



Why the Doctor of Ministry at Abilene Christian University (ACU)?

Through our unique partnership with Stirling Theological College (Stirling) and University of Divinity (UD) in Melbourne, our D.Min. degree is now more accessible and affordable for Australian ministers and Christian leaders.

With only two required trips to Abilene, Texas, for classes, you'll be able to complete a number of your courses in Melbourne and online. Additionally, a portion of your D.Min. degree will be offered as dual enrolment at Stirling through UD, allowing you to earn a Graduate Diploma in Divinity (GDDIV) concurrently with your D.Min.

For Australian citizens, the GDDIV portion of your study will be eligible for FEE-HELP, significantly reducing your out-of-pocket cost.

Our world-class faculty from both ACU and Stirling are active in scholarship as well as ministry. Our program also leverages the power of peer-learning in a community of learners and disciples from Australia, the U.S. and beyond.

What does this partnership between Stirling and ACU look like?

In seeking to expand doctoral-level preparation in ministry contexts, Abilene Christian, Stirling and UD have developed a relationship to offer ACU's program in Australia. After successful application to our D.Min. program, you will have the option to apply with Stirling to complete a GDDIV (6 units of coursework co-credited as 18 hours of the ACU D.Min.).

Students from Australia and the U.S. will participate together in the opening residency and project/thesis classes, as well as several of the six co-credited ministry classes.

What is the process for this D.Min. program?

Our D.Min. is a 33-hour degree that includes 27 hours of coursework, a project/thesis (6 hours), orientation, and two spiritual formation retreats. Our program includes a series of intensive classes that include online components, and most of our courses also require a brief face-to-face residency in either Abilene, Texas, or Mulgrave, Victoria.

Our residency periods occur twice a year for just one to two weeks, allowing students to travel for only brief periods and remain connected with their families and ministry contexts throughout the remainder of the year.

How will travel work?

The partnership between ACU and Stirling/UD allows you to complete our D.Min. degree with only two trips to Abilene, plus an optional third trip for graduation. ACU draws students from around the world, and our experienced ACU Center for International Education is ready to help with your visa application process each time you travel to the U.S. As with all international studies, significant time should be allowed for appropriate visa processing (four to six months).

33

Number of credit hours

36

Months average time to completion



Complete intensives and online classes

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

If you are someone in professional ministry who would like to further your practice through advanced study that deeply engages with your context, then the Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) is designed for you.

As a professional degree that originated in the U.S. and is now well recognized globally, the D.Min. combines academic rigor and praxis, with an emphasis on enhancing the practice of ministry. Intentionally interdisciplinary, the D.Min. serves scholar-practitioners in a variety of Christian-oriented leadership contexts such as congregational ministry, missions, church planting, chaplaincy, and nonprofit organizations.

Building on your prior theological studies, the program is designed to deepen your practice as a ministerial leader by offering tools to refine theological reflection and guide research, enhance leadership skills as you serve contextually, and nurture the deep spiritual formation necessary to sustain a God-shaped ministry in diverse cultural contexts.

Where and when will I take classes?

The following schedule shows a typical course sequence and travel requirements if you wish to enrol and begin in 2020. See our website for alternate schedules if you wish to start the D.Min. in 2021 or later.

June 2020 (Abilene)

- D.Min. Orientation (0 hours)*
- Theological Foundations for the Practice of Ministry (6 hours)*
- Spiritual formation retreat (0 hours)*

January 2021 (Melbourne)

- Christian Spiritual Formation (3 hours)**
- Project/Thesis Seminar I (online) (1 hour)*

June 2021 (Melbourne)

- Missional Ecclesiology (3 hours)**
- Culture, Context, and Community (3 hours)**
- Project/Thesis Seminar II (online) (2 hours)

January 2022 (Melbourne)

- Leading Change in Christian Organizations (3 hours)**

June 2022 (Abilene)

- Christian Leadership Development (3 hours)**
- Forming Communities of Faith (3 hours)**
- Spiritual formation retreat (0 hours)

January-May 2023 (non-residential)

- D.Min. Project/Thesis (6 hours thesis credit)
- Graduate in May 2023; optional trip to Abilene for Commencement ceremony

* First-year requirements

** Eligible for dual enrolment at ACU and STC

How do I qualify for this program?

To enter a D.Min. program you will need a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) or its educational equivalent. A Bachelor of Theology (B.Theol.) plus a Master of Theology (M.Th.) from UD will satisfy this entry requirement. If you hold another theological master's (e.g., M.T.S.T. or M.A.Theol.), please contact us. We would love to review your work and determine your best path toward equivalency and the D.Min.

Additionally, you will need to be involved in ministry and have at least three years of ministry experience following your first theological master's degree.

For more information, email gst@acu.edu.



D.Min. Director and Advisor

Dr. Carson Reed
carson.reed@acu.edu



Principal, Stirling Theological College

Dr. Andrew Menzies
ACUDMin@stirling.edu.au

How do I apply?

Visit gradapply.acu.edu to complete your application any time between now and Dec. 1. The application may be completed fully online and includes the following components.

1. A completed application form and application fee.
2. Official transcripts from all colleges and universities you've attended. We require a credential evaluation for transcripts from non-U.S. institutions other than UD.
3. A Documentation of Ministry Employment form.
4. Recommendations from four people who are familiar with your character and performance in ministry. At least one recommendation should provide an academic reference.
5. Admission essay (see our website for details).
6. An interview with the D.Min. director may be required.

How much will this program cost?

If pursuing the GDDIV concurrently with the D.Min., your program costs will be divided into two parts. The cost for the six classes comprising the GDDIV (18 hours of the D.Min.) will be paid to Stirling/UD by you or through FEE-HELP. For the remaining 15 hours of your D.Min. degree, ACU will bill you a total of only \$6,000 USD (\$2,000 USD per year for three years). This pricing option is available exclusively through our partnership with Stirling/UD and will require acceptance into both ACU's D.Min. and UD's GDDIV.

See our website for additional detail or for alternate pricing options if you do not wish to pursue the GDDIV.

Either way, be sure to also budget for travel and accommodation.

Accreditation

Abilene Christian University's Graduate School of Theology is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the U.S. and Canada to award its master's and doctoral degrees. The University of Divinity, founded in 1910, is Australia's only University of Specialisation and offers the highest standards of awards in theology and related disciplines.



ABILENE CHRISTIAN
Graduate School of Theology

acu.edu/dmin/australia
325-674-3735 • gst@acu.edu



Abilene Christian University
Information for Australian Doctor of Ministry students

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I get to ACU at Abilene, Tx?

Your two main options are to either fly to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) and then drive (approx. 3 hours) or catch an American Airlines flight into Abilene Regional Airport (ABI).

2. Should I hire a car?

Remember that you drive on the right side of the road in the US so you should feel comfortable about that. The accommodation we recommend is an easy 20-30 minute walk from ACU. Having a car makes the wider Abilene area accessible. Cars are available from ABI or DFW.

3. Where is the best accommodation near ACU?

ACU has comfortable and affordable apartments on campus that are available to DMin students. There is also a cluster of modern hotels and motels just west of ACU on the other side of the Texas Forts Train (Interstate 20). The most comfortable (from experience) are the Residence Inn, Courtyard and TownePlace Suites (all on Scottish Road). They also have washing facilities and basic supplies, etc.

4. What is the weather like in Abilene?

It is most likely that you will be at ACU DMin classes in either January or June. January is winter and June is summer. In January the weather can fluctuate from 10C-15C as the daily max with overnight temperatures getting down to zero. I found the breeze quite cool and recommend a warm wind breaking jacket. In June it is warm to hot and can be anywhere from 28C to 38C but mostly around 32C-33C.

5. Will I need a US student visa?

Yes. You will be studying at ACU as an enrolled student so the visa waiver program that many Australians use for tourist purposes is not applicable. Do not attempt to enter the USA on a visa waiver if the purpose of your travel is enrolled study for credit. You will risk denial of future entry to the USA and jeopardise continuance in the DMin.

6. How hard is it for an Australian to obtain a US student visa?

The ACU Centre for International Education is well briefed about the ACU, Stirling and UD Doctor of Ministry program and is ready to advise and assist you. They have expertise in any areas supporting international students. They will guide you through this process. Essentially you will need to be successfully enrolled in the ACU DMin and they will provide the appropriate papers to apply for a student visa at the US consulate nearest to where you live (Melbourne Sydney or Perth). Note: this process can take 4+ months so do not delay moving the process along at any stage or you will risk not being admitted to the USA for your studies.

7. Where or to whom do I apply?

You have to apply to ACU for acceptance into their DMin program (gradapply@acu.edu). Once accepted you can then go through the application process at Stirling for the GDDIV if you intend on going that route and using FEE-HELP for coursework costs - contact registrar@stirling.edu.au.

8. Who do I contact for basic, initial questions about the ACU DMin?

Initial and general questions can be directed to Dr Andrew Menzies who has visited ACU twice and teaches in the DMin program. Dr Graham Hill (Stirling Research Coordinator) is also available on ghill@stirling.edu.au and he will become increasingly involved in the program. You also are welcome to contact ACU direct by contacting Dr Carson Reed or Karissa Herchenroeder karissa.herch@acu.edu .

Dr Carson Reed
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Sample Schedule: Doctor of Ministry

Australian Students Beginning in June 2020

Total Hours = 33

The following schedule illustrates the course sequence and travel requirements for Australian students completing ACU's D.Min. Following this sequence, you will only be required to travel to the US twice, with an optional third trip for commencement. Additional semesters and travel will be necessary if you take fewer classes each semester or if you repeat courses. Please consult with your academic advisor before changing the sequence of courses. Each block represents 3 hours unless otherwise noted.

Year 1	June 2020 (Abilene)	BIBM 701 * D.Min. Orientation (0 hours)	BIBM 716 * Theological Foundations for the Practice of Ministry (6 hours)	Spiritual Formation Retreat * (0 hours)
	January 2021 (Melbourne)	BIBM 717 ** Christian Spiritual Formation	BIBM 724 * Project/Thesis Seminar I (pre-req: BIBM 716) (1 hour) (online)	
Year 2	June 2021 (Melbourne)	BIBM 719 ** Missional Ecclesiology	BIBM 733 ** Culture, Context, and Community	BIBM 726 Project/Thesis Seminar II (pre-req: BIBM 724) (2 hours) (online)
	January 2022 (Melbourne)	BIBM 731 ** Leading Change in Christian Organizations		
Year 3	June 2022 (Abilene)	BIBM 706 ** Christian Leadership Development	BIBM 742 ** Forming Communities of Faith	Spiritual Formation Retreat (0 hours)
	Spring 2023	BIBM 799 D.Min. Project/Thesis (6 hours thesis credit)		

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	January 2022 (Melbourne)	BIBM 731 ** Leading Change in Christian Organizations	BIBM 724 * Project/Thesis Seminar I (pre-req: BIBM 716) (1 hour) (online)		
Year 2	June 2022 (Abilene)	BIBM 706 ** Christian Leadership Development	BIBM 742 ** Forming Communities of Faith	BIBM 726 Project/Thesis Seminar II (pre-req: BIBM 724) (2 hours) (online)	Spiritual Formation Retreat (0 hours)
	January 2023 (Melbourne)	BIBM 717 ** Christian Spiritual Formation			
Year 3	June 2023 (Melbourne)	BIBM 719 ** Missional Ecclesiology	BIBM 733 ** Culture, Context, and Community		
	Spring 2024	BIBM 799 D.Min. Project/Thesis (6 hours thesis credit)			

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