

Guidelines for the M.Div. *Master's Sermon*

In order to bring a student's formal studies to a summative conclusion and obtain a degree from the Leland Center, there is a final requirement for all M.Div. students—a *Master's Sermon*. Regardless of the specific area of ministry the student might enter, there will be occasions when he or she is expected to deliver an oral presentation of the Gospel and to do so appropriately and effectively. Accordingly, instead of a thesis, all M.Div. students have to deliver a public sermon/presentation on a given text. In accordance with the field or area in which a student is or wants to be engaged, the faculty will choose a scriptural text on which the discourse will be delivered. Preparing and presenting the *Master's Sermon* is the student's opportunity and obligation to demonstrate his or her competence homiletically, didactically, exegetically, pastorally, and theologically. The delivery of the *Master's Sermon* will be assessed on the basis of its content, relevance, exegetical/theological insights, and rhetorical strength.

The responsibility for initiating this process belongs to the student, who will follow the steps outlined below.

PART I

The Quick Procedure Checklist:

1. Determine your ministry interest(s).
2. At least three months prior to graduation, a M.Div. student planning to graduate shall contact the Academic Dean to be assigned a Faculty Supervisor for the *Master's Sermon*. The student may request a specific Faculty member, but the Academic Dean will make an assignment based on the student's request and other factors (such as faculty workloads, appropriate areas of interest, etc.).
3. The student shall contact and meet with the assigned Faculty Supervisor. Together they will discuss the student's ministry interests, current ministry setting, and possible opportunities for the presentation of the *Master's Sermon*. Together they will agree upon:
 - a. The *setting* for the delivery of the sermon (e.g., a Leland Center chapel service)
 - b. The preferred *date* for the delivery of the sermon
4. It will be the student's responsibility to make the necessary arrangements for the delivery of the sermon at the place and time upon which they have agreed.
5. It is also student's responsibility to contact the Administrator of the Leland Center and to report the time and location of his/her sermon so that any who wish to attend can do so.
6. The Faculty Supervisor will assign an appropriate Scripture text for the *Master's Sermon*.
7. A candidate must submit a written text of approximately 2,000 words one week in advance of the public delivery of the *Master's Sermon*. A sermon is not the written document but the moment in time when the content is communicated to listeners. The sermon will therefore be evaluated as it is delivered and not in its written form.
8. The Faculty Supervisor will solicit evaluations from the two other faculty members present for the sermon, and will then meet with the student to provide an evaluation.
9. The requirement for the Master's Sermon is PASS/FAIL, but a more complete critique in the form of a brief discussion/feedback after the *Master's Sermon* is delivered makes the experience more beneficial.

PART II

Responsibilities of the Academic Dean

- To validate that the student has successfully fulfilled or is in the process of fulfilling all of the requirements for the degree (M. Div.).
- To assign a Faculty Supervisor for the *Master's Sermon*.

Responsibilities of the Faculty Supervisor

- To discuss the student's ministry interests and his/her current ministry setting (if any).
- To determine, in discussion with the student, the setting and the date of the delivery of the *Master's Sermon*.
- To assign an appropriate Scripture text for the *Master's Sermon*.
- To be present at the presentation of the *Master's Sermon*.
- To grade (PASS/FAIL) the *Master's Sermon* in discussion with at least two Faculty members (full-time or adjunct).
- To meet with the student and evaluate his/her performance after the delivery of the *Master's Sermon*.

Responsibilities of the Faculty

- Time and circumstances permitting, to be available for assessing the *Master's Sermons*.

Responsibilities of an Administrator

- To post a flier announcing the date and place of a *Master's Sermon*.

Responsibilities of Student

- To figure out your ministry interests
- To inform the Academic Dean about your readiness to prepare your *Master's Sermon*.
- To ask for a Faculty Supervisor.
- To contact the Faculty Supervisor and to tell him/her about your ministry interests.
- To determine 1) the *date* and 2) the *location* of the *Master's Sermon* in discussion with the Faculty Supervisor. (It should take place at least three months prior to graduation.)
- To inform the Administrator of the Leland Center about the set date and location of the *Master's Sermon*.
- To make the necessary arrangements for the delivery of the sermon at the place and time upon which a student and Faculty Supervisor have agreed.
- To receive an appropriate Scripture text from the Faculty Supervisor.
- To prepare your *Master's Sermon*.
- To submit a written text of approximately 2,000 words one week in advance of the public delivery of the *Master's Sermon*.
- To deliver the *Master's Sermon*.
- To meet with the Faculty Supervisor and the selected Faculty members after the delivery of the *Master's Sermon* for evaluation.
- To submit a copy of his/her *Master's Sermon* to the Library.