

Best Practices for Doctor of Ministry Programs

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Dr. Winings, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Director of Doctor of Ministry, Professor of Religious Education attended the Annual Conference of the Association for Doctor of Ministry Education (ADME) held March 31–April 2 at Trinity School for Ministry, Ambridge, PA.

ADME is in partnership with the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) for the purpose of advancing theological education.

“The conference brings together directors of DMin programs who openly share their best practices,” said Dr. Winings. “We shared recruitment strategies; we discussed the changing nature of the DMin; we also explored current assumptions and what that may mean for the future of DMin programs.”

This is a very significant year for UTS and Dr. Winings, as it is the 10th anniversary of the UTS Doctor of Ministry program, which was launched in 2006.

Key staff members from ATS offered interesting facts and changes in the field of theological education, particularly in the MDiv programs such as competency-based education. Also noted was the fact that residential schools are becoming commuter-based schools based on market changes.

Feedback from the DMin program directors suggests that cohort-based learning and intensives are best. Programs are now exploring areas in global leadership, health and social work among the many diverse ministries which DMin graduates are entering.

Dr. Winings summed up by saying, “Many seminaries are dealing with similar issues of costs, standards, and student debt. Compared to many seminaries, UTS has taken some major steps forward in outcomes assessment. I am coming away from the ADME conference feeling very positive about the future of the UTS DMin program.”

ADME Statement of Purpose and Vision

The Association for Doctor of Ministry Education shall cultivate discussion, research, and the interchange of information regarding Doctor of Ministry programs with the intent of strengthening them and advancing Doctor of Ministry concerns in theological education by:

- 1) Encouraging students to think deeply in order to minister effectively;
- 2) Facilitating collaboration among DMin programs regarding best practices;
- 3) Creating venues for thoughtful and scholarly discussion of contemporary ministry issues and concerns;
- 4) Developing consensus in excellence for DMin education;
- 5) Providing venues for mutual support among DMin directors; and
- 6) Promoting the Doctor of Ministry degree as an essential contribution to theological education. All these purposes shall be pursued in regular dialogue with the Association of Theological Schools.