

Tips on Choosing a Supervised Ministry Site

For Prospective Student Interns

1. Think through the options offered by YDS. What appeals to you the LEAST? Why? Is this a growing edge? Stretching is good.
2. Think through your previous experiences. What have you already done? What would be new for you? What kinds of people are the most comfortable for you to interact with? Who would stretch you the most?
3. Think about the kinds of supervisors that you've had in the past. What works for you? What doesn't? Is this a person you respect and really want to learn from?
4. Keep in mind that the general expectation of someone with an MDiv degree is that you can "do" church.
5. Internships at your home church or a church you have been attending are strongly discouraged. There are many educational reasons why most field education programs do not allow this.
6. If you are in an ordination process, determine exactly what is *required* of you as well as whether your supervising committee/person has *preferences*. We'll do what we can to meet your judicatory's expectations or desires, but we cannot do that if you do not know what those are.

Good questions to ask:

- 1) "Is CPE required of me?"
- 2) "Would you be comfortable with a parish internship in a denomination other than my (our) own?" This is frequently the case in smaller denominations, but sometimes, even students in larger denominations want a particular type of experience that might not be found within a parish tied with one's own tradition.
- 3) "Do you require a parish internship, or am I free to look at other options?"
- 4) Also ask about timing—do you need to have completed an internship in order to be considered for the next step in your ordination process? If so, you'll need to do your internship your second year.

Past experience has shown that getting these expectations and preferences in writing (or email) can be important.

7. Academic schedule. When are you planning on taking your "tougher" classes? Do you want to pair internship with those classes, or not? Are you comfortable with combining experiential learning with traditional coursework? Are you planning to study abroad? When?
8. How many extracurricular things do you want or need to do? Are you applying for fellowships or denominational opportunities, taking languages or ordination exams, getting married, etc.?
9. How many internships do you want or need to do? Be alert to the number of credit hours you will be amassing with internships; the maximum that counts toward a degree is 15. If you want to do several internships, be sure that you can take all of your graduation requirements, too.
10. Finances. Do you need to work full-time in the summer in order to meet your commitments? Do you need to work many hours in the academic year? Internship requirements cannot be reduced, so think about what you can do to plan financially for reduced income. Some students do work AND do internships during the academic year. Whether or not you would be able to do this depends on your academic and time-management skills.