Anglican Studies (CAS) programs, this supervisor is a clergy person in a leadership position in the placement site, typically a rector, associate rector, or agency director. Effective field education supervision is the most important factor in successful field placements. In accordance with the standards set by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), CDSP's field education program assures that students are supervised by qualified persons "trained in supervisory methods and the educational expectations of the institution," and provides "established procedures for selection, development, evaluation, and termination of supervised ministry settings."

Placement Site and Supervisor Approval

All placement sites and supervisors must be approved by the Director of Field Education. Beginning in 2018, approval of sites for residential students is based on the following four conditions and will be renewed annually.

1. A "Field Placement Site and Supervisor Information" form is completed and submitted to the Director of Field Education. If a form has already been completed and submitted, it must be updated at least once every 2 years.
2. The supervisor(s) at the site are clergy who have been ordained for more than 5 years and have been in their current position for at least two years.¹
3. Supervisors participate in three training sessions offered annually by the Director of Field Education.
4. Students report, and supervisors provide, evidence that the supervisor is committed to the vocational and leadership development of the student. Such evidence will be provided both in conversation with the Director of Field Education² and formally through the end of semester evaluations and will include
 - a. Meaningful engagement in regular supervisory meetings
 - b. Visible support for the student relative to achieving their learning goals
 - c. An openness to learning from and with the seminarian, engaging the gifts the student brings to ministry and being open to change as a result.

A list of approved field placement sites will be made available to residential students at the beginning of each academic year.

¹ Exceptions may be made for placements in non-congregational settings or for supervisors who have significant field education supervisor experience in prior placement sites.

² The Director of Field Education is accessible by phone and email and will visit placement sites

Placement sites and supervisors for low-residence MDiv students are approved in collaboration with the student's diocese and must meet all diocesan-specific expectations. These supervisors are also expected to meet conditions 2-4 listed above. Training for low-residence supervisors will be offered on-line or through virtual gatherings.

Field Education Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Interview students who are seeking placements. This process will begin in February of the year prior to placement and is initiated by the student(s). Students can and should be expected to share their specific interests and reasons for interviewing at the particular placement site.
2. After April 1, contact and invite one of the students who interviewed to invite them to be placed at your site.
3. Meet with the student in April and May to develop specific learning goals, identify a lay committee, and develop a draft contract and learning covenant. This draft is due on May 31st.
4. Be easily accessible to the student and provide ongoing direction, mentoring, professional guidance and clear communication about expectations
5. Invite the student to attend as many congregational (or agency) meetings and activities as the student's other academic and personal obligations allow. Other than those activities related to the agreed upon learning goals and within the scope of the contracted hours, these invitations should not be seen as requirements for the field education student.
6. Assign the student a range of projects and activities that are appropriate to their learning goals, to the local situation, and to the agreed upon weekly time commitment (the minimum commitment is an average of 8-10 hours per week, alternative commitments must be explicit in the contract between the supervisor and the student).
7. Meet regularly with the student for supervision, reflection and training (the equivalent of one hour per week, meeting no less than once every other week).
8. Schedule the student to preach at least once, and preferably 2-3 times a semester, and provide meaningful, specific feedback on their preaching.
9. Complete an evaluation of the student's progress at the end of each semester, using the forms and process provided by the CDSP Field Education Program.

Student-Supervisor Relationships

The relationship between a student and their supervisor should be based on open, authentic communication, grounded in the following:³

Needs – the primary purpose of the field placement is learning and development for the student. The student and supervisor should share a common understanding of what the student needs in order to achieve their learning goals as articulated in the learning covenant.

³ Adapted from Matthew Floding, ed. *Engage: A Theological Field Education Toolkit*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2017

Interests - Both the student and the supervisor/site have interests. Explicitly exploring these interests early in the relationship will decrease the likelihood of misunderstandings later on.

Concerns – Both supervisor and student will benefit from naming concerns that arise and addressing them through mutual reflection and/or negotiation.

Humility – Students and supervisors each have the opportunity to learn from one another by listening, observing carefully, and asking hard questions. Students recognize the supervisor as a relative “expert” in many areas and also bring other areas of expertise with them into the placement.

Expectations – The contract and learning covenant spells out specific expectations. Continuing to refer to these, and to re-negotiate them as needed will increase the effectiveness of the relationship between the student and the supervisor.

If either the student or the supervisor has concerns about the relationship and its effectiveness which cannot be resolved between them, one or both of them should contact the Director of Field Education who will work with them to find a resolution.

Supervisory Meetings

The primary purpose of the supervisory meeting is to engage in detailed analysis of concrete examples in ministry that will further the student’s developing ministerial competence. Inherent in this purpose is the idea that learning comes not through experience alone, but through reflection on experience. In their regular supervisory meetings, the student and the supervisor explore issues related to professional skills (how to do things), professional identity and confidence, vocation, and practical theology. At least half of the meeting should be spent in this last area, finding and exploring the theological dimension(s) of ordinary life and ministry situations through theological reflection.

The agenda for a supervisory meeting should be created by the student and open to mutual revision at the start of the meeting. The agenda will typically include at least the following:

1. Nuts and bolts (administrative details, assigning and planning activities, etc...)
2. Sharing of concerns and/or providing feedback
3. Mutual structured theological reflection on an experience or situation in a specific area of ministry. This should represent at least 50% of the meeting time.

Providing Feedback on Actions in Ministry

Effective feedback for a seminarian, as for anyone, should be specific, based on observable behavior, grounded in compassion, and designed to increase the student’s options. One model for providing feedback is the following.

1. When you _____ (observable behavior)
2. I felt/I observed others/I noticed _____ (specific feeling/observable behavior in others), and I wonder whether this was your intention
3. If so, how did it feel to you?
4. If not, what alternative behavior(s) might you consider for the future?

Structuring Theological Reflection

Students in field education at CDSP are familiar with the following structure for theological reflection.⁴

1. **Description** –
 - a. what happened, who was involved?
 - b. what was the embedded theology in the situation?
2. **Analysis** –
 - a. what does a more deliberative theology reveal about the situation or experience?
 - b. What questions emerged for you from the experience or situation?
 - c. What are some alternative ways of understanding the situation or experience in light of our Christian faith?
3. **Frame a View** –
 - a. What is your personal theological perspective on the experience/situation? How does it relate to the core concerns of faith?
 - b. What theological resources inform your view (scripture, tradition, reason, experience)
 - c. How is this deliberative theological understanding similar to or different from your embedded theology?
4. **Judgement and Response** –
 - a. Make a choice – is the action within your experience/situation consistent with your theological perspective? If not, what action would be?
 - b. What criteria have you used to come to this assessment?
 - c. What might you ask for from others or do differently in the future (if anything)?

Students in the second semester of field education will be familiar with additional structures for theological reflection. The specific format for reflection is less important than the deliberative process of seeing experiences in ministry through a specifically theological lens. You may find some of the following useful as you help the student engage in the process of deliberative theology⁵

1. Gospel - How is the meaning of the Gospel brought to bear in the situation for reflection?
 - a. What is the “good news” that is being communicated? (What does it have to do with Jesus?)
 - b. How does the “good news” reach people? (What role do scriptures or the traditions of the church play in relative to the message?)
 - c. How do the benefits of the “good news” change people’s lives? (What does it require of us and our Christian faith?)
2. Nature of the Human Condition – what is the relationship between God and humans and how is it evident in the situation for reflection?
 - a. What definition(s) of sin underlies the interpretation of what is “wrong” vs “right”?
 - b. What definition(s) of salvation define the ultimate goal or purpose of the human/divine relationship?
 - c. How are humans to access that salvation?
3. Vocation – what does it mean to be faithful in the current context and situation?
 - a. What actions are Christians called to by virtue of our faith?
 - b. What is the rationale for our actions as Christians? (because of? or in order to?)
 - c. What is the most fitting Christian action in the given situation?

⁴ From Howard W. Stone & James O. Duke, *How to Think Theologically* 3rd ed. Fortress Press, 2013

⁵ Adapted from Stone & Duke, *How to Think Theologically* 3rd ed.

Connecting to the Field Education Curriculum

The field education curriculum spans two semesters at CDSP. In addition to the time spent at their placement site, students in field education have reading, an hour of lecture and an hour of peer theological reflection each week. The reading and lectures cover a range of topics in organization development, congregational development, and leadership. Each semester, supervisors will be provided with a copy of the course syllabus. Supervisor training sessions will include discussion of ways students can use course content in support of their learning goals and their overall ministerial practice.

Supervisors will also be provided with the opportunity to learn some of the models and approaches that are taught to the students.

Between the two semesters of the field education courses, supervisors and students will be negotiating or re-negotiating the learning covenant for the second semester. The learning covenant for the second semester will include leadership of a specific project at the field placement site. The supervisor is expected to engage with the student in defining the project and to actively support the student's efforts in the congregation or agency.

CDSP Field Education Supervisor Timeline⁶

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| Fall Semester prior to placement year <i>(for those who wish to supervise residential students)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete or update "Field Placement Site and Supervisor Information" using the link on the CDSP website • Those whose last experience supervising a field education student was 2 or more years prior contact the director of field education to discuss expectations and receive approval as a supervisor. • Expect students to be visiting your congregation |
| By February 1 <i>(for those who wish to supervise residential students)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification from director of field education regarding the approximate number of students who are planning to request an interview. |
| February and March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student interviews – students are responsible for contacting potential supervisors to arrange interviews. Each student is expected to complete three interviews. • Consult with director of field education regarding preferences and priorities emerging from interviews |
| April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact and invite student to be placed at your site. • When student and supervisor agree to work together, confirm with the director of field education • Begin meeting with student regarding contract and learning covenant |

⁶ This timeline will be modified for Supervisors of Low Residence students as needed to assure compliance with local diocesan expectations.

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| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue meeting regarding contract and learning covenant • Supervisors' gathering (collaboration, training and resources) • May 31st - DRAFT Contract and Learning Covenant due to director of field education |
| June, July, August | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication between supervisor, student and lay committee as needed to finalize learning contract. • Program planning at placement sites incorporates student strengths and learning goals • August 31st - FINAL Contract and Learning Covenant for Fall semester due to director of field education |
| Placement Begins: September, October, November, December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students on site 8-10 hours per week • Supervisory conferences ~1 hour per week • October – Supervisors' Gathering (collaboration, training and resources) • All evaluations due to director of field education one week after the end of the semester |
| January | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with student to develop learning covenant goals and agree on congregational development project for the spring semester • Supervisors' Gathering (collaboration, training and resources) • January 31st - FINAL Contract and Learning Covenant for Spring semester due to director of field education |
| February, March, April, May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students on site 8-10 hours per week • Supervisory conferences ~1 hour per week • Supervisors' gathering (collaboration, training and resources) • All evaluations due to director of field education one week after the end of the semester |