
Supervised Ministries at Yale Divinity School

Information for sites hosting an intern

Summer Ministry Summer Intensive Internship

The **Summer Ministry Intensive**, a program of Yale Divinity School, allows our Master of Divinity and other interested students the opportunity to gain concentrated ministry experience in community organizations or lively congregations during their summer break from academic coursework. Our ministry internships are among the most important ways that YDS partners with churches, schools, and community organizations in the theological education and formation of individuals for ministry in the world.

In current times, the shape of ministry takes many forms and is located in surprising places. Sites participating in the supervised ministry program include parishes, campuses, and both faith-based and secular community organizations. Students participating in the program are an equally diverse group. As an educational program of Yale University, internship sites must provide a positive learning environment for their student interns regardless of sex, race, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. The Office of Supervised Ministries works with students and supervisors/mentors to facilitate effective and mutually fulfilling educational experiences.

Goals of Supervised Ministry

- to allow students to test directly their vocational commitments;
- to bring together theological thinking and action (theory and praxis);
- to enable students to gain personal confidence, identity, and authority as pastoral theologians;
- to broaden the base of empirical knowledge and to encourage students in their critical reflection;
- to stimulate the discovery and the lifelong cultivation of learning and competence requisite for ministry in varying situations;
- to provide skilled supervision that will support personal and spiritual formation, critical reflection, lifelong learning, shared ministry, and professional competence;
- to develop within students an ongoing self-assessment process, utilizing self-perceptions and feedback from others, for the purpose of stimulating further growth.

Description - Supervised Ministry

- is a required 6-credit course (equivalent to 2 masters level courses) – not a summer job;
- has an experienced supervisor who directs and supports the student's experience and meets weekly with the student for a larger view of the work;
- has a theologically trained mentor who engages in regular theological reflection with the student (often these two roles are filled by a single supervisor/mentor);
- is guided by a Learning Covenant developed by the intern and the supervisor/mentor;
- requires at least 370 hours with an organization or congregation over a summer (between May 25 and August 15);
- has a weekly two-hour peer group meetings via web conference (more than one excused absence nullifies the internship);
- receives a credit/no credit grade assigned by the Director of Supervised Ministries, based on a collaborative assessment between student, supervisor/mentor, and peer group instructor.

Site Requirements

We try to locate sites that will offer students the kind of robust experiences that they need to develop important professional identities and skills. **There is no cost to a site to host a YDS student intern.** A supervised ministry site must be able to:

- Give a student an opportunity to work with people on meaningful issues;
- Provide significant tasks that a student can accomplish and learn from on a part-time and short-term (less than one year) basis;
- Provide a stable, welcoming environment with consistent direction and oversight of a student's activities;
- Enable a student to function in roles appropriate to their status as students in formation;
- Provide opportunities for the intern to gain new knowledge and experience rather than simply practice what they already know;
- Facilitate a student's learning through ongoing conversation and reflection.

Importance of the Supervisor/Mentor

The YDS program is built around the mentoring relationship between individuals. Committed and effective supervision is crucial to the success of supervised ministry. The importance of this relationship explains how potential supervisors are chosen: they have the qualities of a good mentor, they have extensive experience or participate in training in supervision, they commit to meeting weekly with interns, and they collaborate in regular assessment. The supervisory relationship is definitely the heart of the educational and formational process for interns. This is not to discount the importance of the tasks interns perform, nor of the value to them of being exposed to sites where ministry is flourishing; it simply means that the learning all comes together in the supervision they receive. Because we expect the supervisor to have direct supervision of the activities and skill building of the intern, some site arrangements might include a co-supervisor. If a site is such that the supervisor is not theologically trained, a theological mentor works with the student in weekly sessions in theological reflection on practice.

Problems and questions

All questions and concerns should be directed to the Director of Supervised Ministries. *At any time*, please feel free to contact me by phone or e-mail:

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Additional information can also be found on our website at <http://divinity.yale.edu/supervised-ministries/office-supervised-ministries>.