



**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE
BRETHREN ACADEMY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP**

The Main Office of the Academy is located on the campus of:
Bethany Theological Seminary
615 National Road West • Richmond, IN 47374
1-800-287-8822 • Fax: 765-983-1840
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All mail for the Academy may be addressed to the above location.
All of the main files for TRIM students, including TRIM transcripts, college transcripts, documentation of various TRIM experiences, etc. are kept in this office.
Documentation for completion of TRIM units needs to be forwarded through the District Coordinator to this address.

The Brethren Academy Offices in Richmond are staffed by:

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The TRIM program is administered by the
Coordinator of Training In Ministry:
Marilyn Lerch
Who works from her church office in Pennsylvania
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Marilyn does not have a toll free number, but if you e-mail her that you need to speak to her, she will return your call.

Administrative Assistant of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership:
Fran Massie
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academy@bethanyseminary.edu or academy@brethren.org

THE TRIM CONTACT PROCEDURE:

All students work through their District TRIM Coordinator.
If the need arises, the District TRIM Coordinator is in touch with the Coordinator of Training in Ministry.
The Administrative Assistant may be contacted for procedural issues, and she will direct the caller to the correct party.

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As an attendee of a Brethren Academy event, you may be included in still photos, video taped footage, news articles, informational brochures or other media used to interpret the mission and purpose of Bethany Theological Seminary, the Church of the Brethren, Inc., and the Brethren Academy.



*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I, send me!"
Isaiah 6:8*

**Training In Ministry (TRIM)
A Program of the Brethren Academy for
Ministerial Leadership
AN OVERVIEW**

Why TRIM?

Ministry training in the Church of the Brethren has assumed a variety of forms across the years. In the days of the so-called free ministry (still the practice in a small number of congregations), the mode of training was basically that of apprenticeship. Those called to ministry took their place in an existing body of ministers in a congregation and learned to minister as they served alongside and under the guidance of the elders. Today it is more common to find other modes of training for ministry. This is a result of the move in many congregations from an unsalaried free ministry to a professional ministry, which may be full time or bi-vocational.

The recommended route of training, authorized by Annual Conference, is attending four years of college and three years of seminary. A professional ministry with graduate level training remains central to the church's vision of ministry for the future. At the same time, increasingly there is a need for other ways of training for ministry. On the one hand, a growing number of congregations are finding it difficult, if not impossible, to provide compensation for program. On the other hand, a growing number of persons who have ministry gifts to contribute to congregations such as these find it difficult to become full-time students for seven years in order to pursue a graduate degree. Given this situation, the church has responded by providing alternative ways of training for ministry.

TRIM (short for TRaining In Ministry), a program authorized by Annual Conference, is one alternative program of training which

- (1) offers the same scope of training as a seminary education, but
- (2) offers it in a more abbreviated and more flexible version, so that
- (3) the training can be completed closer to home and, depending on the extent of prior educational experience, in as few as 3 to 4 years.

Like the recommended professional training route of college and seminary, TRIM consists of a combination of general education, biblical and theological studies, and practical training in ministry. It is a more *compact* program, however, and allows students to design their own package of standard courses and other learning experiences within a balanced structure of activities required in TRIM.

Who Are the Sponsors?

Four Church of the Brethren partners have joined together to co-sponsor TRIM. These partners include Bethany Theological Seminary, the Church of the Brethren, Inc., the 23 districts of the Church of the Brethren, and the six Brethren colleges. Representatives of these partners meet as a denominational Ministry Advisory Council to review policy for several special training programs, including TRIM. Direct funding for TRIM comes from the Church of the Brethren, Inc. and Bethany Theological Seminary, but each of the partners contribute services of one sort or another.

All students enter TRIM with the approval and support of their District. Should a student move to a new district during TRIM, the student needs to inform the Brethren Academy Office and both the new and old Districts. In order for a student to continue in TRIM, the approval and support of the new district is required.

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, a partnership between Bethany and the Church of the Brethren, Inc., administrates a variety of ministry training programs, including TRIM, Education for a Shared Ministry (EFSM), Advanced Foundations of Church Leadership, Academy Certified Training Systems (ACTS), church planting, continuing education and cross cultural ministry training. A staff team implements the programs of the Brethren Academy. The Executive Director of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership oversees all work of the Academy. Additional staff includes the Coordinator for Sustaining Pastoral Excellence, the Coordinator of TRIM, the Administrative Secretary and occasional short-term staff assignments.

The office of the Brethren Academy is located on the campus of Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond, Indiana. Both salaried and volunteer personnel make up the training staff for TRIM. A network of district appointed TRIM coordinators oversee the program in each district, providing guidance and support to students enrolled in many parts of the country. As in any ministry training program, District Executive Ministers, District Ministry Coordinating Teams and local congregations also play a necessary and vital role in the lives of participants.

Who Can Participate?

Those committed to Jesus Christ and to faithful membership in the body of Christ who

- (1) Sense a call to set-apart ministry and are willing to test that call.
- (2) Show gifts for ministry, which a congregation and district have discerned and affirmed.
- (3) Are eager to grow and have the self-motivation to pursue a disciplined course of study to facilitate their training.

This Road to Ministry...

- * can be used to fulfill the basic educational requirements for ordination or to upgrade previous training.
- * begins and continues with the counsel and support of one's District Ministry commission.
- * envisions ministry for which the type of training provided in TRIM is both appropriate and sufficient.
- * is for those who exhibit loyalty to the Church of the Brethren and a desire to work collegially within the Brethren family.
- * requires a high school diploma or equivalent GED certification and the ability to do college-level work.
- * has available limited scholarship monies toward a student's educational program.
- * recognizes individual gifts and provides a flexible framework for individuals from diverse educational backgrounds.
- * provides a context for Brethren formation of ministers who come into the church from other church backgrounds.

Competencies For Ministry: A User's Commentary

The TRIM program has as its goal the preparation of individuals called to ministry. While no program can completely prepare one for the complexities that ministry involves, it should be the goal of every TRIM student to obtain a wide range of emerging and developed skills that will be a resource in the years ahead.

Below is a list of Ministerial Competencies as suggested by the Church of the Brethren Ministry Office in its Ministerial Leadership Manual. TRIM Coordinators and students are expected to observe these competencies as a guide for considering areas of study as well as a source of discussion in determining whether a well balanced education program is being constructed and carried out that will provide a strong base for future learnings and solid ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.

1. *FAMILIARITY WITH THE BIBLICAL SOURCES OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND COMPETENCY IN INTERPRETING THOSE SOURCES:*

The Bible bears witness to God's deeds and guides the church in its quest to live as God's people. It is thus important for ministerial leaders to know the writings that comprise the Bible and the story of the people of God out of which these writings arose. It is also important that they acquire skills in interpreting Scripture more effectively, and that they understand how and why Christians interpret the Bible differently. It is especially important that they be able to use Scripture appropriately in the various ministries of the church, and that they be able to facilitate the study and discernment of the biblical message on the part of the congregation as a whole.

2. *FAMILIARITY WITH AND ABILITY TO REFLECT THEOLOGICALLY ON THE HISTORY AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF CHRISTIANITY:*

The story of God's people that begins in Scripture continues on in the life and history of the church across the centuries. It is thus important for ministerial leaders to be familiar with significant people, events, and issues in the ongoing story of the Christian community. It is also important that they understand how the church's story relates to and intersects the wider world in which it develops. In addition to knowing the story, ministerial leaders need to be able to reflect on the story from the vantage point of faith: Where and how do we see God active in the church's story? Where and how do we see the church responding faithfully or unfaithfully as the people of God?

3. *AWARENESS OF THE CONTEXTUAL CHARACTER OF PARTICULAR CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS, ESPECIALLY AS FOUND IN THE NORTH-AMERICAN SETTING AND IN GLOBAL SETTINGS OF DEVELOPING CHRISTIANITY:*

Christians have one Lord, one faith, one baptism. But the way they confess and practice their faith differs widely from age to age, from place to place, and from one society to another. It is thus important that ministerial leaders understand

the way in which the language, symbols, and practices of various Christian groups bear the imprint of their cultural context. It is important that they be familiar with significant features of the North-American setting of most Brethren communities, including the growing cultural diversity in our midst. It is also important that they appreciate how and why believers elsewhere in the world may experience life differently and express their faith differently.

4. *FAMILIARITY WITH AND ABILITY TO REFLECT THEOLOGICALLY ON THE HERITAGE OF THE BELIEVERS' CHURCH TRADITION:*

Within the wider Christian story, Brethren are one of several groups that share a heritage known as the believers' church tradition. It is thus important that ministerial leaders be conversant with the movements out of which the Brethren and other believers' church groups emerged. It is important that they understand some of the characteristic themes and emphases of the believers' church such as believers' baptism and discipleship. It is also important that they be familiar with some of the particular people and events that shaped to the history of the Brethren. And it is important that they be able to interpret the beliefs, practices, and polity of the Brethren in terms of their biblical basis, historical development, and significance for the church today.

5. *ABILITY TO ARTICULATE FAITH IN LANGUAGE THAT IS THEOLOGICALLY INFORMED AND CULTURALLY PERSUASIVE:*

As Christians, we celebrate the good news of God's love for us in Jesus Christ. All too often, however, we are unable to communicate that good news in a clear and convincing manner. It is thus important that ministerial leaders acquire and demonstrate skills in theological reflection. It is important that they be able to demonstrate how the convictions they hold relate to the Bible, the shared heritage of the wider church, and the beliefs and practices of the Brethren. It is also important that they be able to show how the Christian message engages and challenges the values of the dominant culture. And it is important that they be able to communicate the good news with clarity and credibility in a variety of settings, within and beyond the church.

6. *AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONGREGATION INFORMED BY BOTH THEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND LEARNINGS FROM THE HUMAN SCIENCES:*

The life of faith is a life in community, and the place where we experience community with other believers on an ongoing basis is the congregation. It is thus important that ministerial leaders be familiar with biblical images and models of the church as the people of God. It is important that they are able to describe key features of the believers' church view of the faith community and how they may be embodied in the life of a congregation. It is also important that they acquire a systemic understanding of the congregation and so be better able to deal with the dynamics at work in congregational life. And it is important that

they be able to reflect critically on significant issues affecting the life and health of congregations at the present time.

7. *ABILITY TO ARTICULATE A VISION OF MINISTRY CONGRUENT WITH ONE'S SENSE OF VOCATION AND APPROPRIATE TO THE MINISTRY CONTEXT IN WHICH THAT VOCATION WILL BE PRACTICED:*

Central to our understanding of ministry is the belief that ministry is not simply an occupation, but rather a vocation. It is thus important that ministerial leaders be able to describe the nature and development of their sense of calling. It is important that they be able to discuss how their sense of vocation relates to biblical models of ministry and to the understanding of ministry in the Church of the Brethren. It is also important that they be familiar with significant features of the ministry setting in which they are or will be serving, whether a congregation or other placement. And it is important that they be able to distinguish helpful and unhelpful understandings of the role of the ministerial leader.

8. *ABILITY TO NURTURE AND REFLECT CRITICALLY ON THE SPIRITUAL FORMATION OF SELF AND OTHERS, INCLUDING ETHICS FOR MINISTRY AND LIFE IN COMMUNITY:*

The life of faith is more than believing and doing; it is an unending process of spiritual formation and transformation. It is thus important that ministerial leaders be able to articulate their own spiritual autobiography and identify critical issues for continuing development. It is important that they be familiar with some of the classical disciplines for spiritual growth, including prayer and Bible study. It is also important that they be familiar with several contemporary models for understanding moral or faith development in individuals and groups. And it is important that they are aware of key issues in ministerial and congregational ethics as addressed by Annual Conference, and exhibit skills in processing concrete cases related to these issues.

9. *SKILLS IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, IN MEDIATING CONFLICT, AND IN BUILDING COMMUNITY:*

Healthy congregations are places where people know how to relate to one another in constructive ways, even in the midst of conflict and controversy. It is thus important that ministerial leaders understand how differing personality types and styles of interaction affect the life of a group. It is important that they have developed skills in listening and cultivating communication. It is important that they be familiar with resources from

Scripture, Brethren heritage and conflict theory that can help persons deal with conflict in constructive ways. It is important that they be able to apply conflict mediation skills to concrete situations, as demonstrated through role plays, case studies, etc.

10. *ABILITY TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN CONGREGATIONAL AND OTHER CHURCH-RELATED ARENAS OF MINISTRY:*

The quality of leadership frequently determines whether a group will be able to carry out its mission. It is thus important that ministerial leaders be able to articulate an understanding of leadership informed by biblical, theological, and sociological perspectives. It is important that they be able to identify their own leadership style and assess the particular strengths and weaknesses of that style. It is also important that they be able to demonstrate skills in the various arenas of ministry related to their vocation, skills in preaching, worship, pastoral care, teaching, and administration. And it is important that they be able to identify ways of calling forth and nurturing others' gifts for ministry.

11. *ABILITY TO INTEGRATE BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDINGS WITH THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY:*

Understanding that is not embodied in practice is worthless. Practice that is not guided by understanding is shallow. The overarching competency therefore that ministry education seeks to achieve is the ability to practice ministry in a biblically and theologically informed manner. One of the marks of this competency is an ability to bring biblical and theological understandings to bear on concrete ministry situations, whether in actual practice or in case studies. Another is the ability to respond in discerning ways to the questions of peers and teachers regarding the meaning and practice of ministry. However assessed, integration of understanding and practice is the crucial test of competency for ministry.

Training In Ministry (TRIM)

*Graduation from TRIM meets the educational requirements
for ordination in
the Church of the Brethren*

Student Enrollment and Orientation Process

The District determines whether to recommend a person for TRIM, preferably in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator. A high school diploma or GED is a prerequisite for entrance into the TRIM program.

The "Profile on Prospective Student" form is completed, signed by the District and mailed to the Brethren Academy office.

A TRIM application and this TRIM document are mailed from the Academy office to the student. The TRIM application is completed by the student and mailed to the Academy office with the \$325.00 enrollment fee. Districts differ in their determination of who pays this enrollment fee. A copy of the completed application form is mailed to the district by the Academy as a courtesy.

As an application is considered, Academy staff may interview the student by telephone.

If appropriate, the student is accepted into the program. Every student attends one orientation session at Bethany Theological Seminary, which includes the beginning of an 8 week online course. Orientation registration deadlines are strictly observed.

Please contact the Brethren Academy for upcoming Orientation dates.

All expenses during orientation are paid for by the Academy.

The student is responsible for travel expenses to and from Richmond, IN and for the books required for the online course.

The orientation experience includes reading a book on servant leadership prior to arrival (a complimentary copy of this book is sent to each enrolling student) and writing a paper following orientation, the beginning session of an eight week online "Introduction to Biblical Studies" course (this course requires 8-10 hours each week following orientation spread over 3-4 times a week), a detailed explanation of the TRIM program, the entrance Biblical Theological Awareness Inventory and opportunities to meet other students and church leaders for worship and conversation.

Following orientation, the Learning Contract is completed in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator, signed by the Coordinator and mailed to the Academy for approval within three months of the conclusion of orientation.

Ministerial Ethics in the Church of the Brethren

We live in a time when the church has been greatly damaged by those in leadership who have not taken their role as ethical leaders seriously. While we are all “humans who make mistakes,” those called to ministry need to be very aware of the visible and honorable place they occupy in the church.

To that end, included in your TRIM notebook is the Code of Ethics (A-Z below) from the current Church of the Brethren Ethics in Ministry paper that was adopted by Annual Conference in 2008. For the complete paper, please go to the section of the Annual Conference web site where Annual Conference adopted papers are listed:

http://www.brethren.org/ac/ac_statements/ Scroll down to the papers for 2008 and you will find a paper entitled “Ministerial Ethics” In addition, each of the Church of the Brethren Districts addresses this issue with training on a regular basis.

III. CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERS

We believe that we have been called by God, through the church, to the set-apart ministry in the Church of the Brethren. It is our calling and our function to lead and facilitate the church in its mission to obey and serve Christ and to witness to the good news of the gospel. We are committed to fulfilling the trust the church has placed in us by maintaining a high standard of Christian conviction, by sincerity of purpose, by nurturing and sharing our gifts, and by integrity of our character. We are dedicated to upholding the dignity and worth of every person who seeks or is reached by our care and proclamation. In order to uphold our standards we, as ministers in the Church of the Brethren, together and individually covenant to live out the following:

Integrity of the Ministerial Life

- A. I will be true to the Judeo-Christian scriptures in my preaching, teaching, and manner of living.
- B. I will be true to Christian convictions as revealed in the Bible and interpreted, taught to, and nurtured in me by the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- C. I will live with integrity, upholding my commitments to God, to others, and to the church.
- D. I will exercise a lifestyle consistent with the teachings of Jesus, giving serious attention to Annual Conference statements.
- E. I will assume responsibility for my physical and emotional health and for my spiritual growth and enrichment. I will strive to maintain reasonable expectations for myself and not allow others' unreasonable expectations to endanger my well-being.
- F. I will treat members of my family with Christian love and respect.
- G. I will treat my congregation and parishioners with Christian love and respect.
- H. I will be a good steward of all of my resources, managing them to live within my income.

Integrity of the Ministerial Call

- I. I will support the basic beliefs and practices of the Church of the Brethren as determined by Annual Conference.
- J. I will respect the privacy of individuals and will not divulge information obtained in confidence without expressed permission. When an individual is a danger to self or others, however, I will take appropriate action, even when this breaks confidentiality.
- K. I will report all cases of suspected child abuse. I will be knowledgeable of and act in accordance with the mandated reporting requirements of professionals within my state.
- L. I will not exchange or tolerate scandalous, malicious, or inaccurate information concerning others.
- M. I will give credit for all sources quoted or extensively paraphrased in sermons and prepared papers. I will honor all copyrights.
- N. I acknowledge that education is a lifelong process, and will seek out opportunities to continue to grow spiritually and in ministry skills.
- O. I will honor the ministry of clergy colleagues in our denomination and in the larger Christian community, striving to work with them in a collegial manner. I will not proselytize people from other churches. I will only perform ministerial services, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, anointings, pastoral counseling, and critical pastoral care, in another congregation at the request of the current pastor and that build up the ministry and mission of the body of Christ in that place.
- P. I will honor the ministry of pastors in my former parishes. It is inappropriate to be involved in the pastoral ministry of a congregation after leaving it or upon retirement, or to perform ministerial services, or to cultivate such relationships with former parishioners, if it hinders the ministry of the congregation and pastor. I will only perform ministerial services, such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, anointing, pastoral counseling, and critical pastoral care, in a former congregation at the request of the current pastor.
- Q. Whenever serving in another category of ministerial leadership (i.e., chaplain, professor, denominational leader, retired, etc.) than pastoral/congregational ministry, I will honor the ministry of my pastor and congregation by being aware of my informal authority. I will not exert undue influence in the internal workings of my congregation.
- R. In the event of a complaint against me, I will participate in the denominational process for dealing with complaints of ministerial misconduct.

Integrity of the Ministerial Relationship (Fiduciary Responsibility)

- S. I will not misuse the trust placed in me and the unique power inherent in my role by exploiting in any way those who seek my help or care.
- T. I will not use my office or authority to apply influence upon a parishioner or others in order to secure bequests, gifts, loans, or financial gain that would personally benefit me.
- U. I will not expect nor seek financial favors or gratuities because of my position.

- V. I will be responsible and honest in the management of all resources and funds entrusted to my care in the course of my employment.
- W. I will not enter into “dual relationships” with parishioners that result in a “conflict of interest” that could personally benefit me.⁸
- X. I will not engage in pastoral counseling that extends beyond the limits of my training and experience. I will use appropriate consulting and referral services.
- Y. It is unethical to take advantage of the vulnerability of any person by causing that person to engage in sexual activity or conduct with me. I will not engage in sexual activity with any person other than my spouse. Such behavior would be especially egregious within the church or ministry agency I serve.
- Z. I will not engage in any form of child abuse-sexual, physical, or emotional.

Financial Considerations of TRIM

“Count well the cost,” Christ Jesus says, “when you lay the foundation.” So begins the hymn whose translated words were written by the first leader of the Church of the Brethren, Alexander Mack. Entering TRIM students are encouraged to take these words to heart, for a ministry training program requires time, thought, and a strong commitment of one’s life to Jesus Christ. In addition, there are financial costs whenever one embarks on an educational venture. While God does provide in miraculous ways, TRIM students often have many financial responsibilities in their lives, and so this financial aspect of enrolling in the program is one to consider carefully.

Application and enrollment fees: TRIM calls for a substantial investment of resources, some of which come from supporting agencies and some of which come from the students themselves. The direct payments a student makes to the Academy include a one-time enrollment fee of \$325 and a yearly participation fee of \$175, invoiced each January.

Costs for Units of Study: Students themselves pay for courses and other units of study. In the end, costs will vary by student because the cost of units varies widely. Students will pay less overall if they enter TRIM having already earned academic credit or completed units of study at another institution that count toward TRIM certification. While enrolled in TRIM, some students will pay more for credits earned at outside institutions and applied to the TRIM program. Also, full-time enrollment is more costly than part-time, but full-time students are eligible for more financial assistance than part-time students. In the end, the total net cost could end up being less for full time students.

Financial Assistance: All participants in TRIM are eligible to apply for financial assistance in the form of covenantal grants. TRIM grants do not have to be repaid. In accepting grants, however, applicants commit themselves to supporting the Church of the Brethren in the future through their ministries, contributions to the Church of the Brethren and Bethany Theological Seminary (both of which support the Brethren Academy), and their total stewardship of life and resources. The amount of the grant for which a student is eligible is contingent on the number of units the student is enrolling for the year. The maximum annual grant is \$1,000. Some additional scholarship funds may be available for those students who take courses through Bethany Seminary. All scholarship funds awarded are to be used for tuition, fees, and books only.

Funding Alternatives: District TRIM Coordinators work with each entering trainee to determine costs and funding alternatives to help cover expenses.

GUIDELINES for REQUESTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE through TRIM

1. TRIM students may request and receive two semester awards (reported as taxable income) for each academic year (July 1—December 30; January 1—June 30) in which the students is enrolled.
2. The amount of an award is determined by the number of units the student plans to complete during that semester to fulfill TRIM credits and by the estimated expense of those units:
 - A. Students enrolling for the minimum required 2 units per semester are eligible for an award of up to \$275.
 - B. Students enrolling for 3 or more units per semester are eligible for an award of up to \$550.
 - C. Since “Orientation” and “Introduction to Biblical Studies” are units of study funded by the Brethren Academy, they cannot be included in requests for financial assistance.
3. TRIM financial assistance awards may be used for tuition, registration fees, books, and other study materials.
4. Requests for financial assistance will be submitted on the appropriate TRIM form to the District TRIM Coordinator, who in turn will submit the form with his or her recommendation. Submission must take place before the semester ends. The fall semester deadline is December 1; the spring semester deadline is June 15. These deadlines will be strictly observed.
5. Each time after the first time that a student requests financial assistance, the student’s transcript will be examined to verify that course work funded by a grant in the previous period was completed.
6. The TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy will notify the applicant after approving the assistance request.
7. Once the applicant has returned the TRIM Financial Assistance Award Form and provided proof of expenses to the Brethren Academy Office, funds will be disbursed.
8. The applicant is responsible for all accounting of awards received for tax purposes. Awards received are taxable income.

**Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership
REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Fall Semester: July 1—December 31, 20_____
Deadline for application: December 1

Spring Semester: January 1—June 30, 20_____
Deadline for application: June 15

Student name _____

Address _____ **Phone** _____

Anticipated Study Program:

- Space is provided below for you to list event(s), course(s) and Independent Study Units you expect to do during the year for which financial assistance is requested.
- List courses or other units by name.
- Enter the dates each unit of study will take place.
- Enter the TRIM unit value of each course (One 3-hour semester or one 4-hour quarter course = one TRIM unit).

College/Seminary Courses Units	Place	Date	TRIM Hours
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Academy Level Courses	Place	Date	TRIM Units
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**Since "Orientation" and "Introduction to Biblical Studies" are funded by the Brethren Academy, they may not be included in requests for financial assistance.*

Independent Study Units	Place	Date	TRIM Units
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Total Estimated Cost for course(s)/event(s) listed:

Note: Financial assistance can only be given for tuition, fees and books.

Tuition		_____
Registration Fees		_____
Books, Study Materials		_____
(receipts required for reimbursement)		
Total	\$	_____

TOTAL Course Units Listed _____

TRIM Covenant Grant Guidelines:

- Up to \$275 per semester requested for the minimum 2 units;
- Up to \$550 per semester may be requested if you are completing 3 or more units;

Statement by District TRIM Coordinator: I have worked with the student in preparing this Covenant Grant request, concur with the information included on this form, and recommend a Covenant Grant.

Signature of District TRIM Coordinator

Financial Assistance is given directly to an educational institution or for an event registration.

Make check out to:	Amount: \$
Mail check to this address:	

Make check out to:	Amount: \$
Mail check to this address:	

Statement by Student: The information provided on this form is as accurate and complete as possible, and there is financial need for the financial assistance requested.

Signature of Student

SEND COMPLETED REQUEST TO:

**Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership
615 National Road West
Richmond, IN 47374**

TRIM FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AWARD AGREEMENT

TO:

Having reviewed your financial assistance request and your anticipated program of study, we are pleased to offer you financial assistance from the TRaining in Ministry (TRIM) program budget of the Brethren Academy of Ministerial Leadership for the academic semester _____

(Spring or Fall, Year)

in the amount of \$ _____.

This money is available to you as needed during the semester for tuition, registration fees, books, and other study materials directly related to coursework for your TRIM program.

This financial assistance is in the form of a covenantal award and as such does not have to be repaid. In accepting the financial assistance award, however, you commit yourself to future support of Bethany Theological Seminary and the Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren, the two denominational agencies sponsoring the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership through which the TRIM program is administered. It is expected that you will support these Church of the Brethren agencies as you serve in ministry through your total stewardship of time, talent and financial resources.

As soon as this agreement is signed and returned to the office of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, your financial assistance monies will be processed.

Marilyn E. Lerch

(Signature of TRIM Coordinator, Brethren Academy)

(Date)

STATEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE:

I hereby accept the financial assistance offered in this award and agree to the terms outlined above.

(Signature of TRIM Student)

(Date)

Reporting Progress in TRIM

Files for all active students are housed at the Brethren Academy office in Richmond, Indiana. Therefore, all completed work should be sent to:

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership
615 National Road West
Richmond, IN 47374-4019

Student transcripts are sent to students and District TRIM Coordinators two times a year, once in the fall and once in the spring.

For accredited coursework, a grade of “C” or better is required for TRIM credit. Either a transcript from the college or seminary or a grade report is needed for documentation. This includes classes taken at Bethany Seminary since the seminary transcript system does not note whether a course is taken for TRIM credit.

Work completed in Academy sponsored courses is reported directly from the instructor to the Academy Office with evaluations/papers returned to students.

To credit Independent Study Units to the transcript, a completed contract, signed by the District TRIM Coordinator must be received. Any work sent directly from a District TRIM Coordinator to the Brethren Academy Office electronically is considered “signed.”

Program Expectations:

Students will normally complete the TRIM program in 2-5 years. In special cases permission to extend a program of study an additional year will be granted by the Academy staff upon request of the student and recommendation by the District TRIM Coordinator. Such requests and recommendations will provide an adequate rationale for the extension.

In any given academic year, a student must complete a minimum of two units (or one unit plus supervised ministry experience) to remain in good standing. Each fall a summary report is sent from the Academy Office to each District for their use to determine student progress in TRIM. If a student fails to make adequate progress in TRIM, the District may decide to remove a student from the program. This is to be done in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator, the student, and at times the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy.

If a student finds that TRIM is not appropriate ministry training – whether a decision is made to become a seminary student, to move to another approved Church of the Brethren training program, or to discontinue ministry training – the student needs to discuss this matter with her/his District and report the decision made to the Brethren Academy Office.

Transcript

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Training in Ministry (TRIM)
A Ministry Training Program of the Church of the Brethren
Student Transcript

Date of the Last Addition to Transcript: **09/21/12**

Student Information	
Name: _____	District: _____
Congregation: _____	Coordinator: _____

Enrollment Record	Date	Date
Application Rec'd & Approved:	_____	Transcript Received: _____
Enrollment Fee Rec'd:	_____	Learning Contract Rec'd & App'd: _____
Orientation Date	_____	

Assessment of Previous Training and Training Requirements in TRIM

	General Education	Bible/ Theology	Ministry/ Ministry Skills	Total
Minimum Units Req'd by TRIM	10	10	10	30
Unit Value Previous College Courses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unit Value of Previous ALCs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unit Value of Previous ISUs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Units To Be Done In TRIM	10.00	10.00	10.00	30.00

Note: At least 10 of the 30 units required by TRIM must be accredited college or seminary courses.
 Therefore, at least 10.00 of the 30.00 units need to be college or seminary courses.

Note: At least 10 of the 30 units required by TRIM must be Academy Level courses.
 Therefore, at least 10.00 of the 30.00 units need to be Academy Level courses.

TEST RESULTS: BTAI Entrance: out of 125.00 BTAI Exit: out of 125.00

Program Requirements:	
Date	Date
General Education Units Completed: _____	Brethren College Experience: _____
Bible/Theology Units Completed: _____	Bethany Seminary Experience: _____
Ministry Skills Units Completed: _____	Ecumenical/Intercultural Event: _____
Five Required Experiences Completed: _____	Annual Conference: _____
Exit BTAI Completed: _____	District Conference: _____
Ministry Internship Completed: _____	Final Evaluation - Student: _____
Recognized at Bethany Luncheon: _____	Final Evaluation - Coordinator: _____
	District Graduation Event: _____
Ministry Formation Group	Ministry Internship
Nature of Group: _____	Contract Approved: _____
Location: _____	Location: _____
Date Group Entered: _____	Supervisor: _____
	Dates: _____
	Final Student Eval: _____
	Final Supervisor Report: _____

Curricular Units to Be Completed in TRIM

General Education			Total Units Req'd: 10.00			Previous Training Units			Units Completed in TRIM		
Title of Course	College/Seminary	Date	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit
Total G.E. Units Still Needed:			10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Bible & Theology Study			Total Units Req'd: 10.00			Previous Training Units			Units Completed in TRIM		
Title of Course	College/Seminary	Date	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit
Total B/T Units Still Needed:			10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Ministry/Ministry Skills			Total Units Req'd: 10.00			Previous Training Units			Units Completed in TRIM		
Title of Course	College/Seminary	Date	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit	College Course	ALC Unit	ISU Unit
Total M.S. Units Still Needed:			10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Minimum College Courses Required:	10.00	General Education Units Still Needed:	10.00
Total College Courses Still Needed:	10.00	Bible/Theology Units Still Needed:	10.00
Minimum Academy Level Courses Required:	10.00	Ministry Skills Units Still Needed:	10.00
Total Academy Level Courses Still Needed:	10.00	Total Units Required:	30.00
		Total Units Still Needed:	30.00

Please note: In some cases, more than the minimum number of units may be essential to cover the subject areas in which TRIM students must achieve competency.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RECORD			
Date			
Units Projected:			
Assistance Eligibility:			
Assistance Allotted:			



I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me,
because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service...

1 Timothy 1: 12

Welcome!

Welcome to Bethany Theological Seminary and the central offices of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership! It is the prayer of the staff of the Academy that this Orientation time is one you find both inspirational and challenging. May you feel God's presence in a special way during these beginning days in your TRIM program.

The staff of the Academy is here to support you during this time of Orientation, so please feel free to let us know if there are things that you need to make your days more productive. At the end of Orientation, you will fill out an Evaluation Form. We value your thoughts about this experience and consider your comments as we plan future Orientation sessions.

The Purpose of Orientation

The basic purpose of Orientation is to help you understand the details of the TRIM program. During sessions here, the process, the requirements and the expectations of this program will be discussed. This TRIM notebook will become a valuable resource to you as you proceed through your program of study. Your copy is the latest in a constantly evolving document of information for students and coordinators.

In addition to the "nuts and bolts" of the TRIM program, it is hoped that you will find rich fellowship and support among the students who are entering this program with you. Within your ministry training settings you will learn of the guidance your District TRIM Coordinator will provide for you. During sessions focusing on a variety of topics, you will begin to enter the world of ministry training. You will meet many on the staff of Bethany Seminary, and learn of the possibilities for training through Bethany that might be open to you. You will be introduced to the concept of servant leadership, begin an online class in "Introduction to Biblical Studies" that will develop your confidence in online learning, as well as give you a taste of the deeper levels of learning that are available to you as you answer the call of God to set apart ministry.

Finally, it is the hope of those planning this Orientation that you will find your time here to be, in many respects, a retreat. By coming to orientation you have placed yourself apart from your busy life, allowing for the possibility that God may speak to you in a new way. As you leave this Orientation, may you be filled with anticipation and enthusiasm about the possibilities that lie ahead for you and sense even more deeply than you have in the past that God walks with you on this journey.

Orientation Follow Up

When Orientation ends, it is important for students and District TRIM Coordinators to build on that experience. The following list will set some direction for the weeks following Orientation:

1. Be gentle with yourself and allow for some down time upon returning home. One important aspect of any ministry is balance, and there are times when rest is vital. Your days at Orientation may not seem as hectic as your normal life, but change is a tiring experience. You have been exposed to many new ideas and lots of information during this time, which you may want to share with others

2. You will want to meet with your District TRIM Coordinator shortly after returning home. This time together should include:

- a review of your orientation experience.
- a discussion of how you will participate in a Ministry Formation Group. Your District TRIM Coordinator will be informing the Brethren Academy of the details of your formation group, and this information will be noted on your TRIM transcript.
- Complete your Learning Contract begun at orientation. Once it is signed by your TRIM Coordinator, it is mailed to the Brethren Academy office.

3. You have begun an online course "Introduction to Biblical Studies." Another piece of ministry training is the allotment of time. You will be more successful in any class you take if you set aside some time for the work each week. Once you get behind, it is very difficult to catch up. This study will give you an opportunity to experiment with how well you can pace yourself. When you have successfully completed this class, you do not need to let the Academy Office know. We will receive that information directly from the instructor, and you will be given one Academy Level Credit (ALC) in Biblical/Theological Studies.

4. You will receive credit in your TRIM program for the Orientation experience once you have completed the assignment of writing a paper in connection with the class you took on servant leadership. Please e-mail or mail that paper to the instructor on or before the due date you were given.

TRIM Learning Contract

The purpose of the TRIM Learning Contract is to document any coursework you have completed previously and to set the direction of the work you will complete while in TRIM.

Although you have the option, with the approval of your District TRIM Coordinator, to change items listed on your Learning Contract at a later date, going through this process will give you an opportunity to dream, to consider what kind of training you need and what areas of study you are particularly interested in. The “Competencies for Ministry” document in the Basic Information section of this notebook, as well as ideas that are listed for you in the page entitled “Coursework”, will help you plan your program.

Instructions

1. Fill out all of the basic information on the first page of your Learning Contract and sign the bottom statement.
2. Fill out every line of the TRIM coursework sections. List courses you have already completed with the date and institution where you did the work. Be sure the Brethren Academy Office has official documentation for this work.
3. As you add future work, you do not need to write exact titles for courses – just general areas of study – and projected dates for this work. With your District TRIM Coordinator’s approval, you may change these projected classes as you move through your TRIM program, but each line must be filled with either completed work or an idea for future study for your learning contract to be complete.
4. Calculate the course totals for your TRIM program in the “Training Requirements Summary” Section.
5. Consult with your District TRIM Coordinator about your Ministry Internship Experience. Although this is completed toward the end of your TRIM program, considering now how and where that experience might take place for you will help shape the coursework you do.
6. Give your Learning Contract to your District TRIM Coordinator for his/her signature. Your District TRIM Coordinator will send a copy of your contract to the Brethren Academy Office for approval. If your District TRIM Coordinator lives at a distance and you complete this procedure by email, please know that we consider any work emailed to us by a District TRIM Coordinator as “signed.”

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Training In Ministry (TRIM)

Learning Contract Draft

Name of Student:

District:

District Coordinator:

Educational Goal in TRIM:

- Fulfill minimal requirement of ten units of college level work, plus additional training in theology and ministry
 - Earn an Associate's degree and complete additional training in theology and ministry
 - Earn a Bachelor's degree and complete additional training in theology and ministry
 - Build on college degree by pursuing additional training in theology and ministry
 - To earn credits toward possible future completion of Masters of Divinity degree
 - Other (describe)
-
-

Time Projected for TRIM Program:

Length of time projected for total program: _____

Pace at which studies will be pursued:

- More than halftime (six or more units per year)
- Less than halftime (five or fewer units per year)

Statement on Confidentiality:

I hereby agree that the following persons may have access to my grades, test results, and other confidential program material, with the understanding that they will not share this data with others without my permission, except as a part of statistical summaries for evaluative purposes: Executive Director of the Brethren Academy, TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy, District TRIM Coordinator, College Academic Advisor, and Brethren Academy Secretary.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

**TRIM Coursework
Learning Contract**

General Education (10 units of study required)

Course Title	School	Date Completed	Unit Value
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Biblical and Theological Studies (10 units of study required)

Course Title	School	Date Completed	Unit Value
1. Intro to Biblical Studies	Brethren Academy		1
2. Intro to Old Testament			1
3. Intro to New Testament			1
4. Brethren Studies			1
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			

10.

Ministry and Ministry Skills (10 units of study required)

	Course Title	School	Date Completed	Unit Value
1.	Orientation (Servant Leadership)	Brethren Academy		1
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

Training Requirements Summary

	General Ed.	Bible/ Theology	Ministry Skill	Total
MINIMUM UNITS REQUIRED BY TRIM	10	10	10	30
UNIT VALUE OF PREVIOUS COURSES				
UNIT VALUE OF PREVIOUS ALC's				
UNIT VALUE OF PREVIOUS ISU's				
UNITS TO BE DONE IN TRIM				

Note:

*At least 10 of the 30 units required by TRIM must be accredited college or seminary courses. Therefore, at least ___ of the ___ units I will be doing in TRIM will be college or seminary courses.

*At least 10 of the 30 units required by TRIM must be Academy level classes or above. Therefore, in addition to my college/seminary courses, at least ___ of the ___ units I will be doing in TRIM will be Academy level classes or above.

Proposed Ministry Internship Setting: _____

I have reviewed and approved this TRIM Learning Contract and now submit it to the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership for approval.

District TRIM Coordinator Signature

Date

Training In Ministry (TRIM)

Learning Contract

Name of Student:

District:

District Coordinator:

Educational Goal in TRIM:

- Fulfill minimal requirement of ten units of college level work, plus additional training in theology and ministry
 - Earn an Associate's degree and complete additional training in theology and ministry
 - Earn a Bachelor's degree and complete additional training in theology and ministry
 - Build on college degree by pursuing additional training in theology and ministry
 - To earn credits toward possible future completion of Masters of Divinity degree
 - Other (describe)
-
-

Time Projected for TRIM Program:

Length of time projected for total program: _____

Pace at which studies will be pursued:

- More than halftime (six or more units per year)
- Less than halftime (five or fewer units per year)

Statement on Confidentiality:

I hereby agree that the following persons may have access to my grades, test results, and other confidential program material, with the understanding that they will not share this data with others without my permission, except as a part of statistical summaries for evaluative purposes: Executive Director of the Brethren Academy, TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy, District TRIM Coordinator, College Academic Advisor, and Brethren Academy Secretary.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

**TRIM Coursework
Learning Contract**

General Education (10 units of study required)

Course Title	School	Date Completed	Unit Value
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Biblical and Theological Studies (10 units of study required)

Course Title	School	Date Completed	Unit Value
1. Intro to Biblical Studies	Brethren Academy		1
2. Intro to Old Testament			1
3. Intro to New Testament			1
4. Brethren Studies			1
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			

10.

Ministry and Ministry Skills (10 units of study required)

	Course Title	School	Date Completed	Unit Value
1.	Orientation (Servant Leadership)	Brethren Academy		1
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

Training Requirements Summary

	General Ed.	Bible/ Theology	Ministry Skill	Total
MINIMUM UNITS REQUIRED BY TRIM	10	10	10	30
UNIT VALUE OF PREVIOUS COURSES				
UNIT VALUE OF PREVIOUS ALC's				
UNIT VALUE OF PREVIOUS ISU's				
UNITS TO BE DONE IN TRIM				

Note:

*At least 10 of the 30 units required by TRIM must be accredited college or seminary courses. Therefore, at least ___ of the ___ units I will be doing in TRIM will be college or seminary courses.

*At least 10 of the 30 units required by TRIM must be Academy level classes or above. Therefore, in addition to my college/seminary courses, at least ___ of the ___ units I will be doing in TRIM will be Academy level classes or above.

Proposed Ministry Internship Setting: _____

I have reviewed and approved this TRIM Learning Contract and now submit it to the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership for approval.

District TRIM Coordinator Signature

Date

**TRIM/EFM ORIENTATION
Evaluation Form**

You have now experienced the Orientation planned for the introduction to your ministry training program. As the staff of the Brethren Academy, we hope this time has been helpful to you in a number of ways. While the diversity of our student body means that orientation will be experienced in different ways by those attending, to help us continue to offer a time that is engaging to students, please fill out this evaluation as completely as you possibly can.

Circle a number on the continuum for each of the items below.

(A "5" would be a superior rating, "1" a poor rating, etc.) Add extra comments freely.

1. DESIGN/ORGANIZATION OF THE WEEK

5 4 3 2 1

**What did you wish there was more time for?
What could have been eliminated or received less emphasis?**

2. ADVANCE INFORMATION AND ARRANGEMENTS

5 4 3 2 1

**Did this experience meet your expectations?
If not, how could we have helped prepare you better?**

3. WORSHIP/DEVOTIONS/PRAYER SESSION

5 4 3 2 1

We weave a variety of worship/devotions/prayer times through the days. In the context of an orientation geared toward your education, what was your reaction to this aspect of the time here?

4. TRIM/EFM TRAINING SESSIONS

5 4 3 2 1

This experience is meant to be a springboard for your work with your District TRIM Coordinator/EFM Supervisor. While it is not anticipated you will leave with all the answers to questions that will arise, do you feel you have received enough information to move ahead? If not, what are you uneasy about?

5. OTHER GROUP SESSIONS

5 4 3 2 1

As part of this experience, to prime the pump for learning in the area of ministry, we have tried to include a variety of sessions lead by various individuals and addressing a diversity of topics in ministry. Which session(s) were particularly intriguing to you? Was there something missing that you anticipated or wished would have been planned?

6. SERVANT LEADERSHIP CLASS

5 4 3 2 1

The Church of the Brethren expects a different style of leadership from its ministers than many other denominations. Do you feel you have a good basic understanding of this expectation?

7. ACADEMY STAFF LEADERSHIP

5 4 3 2 1

We want you to get to know our staff through orientation. Do you have comments to make about how well that happened for you?

8. ACCOMODATIONS/MEALS

5 4 3 2 1

It is our hope that you are comfortable while here, but in a “retreat” setting in order to give you a time away from your normal activities. Do you have observations that would help us plan for other groups?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME NOT ONLY TO BE WITH US AT ORIENTATION, BUT TO ALSO GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK. ARE THERE OTHER AREAS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON?



Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. For to this end we toil and struggle, because we have our hope set on the living God,
who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.
1 Timothy 4: 7b-10

A Summary of TRIM Program Requirements

TRIM features a flexible design of training. For every student, however, there will be common elements of training. These common elements include both **coursework and auxiliary training experiences** as summarized below:

* Participation in an ongoing **ministry formation group**

* **30 units of coursework**, at least 10 of which need to be completed while in TRIM:

10 units of Biblical or Theological Studies

will include: Introduction to Old Testament
Introduction to New Testament
Church of the Brethren Studies

10 units of Ministry Skills

10 General Education Units

These 30 units will be completed at the following academic levels:

Students are expected to work at their next level of academic achievement.

10 units at the college or seminary level

10 units at the Academy level or above

10 units at the Independent Study Unit (ISU) level or above

* **Five Required Experiences**

Ecumenical/Intercultural Experience

Church of the Brethren College Experience

Bethany Theological Seminary Experience beyond Orientation

Annual Conference Experience

District Conference Experience

* **Ministry Internship**

Pre-requisite: Completion of at least 20 units of the TRIM program,
at least 5 units while in TRIM.

The plan for this 400 hour requirement must be submitted to the
Academy for approval one month before beginning.

* **Graduation Preparation**

Final Biblical Theological Awareness Inventory, mailed to
Academy TRIM Coordinator for grading.

Final Student and District Coordinator evaluations

All work is planned and completed in consultation with District Coordinator.

Students pay a \$175 participation fee to the Brethren Academy each year they are in the program beginning with January following attendance at orientation.

TRIM transcripts are mailed twice a year to the student and District TRIM Coordinator. The fall mailing includes a summary report on each student to the District.

Participation in a Ministry Formation Group

Since the beginning of our history as a church, we Brethren have believed in the importance of community. While God may call us as an individual into faith or into set apart ministry, we are formed by the community. Together we discern God's will for our lives and in one another we see the face of Jesus and hear God's voice.

While in TRIM, all students will participate regularly in a supervised group experience called a "ministry formation group." The purpose of this group is to provide opportunities for shared reflection on, evaluation of, and support in their faith journey, to discuss issues arising out of study, ministry experience, and other topics important to growth as persons and as leaders.

Ministry formation groups may be organized in a variety of ways and include the following student participants:

- (1) A district group of TRIM trainees.
- (2) A district group of TRIM trainees and other ministry students.
- (3) A group of TRIM and other ministerial students at a Brethren college or at Bethany Seminary.
- (4) A local group of ministerial peers.
- (5) A congregational group willing to support and work with a TRIM student.

Ministry formation groups provide an excellent setting in which to reflect on every facet of the training in TRIM, including the learning that occurs via Independent Study Units. If the number and location of students permit regular group meetings, take advantage of this setting as a part of the learning process.

Most often the ministry formation group is led by the District TRIM Coordinator. Other possibilities include a TRIM academic advisor at a Brethren college, or a pastor appointed by the district. In the latter two instances, the leader of the group will report on the group experience to the District TRIM Coordinator.

The agenda of a typical group meeting might consist of several of the following:

- (1) Informal sharing of significant experiences in members' lives since the previous meeting.
- (2) Cultivation of personal and spiritual disciplines and practices.
- (3) Discussion of reading of book the group has agreed to study as a common discipline.
- (4) Review of a case study or verbatim on a specific ministry experience, prepared by one of the group members.
- (5) Review of progress on current TRIM units and discussion of issues or topics growing out of those units.
- (6) Role plays on ministry situations, real or hypothetical, with group reflection on the process.

- (7) Exploration of some specific topic on which the group has decided to focus for one or more meetings.
- (8) Bible study, conducted either for its own sake or as an occasion for reflecting together on how we approach and use the Bible.
- (9) Use of tests and other inventories (e.g., Myers-Briggs) that help us understand ourselves and what we bring to ministry.
- (10) Sharing and reflecting together on statements of faith that members of the group developed.
- (11) "How to" work sessions (e.g., how to write learning objectives, how to use journaling effectively, how to develop a position description for pastoral ministry, how to fill out financial aid forms, how to plan one's supervised ministry experience, how to write evaluations for course-equivalent units, etc.).

The preceding list is meant to be suggestive, not restrictive. Groups are encouraged to structure the time they spend together in a manner that proves helpful to all participants. Where the formation group includes persons other than TRIM students, agenda related specifically to the TRIM training process will need to be cared for in another setting.

The location and situation of each student will determine how the formation group experience is carried out. District TRIM Coordinator, District Ministry Coordinating Team and the student will consult together to find the most appropriate scenario for this important aspect of the program. The recommended length and frequency of meetings is a monthly get-together of 90 minutes to 2 hours. Where geography makes monthly meetings impossible, a group may decide to gather every other month for a 3 hour session. The place of meeting might be either a fixed or rotating location. Wherever held, the place of meeting should be convenient to the participants and suited for the work the group will be doing.

Whoever actually leads the formation group, it is the responsibility of the District TRIM Coordinator to see that the group is launched, to clarify the purpose and agenda of the group, to ensure that newly entering trainees are warmly incorporated into the group, and to monitor the group's life and work. Where a limited number of students and/or geographical distances make it impossible to set up a district group, the Coordinator should solicit the counsel of the District Ministry Coordinating Team, District Executive Minister and Academy TRIM Coordinator in exploring alternatives.

It is the responsibility of District TRIM Coordinators to inform the Brethren Academy as to the nature of the Ministry Formation Group in their district. If questions arise that are not covered by the guidelines above, the District TRIM Coordinator should contact the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership.

Coursework

Participants in TRIM work in three basic subject areas:

general education
biblical and theological studies
ministry skills

The basic objective of ***general education*** is to become more familiar with the broad areas of knowledge important for understanding ourselves and the world in which we live. Specific units of recommended study in this area include:

language and communication skills, computer skills, literature, the arts (including music), philosophy, history, economics, psychology, sociology, and natural science.

There are many other fields of general education that would be appropriate areas of study depending on the interest of the student.

The purpose of ***biblical and theological studies*** is to become more familiar with the biblical foundations of the Christian faith and with the church's reflection on and response to the biblical message throughout its history. All students are required to take a minimum of one unit in each of three areas:

Introduction to Old Testament
Introduction to New Testament
Church of the Brethren Studies

Other recommended units of study in this area include:

biblical interpretation, study of particular sections of scripture, basic Christian beliefs, Christian ethics, peace studies, spiritual formation, theology, and church history.

In the study of ***ministry and ministry skills***, the goal is to become familiar with the nature and scope of the church's ministry, to be able to articulate how one's calling relates to that ministry, and to exhibit increased competency in the various skills for ministry. Specific units of recommended study in this area include:

prayer, conflict resolution, the congregation as a context for ministry, specific types of congregations (examples: small membership, rural, urban), preaching and worship, church administration, pastoral leadership, pastoral care and counseling, teaching and nurturing, evangelism and church growth, missions (example: disaster response), church music, cross cultural ministry, campus ministries, camping ministry, work with particular populations (examples: children, youth, young adults, older adults, married couples), communication in the church, group dynamics study, sociological issues affecting ministry: economics, gender, race, age, etc.

The expectations and criteria for TRIM coursework can be summarized as follows:

(1) Every student will complete a total of **30 curricular units** in the subject areas indicated above. A curricular unit is defined as a **3-hour semester course or a 4-hour quarter course**, at the college or seminary level or a package of learning experiences broadly equivalent to a 3-hour semester course (75-90 hours). In the TRIM program, these equivalent learning experiences are known as ISU's (Independent Study Units).

(2) Of these 30 curricular units:

* at least 10 will be acquired through courses offered by an **accredited** college or seminary. The guidelines for the TRIM program define accreditation as "accredited by the U.S. Department of Education."

*10 units will be acquired through Academy Level courses or above. The Brethren Academy is authorized by Annual Conference but is not accredited. Academy Certified Training Systems (ACTS) courses may be included as part of an Independent Study Unit (ISU).

*Up to 10 units may be acquired through independent study experiences either sponsored or approved by the district, or constructed by the student under the supervision of the District TRIM Coordinator.

(3) To ensure adequate coverage of the three subject areas indicated above, the 30 curricular units in TRIM will include at least:

- (a) 10 units in general education.
- (b) 10 units in biblical and theological studies.
- (c) 10 units in ministry and ministry skills.

(4) Where possible, college courses will be taken at one of the six colleges related to the Church of the Brethren, whether through residential study, commuting to classes, extension work or online courses. Consult with individual Brethren colleges to discuss the tuition rate for TRIM students.

(5) Credit may be granted for units of study completed prior to participation in TRIM **if the trainee can provide acceptable certification for this work**. For work at accredited colleges or seminaries, official transcripts or grade reports are required.

For work in other structured academic settings, the number of allowed curricular units is negotiated with the District TRIM Coordinator and approved by the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy. This negotiation is to be based on a fair assessment of the actual hours put into the course. One course may be worth $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ a TRIM unit, but no more than $\frac{1}{2}$. Another way to approach the situation of previous unaccredited work is to give one unit of credit for several courses in the same area, i.e. give one unit of credit in the TRIM required area of Biblical and Theological Studies.

Please note...

In order to receive a graduation certificate from TRIM, every student must: Complete **at least ten curricular units** while in the program

- Participate in the five required events
- Successfully complete a Ministry Internship
- Receive an acceptable score on the Biblical/Theological Inventory
- Complete the required paperwork for all of the above, working in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator
- Be in good financial standing with the Brethren Academy.

TRIM transcripts are sent to students and coordinators two times a year, in the fall and in the spring. The work shown on the transcript reflects all work that has been received at the Brethren Academy Office as of that time, so transcripts are a good way to keep track of what work in all areas of TRIM has been completed.

Suggested Activities and Topics of Study for TRIM Students:

Priming the Pump...

The following are offered as starting points/ suggestions for individual study by TRIM students as well as for use with TRIM Ministry Formation Groups. They only begin the imaginative process of ways individuals can learn. May these encourage you to think of others! Remember to consult Brethren Press and the Church of the Brethren site online for resources. Many of the decisions of Annual Conference are online and would provide good background material on a number of subjects.

Bible Study/ Helps:

Use Biblical sections of the BTAI as discussion starters

Use BTAI as basis for selecting texts to study

Memorize key Biblical passages, such as:

I Corinthians 13: 1-13

Matthew 5: 1-12

Psalm 23

John 1: 1-13

Romans 12: 1-21

Do a "group" Independent Study Unit on a Bible section, i.e.

Wisdom literature

Minor prophets

Paul's travels

Study and portray a series of Bible characters

Become familiar with use of the lectionary

Church of the Brethren Denomination:

Demonstrate/practice the following:

a service of anointing, baptism, child dedication, graveside service, Love Feast

Read and discuss the Ministerial Leadership Manual

Read and report on articles in Messenger

Volunteer as a camp leader; discuss the experience

Discuss the congregational, district or denominational structure and its effectiveness

Preach a sermon and critique each other. Possible topics:

simple life, stewardship, social justice, family issues, faith in the workplace, from inner peace to world peace, technology and faith

Consider topics of pastoral care:

divorce, grief, mental health issues, family crisis, homosexuality, stress and overactivity, incurable illness, disabilities, end of life issues, still birth/ loss of a child/ abortion, child and spousal abuse, preparing to marry, remarry,

Invite a representative from denominational/district and related COB

agencies:

Outdoor Ministries Association

Association for the Arts

Mission and Ministry Board

District Board

Mutual Aid Association

On Earth Peace Association

Brethren Benefit Trust

Annual Conference Office

Study Annual Conference reports/ queries/ business items
Read and discuss Annual Conference statements on ethics: Congregational
Ethics and Ethics in Ministry Relations

Use Videos, DVDs, Technology as Educational Tools:

Become familiar with COB websites
Google various religions topics that come to mind to begin to learn how to
use the computer as a research tool
Bookmark your favorite sites to find them easily
Log onto Facebook to enter the online community that many in the
COB are a part of.
Dale Brown series on church beliefs
Bill Eberly series on church history
Journey in Jesus' Way series
Contemporary movies with a moral or religious theme
Check Brethren Press for resources
Check the District office for resources

Invite/Interview Guest Presenters/Community Resources Personnel:

Possibilities include:
medical doctor, mental health provider, funeral director, hospice nurse, nursing
home administrator, social worker, nursing home, hospital or hospice chaplain,
missionary, area pastor from other denomination, priest/rabbi or leader from
another faith tradition, district executive/minister, divorce mediator, retired pastor
from the denomination, religion professor, religion newspaper columnist
Visit/tour an area facility, i.e. hospital, jail, AIDS clinic, mental institution

Ministers/ Families Self-care:

Meet for a meal with spouses/families
Discuss the pastor's appropriate use of humor in preaching
Share resources for personal spiritual growth/ devotions
Consider local resources for times of spiritual renewal
Discuss/discover what "sabbath rest" means to you

Expectations/Encouragement/Support:

Share stories -- of daily events to intimate feelings as members of the
group are comfortable doing this
Share one's theology; explain how it came to be, how it is in process
Encourage individuals to participate locally:
teaching Sunday School
volunteering for disaster work
volunteering for Habitat for Humanity
working with ecumenical events
Spend time affirming, praising, supporting one another
Use the case study method to deal with real situations in ministry
Set and discuss personal goals in ministry
Discuss what qualities make an "excellent" pastor
Share stories of "Christians I have admired"



Training in Ministry (TRIM)

TRIM is an approved ministry training program for the Church of the Brethren, which provides the educational component required for ordination.

Districts make all decisions regarding ordination of people for ministry.

My TRIM Checklist

Fill in date of completion for each requirement online provided to keep track of progress

Entrance Process:

- _____ Attended Orientation at Bethany Theological Seminary
- _____ Successfully completed "Introduction to Biblical Studies" course online
- _____ Mailed "Servant Leadership" paper to instructor
- _____ Completed and discussed Learning Contract with coordinator within 3 months of orientation
- _____ Learning Contract was approved by Academy TRIM Coordinator who mailed it to the Brethren Academy Office

Program Requirements:

Joined an ongoing ministry formation group on _____

Completed 30 units of work, at least 10 of which need to be completed while in TRIM.

Required: 10 college or seminary, 10 Academy level or above, 10 ISU level or above

Designate each unit below as CS (college or seminary), A (Academy level) or ISU (Independent Study Unit):

10 Units of General Education:

	<u>Date Completed</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Level of Instruction</u>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

10 units of Biblical or Theological Studies:

	<u>Date Completed</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Level of Instruction</u>
1.		Introduction to Biblical Studies	A
2.		Introduction to Old Testament	
3.		Introduction to New Testament	
4.		Church of the Brethren Studies	
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

10 units of Ministry Skills:

	<u>Date Completed</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Level of Instruction</u>
1.		Orientation	A
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

Five Required Experiences:

(one form completed for each experience, signed by coordinator)

- _____ Bethany Theological Seminary Experience beyond Orientation
- _____ Church of the Brethren College Experience
- _____ Annual Conference Experience
- _____ District Conference Experience
- _____ Intercultural/Ecumenical Experience

Ministry Internship:

Pre-requisite: Completion of at least 20 units of the TRIM program, at least 5 units while in TRIM.

- _____ Plan for this 400-hour requirement approved by District Coordinator submitted to the Academy for approval one month before beginning.

Location of Ministry:

Anticipated Dates of participation:

- _____ Submitted Plan approved by Academy
- _____ Final student evaluation of experience submitted

Graduation Process:

- _____ Final Biblical Theological Awareness Inventory completed and mailed to Academy TRIM Coordinator for grading
- _____ Final Student and Evaluation completed and submitted
- _____ Recognition at Annual Conference at Bethany Luncheon (attendance optional)
- _____ Presentation of Graduation Certificate at District Conference or other event

All work is planned and completed in consultation with District Coordinator.

Students pay a \$175 participation fee to the Brethren Academy each year they are in the program beginning with the January following attendance at orientation.

TRIM transcripts are mailed twice a year to the student and District Coordinator. The fall mailing includes a summary report on each student to the District Executive Minister for the District Ministry Coordinating Team.

ACCREDITATION AND TRANSFERRING CREDITS TO TRIM UNITS

What does “accredited” mean in TRIM?

Any seminary that a TRIM student attends must be recognized (accredited) by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) if the student plans to receive accredited course credit for the course taken.

Any university, four-year college, junior college, community college, Bible school, or other institution of post-high school education must be recognized (accredited) by one of the eight regional accrediting agencies that identify quality institutions according to guidelines of the United States Secretary of Education. One example of such a regional accrediting agency is the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. All such accredited institutions are periodically reviewed and subsequently listed in the annual Higher Education Directory.

Please refer questions regarding accreditation to the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy.

In addition, **all** courses related to TRIM, including those completed prior to a student officially beginning TRIM and those courses taken throughout the student’s TRIM program, **must have a grade of “C” or better** to be accepted and credited in TRIM. Incomplete or audited courses do not meet the requirements for an accredited course.

Semester Hour System	TRIM Unit	Quarter Hour System	TRIM Unit
4	1.33	5	1.25
3	1.00	4	1.00
2	.67	3	.75
1	.33	2	.50
		1	.25

Academy Student Participation in Graduate Courses

Academy students have two options for taking graduate level courses through Bethany Theological Seminary, either at the Richmond campus or the Susquehanna Valley Satellite.

(1) TRIM students who have previously earned a bachelor's degree are encouraged to enroll as an **occasional student**.

(2) TRIM students who do not have a previously earned bachelor's degree may enroll as a **sit-in student**.

"Sitting-In" is different from "auditing" a class.

An auditor must be enrolled as a graduate level student and the audited class will be included on an official transcript. Academy does not fulfill TRIM requirements by auditing courses.

Those "sitting-in" on classes do not enroll as graduate level students and the class will not appear on an official transcript. Sitting in on a class earns an ALC in TRIM, not a college/seminary credit.

HOW DOES ONE APPLY FOR "OCCASIONAL STUDENT" STATUS AT BETHANY SEMINARY?

1. An Academy student who holds a Bachelor's degree is encouraged to apply for "occasional student" status at Bethany Seminary. An application and more detailed information can be requested from the Admissions Office (765-983-1806). Occasional students will want to be in touch with the Director of Student Development and consult the Bethany catalog concerning fees for courses.

HOW DOES ONE "SIT IN" ON A GRADUATE LEVEL SEMINARY COURSE?

Students who choose to "sit-in" on a course receive ALC credit for that course.

2. ***Those desiring to sit-in on a course at the Richmond campus should contact the Brethren Academy office.*** Academy student registration begins the day after registration for degree students. Registration for each semester begins roughly six to seven weeks before the first day of the semester.
3. ***Those desiring to sit-in on a course at the Susquehanna Valley Satellite should contact the Registrar (717-361-1450) for information and registration.***

4. While Bethany would like to welcome as many Academy students as possible, there are some restrictions and limitations. The following steps must be taken before permission can be granted to sit-in on a class:
 - a. The Academy Secretary will contact Bethany's registrar to see if there is room in the class for an Academy student. (In keeping with accreditation guidelines set forth by the Association of Theological Schools, the number of sit-in students is limited to 15-20% of the total students registered for a class.)
 - b. The Academy Secretary will contact the instructor of the class to see whether she/he agrees to have the student as part of the class. The instructor can limit the class size and determine whether or not the course is appropriate for the student's skill level.
5. If permission is granted to sit-in on the course, the student will be expected to complete the same work as other students in the course.
6. The cost for sitting-in on a graduate level course at the Richmond campus is \$300.00. The cost for auditing a graduate level course at Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center is \$350.00 per course.
7. TRIM students should be working with their District TRIM Coordinator on educational plans and goals, including expectations for involvement in graduate courses.

TRIM students enrolled graduate courses (regardless of the status) need to request that Bethany Seminary or the Susquehanna Valley Satellite notify the Brethren Academy Office of their successful completion of course requirements.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

For participants enrolled in the TRIM program, the General Education requirements may be met by successfully completing units in the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) rather than taken actual courses. Accepted by many educational institutions around the country, these tests, administered by the same College Board organization that administrates the SAT, are offered in the following subjects according to the website at

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/about.html>

Composition and Literature

American Literature, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature, English Composition, English Literature, Freshman College Composition, Humanities

Foreign Languages

French, German and Spanish Language (Levels 1 and 2 available in each language)

History and Social Sciences

American Government, Human Growth and Development, Introduction to Educational Psychology, Principles of Macroeconomics, Principles of Microeconomics, Introductory Psychology, Introductory Sociology, Social Sciences and History, U.S. History I: Early Colonizations to 1877, U.S. History II: 1865 to the Present, Western Civilization I: Ancient Near East to 1648, Western Civilization II: 1648 to the Present

Science and Mathematics

Calculus, College Algebra, College Algebra-Trigonometry (**No** longer available after June 30, 2006. Replaced by Precalculus.), Trigonometry (**No** longer available after June 30, 2006. Replaced by Precalculus.), Precalculus — New! Coming in 2006, College Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Natural Sciences

Business

Information Systems and Computer Applications, Principles of Management, Principles of Accounting, Introductory Business Law, Principles of Marketing

As is the case with many colleges, the Brethren Academy does not allow CLEP credit for any course that is similar to a course a student has taken at the college level from an educational institution. So, for example, if a student already had taken Sociology 101 at LaVerne, we would not accept another CLEP credit in sociology.

The fee for each CLEP test is \$70.00. At the time a test is taken, the student should request that the score be reported directly to the Brethren Academy office. In order to receive credit, the student score must at least as high as the recommended score listed on the CLEP website. In an effort to obtain a broad range of general education subjects as is appropriate for a TRIM student, please be aware that no more than 2 units of credit will be given for any one subject area. Three semester hours of credit equals one TRIM unit.

Guidelines for Writing TRIM Research Papers

For many entering TRIM students, it has been quite a while since they have written a research paper. The guidelines here will provide some structure around that experience. Please know that instructors of particular courses may have their own expectations, so see the following as general suggestions.

Pay close attention to the instructions regarding assignments like this. They often take the form of: “the student is to write a 10-12 page research paper on a topic of their choice approved by the instructor, which is due no later than (date) to be considered for credit.” Take deadlines seriously. Should you need an extension of time, be in touch with the instructor as soon as that becomes evident.

Normally a research paper should be typed in a 12 point font, double-spaced, and with standard (1 inch) margins. All quotations are to be footnoted, and quotes longer than a couple of lines need to be placed in a block quote, which should be indented and single-spaced. Since this is an academic paper, the instructor would like to see a bibliography at the end of the paper. Each footnote and entry of the bibliography should include the author’s name, title of the reference (italicized), publisher, and year. Footnotes should also include a page number. If an online website is referenced, it is necessary cite the specific web address and the date the information was downloaded.

Footnote Citation Example:

Carl Desportes Bowman, *Portrait of a People: The COB at 300*, Brethren Press, 2008, p.83.

Ministerial ethics require crediting all sources. Plagiarism is looked upon with great concern in a ministry training program. Should there be evidence found of plagiarism, the TRIM Coordinator or the Executive Director of the Brethren Academy will need to have a conversation with the student’s district regarding this matter.

Focusing your proposed topic:

Many topics initially proposed by students require some focusing. Here are some suggestions for focusing a topic. After a broad topic has been selected, do some introductory reading. For example, if the course textbooks address the topic, look at their ideas, arguments, and bibliographies. In addition, check some reference works such as Bible dictionaries and commentaries. Get a feel for the issues that scholars are debating in relation to the topic, and note suggestions for further reading. Then choose a more specific issue or question that the introductory exploration leads to and could be studied in depth. Remember that depth is usually more valuable than breadth in a research project. Above all, a research paper should clearly indicate what you have learned as a result of your research

Academic research papers should have an *introduction*, a *body*, and a *conclusion*.

The *introduction* should include one sentence that states clearly what the focus of the paper will be. This is called a thesis statement.

Get right to the point in the *introduction*. No need to beat around the bush. One useful technique (although not the only technique) is to make the first sentence a statement of the thesis.

Thesis Statement Example: In John 13:13-15, Jesus commands his disciples to wash one another's feet. In this paper, I will demonstrate the effect of gender with regard to one's perspective on footwashing, gathering information from historical, biblical and theological sources.

(This is not the only way a thesis statement can be structured, but this example provides some guidance.)

The *body* of the paper makes the case that the student has come to through research and thought; that is, the body presents the reasons for thinking the thesis is true, and/or examine the evidence of the problem or question that has been explored. It is also in the body of the paper where there is a clear demonstration that the research that has been done backs up the position taken with quoted material. Be sure to show that you have *learned* something!

In the *conclusion*, draw together the various strands of the position taken, showing how they connect to the thesis and how they lead to the particular Biblical/theological viewpoint which has been assumed as a result of this study.

Even after a proposal is approved, one can adjust a topic in light of further research. Just keep the instructor informed of any major changes. Don't hesitate to consult with an instructor if you have questions. Such questions will be received with much more grace if they come in a timely manner rather than at 5:30 the day before the research paper is due 😊

With appreciation to Craig Gandy, Brethren Academy Instructor and Dan Ulrich, Bethany Theological Seminary Professor for consultation on these guidelines

Brethren Academy and SVMC Policy on Citation Style and Plagiarism

Plagiarism policy

Integrity is central to life in community. In the Christian academic community, integrity means giving proper credit to people for the ideas and information we receive from them. It also means that the work we submit and represent as our own is really work we ourselves have done. The Church of the Brethren 2008 Annual Conference Ethics in Ministry Paper (2008) Part III Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders states:

“I will give credit for all sources quoted or extensively paraphrased in sermons and prepared papers. I will honor all copyrights” (p. 8, Letter M).

Plagiarism is using the work of other people without giving them credit, whether in written assignments, oral reports and sermons. A glaring example of plagiarism would be submitting an entire essay or preaching a sermon written by someone else and claiming it was your own. It is also plagiarism to use, without giving credit, someone else’s ideas or phrases. This definition applies to words and images, to manuscripts, and to ideas gleaned from spoken communication.

The consequences for plagiarism will vary according to the extent of the offense. These may range from rewriting the assignment, non-crediting the assignment, or non-crediting the course. The instructor will report any instance of plagiarism to the student and to those supervising the instructional programs. Students who wish to challenge the charge of plagiarism could contact their district executive and/or the Church of the Brethren Office of Ministry.

Guidelines for Writing Research Papers

The Training in Ministry (TRIM) Notebook – handed out at orientation and available online at the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership website – contains a section on *Guidelines for Writing TRIM Research Papers* (pp. 48- 49). These guidelines were written by Marilyn Lerch in consultation with Dr. Daniel Ulrich, a Bethany Theological Seminary professor, and Craig Gandy, a Brethren Academy instructor.

Additional resources for writing, further examples and appropriate ways to cite, include:

- Core, Deborah. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000. This very easy to read book outlines practical guidance for beginning students. Choosing and researching a topic; outlining, writing and editing a paper; and proper formats for citation are addressed.
- Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers: for Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. This book explores in more depth research (definition, planning, thinking), finding sources, choosing a topic, bibliographies, papers (organizing, writing, formatting), and research (biblical exegesis, descriptive, program development, case study).

- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. This is the definitive resource for advanced research papers and projects. *A Turabian Style: Quick Reference Guide for Students* is available online as a downloadable pdf at the Bethany Theological Seminary website.

Adapted from the Policy on Citation Style and Plagiarism for
Earlham School of Religion and Bethany Theological Seminary

Affirmed by the Ministry Advisory Council May 11, 2010

Independent Study Unit Guidelines

An Independent Study Unit (ISU) should be broadly equivalent to a college or seminary course in the quantity and quality of learning it provides. In most cases, then, the amount of work for an ISU should total **75-90 hours** or more. Included in this figure will be time spent in class or other group sessions, in reading, in the preparation of written or other projects, in ministry activities that relate to the unit, and in individual or group conferences to evaluate the work done.

Examples of independent study units include:

- (a) a video instruction course or an online course and related projects;
- (b) independent study, based on research and/or practice;
- (c) a correspondence course and related assignments;
- (d) a combination of workshops and other short-term events, with accompanying reports and reflection on experiences;
- (e) participation in a Academy Certified Training Systems (ACTS) course;
- (f) a combination of reading and interactive and reflective experiences that focus on one of the required areas of study listed above.

The Process

1. Responsibility for designing a proposed ISU rests initially with the student. She or he will prepare a **rough draft of the first page** of the ISU contract for the proposed unit and share it with the District TRIM Coordinator at least a month **in advance** of the time when the work of the unit is scheduled to begin. The Coordinator will review the proposed unit contract, offer criticism and suggestions, negotiate revisions where appropriate, and finally approve the unit design.

Among the questions both the student and the Coordinator will want to ask in this process are these:

- a. Does the unit contribute to the overall training needs of the student as identified in his or her learning contract?
- b. Does the unit contract spell out clear and measurable learning objectives?
- c. Are the events and/or experiences to be incorporated in the unit academically and theologically appropriate?
- d. Is the amount of work projected both sufficient and reasonable?
- e. Are there adequate and clearly defined means of evaluating the work done, whether directly or indirectly?

2. ***When the work of a given unit is completed***, the student and District Coordinator will complete ***written evaluations of the unit on pages 2 and 3*** of the contract, and will secure the evaluation of any other ***leader if necessary on page 4***. The Coordinator will then sign the contract and submit it to the Brethren Academy Office. Any work submitted by email from a District TRIM Coordinator is considered “signed.”

Written evaluations should address each of the following questions:

- a. How has the overall design of the unit worked or not worked? What was helpful? What was less helpful?
- b. How have the various objectives for the unit been fulfilled? If some have not been fulfilled, why?
- c. Where did significant growth occur during the unit? Can you identify several learnings that stand out?

In addition, the District TRIM Coordinator may make recommendations for follow-up reading or training experiences to build on the work of the unit.

Remember...

The completion of the TRIM program requires not only completion of a certain number of units, but competency in certain designated areas. In some cases, the District TRIM Coordinator may want to recommend broadening the scope of a proposed unit. For example, one of the areas of ministry in which a TRIM graduate needs to be competent is pastoral care and counseling. If a student proposes a seminar being offered on "Care for the Dying and Grieving" as the basis of an ISU, the unit might be redesigned to deal with pastoral care and counseling as a whole, with the seminar mentioned as one piece of that larger whole. Due to the abbreviated study required by TRIM for ministry training, units need to be chosen carefully.

The “Coursework” section of this notebook suggests a number of possibilities for units of study. If a student comes up with an idea that isn't covered by the list, consult with the Brethren Academy TRIM Coordinator about the appropriateness of this idea. As long as quality standards are maintained for the training that occurs, the format of that training can vary considerably. This will be particularly true for TRIM students who have ministry goals other than pastoral ministry.

Please use the forms provided by the Brethren Academy office for Independent Study Unit Contracts so that appropriate information is received for all ISU contracts.

Reproduce form as needed

Independent Study Unit (ISU) Contract

Name of Student:

Name of District TRIM Coordinator:

Subject Area of Unit:

Time Period Projected for Unit:

Learning Objectives for Unit: (what will student know, or are able to do, when ISU is completed?)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Learning Events or Experiences Making Up Unit: (what will student read, attend, explore, study in order to reach objectives?)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Person(s) Who Will Evaluate Unit:

_____ District TRIM Coordinator

_____ Other (please identify) _____

Means of Evaluation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Student Evaluation of Completed Unit

Name of Student:

Subject Area of Unit:

Overview of my experience:

What I wish I had done differently:

What went well:

My most significant learning(s):

District TRIM Coordinator or other Supervisor Evaluation of Completed Unit

Name of Student:

Subject Area of Unit:

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Certification of Unit for Credit:

Area in which student receives credit: (check one)

____ **General Education** ____ **Bible/Theology** ____ **Ministry**

Number of TRIM units student receives: (check one)

____ **1 Unit (75-90 hours)** ____ **.67 Unit (50-60 hours)**

____ **.50 Unit (40-45 hours)** ____ **.33 Unit (25-30 hours)**

(If more than one unit, please indicate, and explain the student's additional work).

(Signature of District TRIM Coordinator)

(Date)

Independent Study Unit Contract Sample

Thank you to Mary Mueller, District TRIM Coordinator and Disaster Ministry Leader, for many of the following ideas

Name of Student: John Kline
Name of Coordinator: Anna Mow
Subject Area of Unit: Brethren Disaster Ministries
Time Period Projected for Unit: January 1 - March 30

Learning Objectives for Unit: (what will student know, or be able to do, when ISU is completed?)

1. Will be able to articulate an understanding of the theology behind the Brethren emphasis on being a servant to others, citing not only ideas about God and faith, but also scriptures that are relevant
2. Will become familiar with the history of Brethren Disaster Ministries and with the written resources available for volunteers on site.
3. Will develop strategies to encourage others to participate in a Brethren Disaster Ministry project, including being able to speak from personal experience. This participation could be on site or offering support in other ways.
4. Will evaluate how I can personally best use my gifts in this kind of ministry.

Learning Events or Experiences Making Up Unit: (what will student, read, attend, explore, study in order to reach objectives?)

1. Participate as a volunteer for at least one week at a disaster ministry site.
2. Volunteer to lead one of the devotional times for the group during that week.
3. Interview the site coordinators and other experienced volunteers to learn of their motivation and experiences. Record these interviews, either on paper or with a recording device.
4. Keep a daily journal from the time of leaving home until returning to record not only activities, but reflections on how this experience might impact and shape one's ministry. Take notice of what personal gifts I have that can contribute to this kind of ministry.
5. Read "*Brethren Disaster Ministries Volunteer Handbook*," "*Here I Am Brethren Disaster Ministries Devotional Guide*," "*Light Our Way: A Guide For Spiritual Care In Times Of Disaster*," "*A Cup of Cold Water: The Story of Brethren Service*" by J. Kenneth Kreider, Write a one page paper on each publication, describing what I learned, who else might find this book helpful, and a basic description of the content.
6. Create and lead a worship service in two locations in which the theme is one of Brethren Disaster Ministries in order to not only share information but inspire others to serve. Use pictures in the form of PowerPoint. In this service, incorporate the theology and scripture mentioned above. Also share at least 2 examples from personal experience of how I saw God working in this experience. Include specific opportunities for congregation to consider traveling to a disaster project site to experience this kind of ministry first hand or support disaster ministry in another way. Give at least 8 people attending a feedback form to fill out.

Person(s) Who Will Evaluate Unit:

- District TRIM Coordinator**
 Other (please identify) _On Site Project Director_____

Means of Evaluation:

1. Observing participation as a volunteer on a disaster ministry site.
2. Read Journal to evaluate its depth and completeness.
3. Read papers on books read to consider their detail and self-reflective qualities.
4. Either attend or read a complete manuscript of the disaster ministries worship service.
5. Read the feedback forms to further information of the effectiveness of this service.

Student Evaluation of Completed Unit

Name of Student: John Kline **Subject Area of Unit:** Brethren Disaster Ministries

Overview of my experience:

I have always wanted to serve at a disaster site. This unit of training was a good balance of experiential and practical experiences along with thoughtful reading and self-reflection. Through my experience, my vision was expanded about the many ways in which God can touch the lives of people. At times this was an exhausting experience, both physically and emotionally, but it was one of the most meaningful experiences I have ever had in my life. Now that I have had this experience, it will be easy for me to encourage others to think about volunteering.

There were so many aspects of my experience that stretched me and put me in a better place to minister to others. I was away from home, which both freed me to experiment with new ways of doing things, but also at times felt uncomfortable. I was ministering to those who were in deep need, having come myself from a place where I have a comfortable home. I learned a great deal from both watching and listening to the disaster response site coordinators. An added learning that I did not anticipate was the skills one needs to work closely with a group of people who one does not know. And of course, in any group, not everyone is always easy to get along with or understand. So I tried hard to fit in, and to be loving and kind.

The books covered a wide range of subjects that were very helpful to me in terms of my preparation for this experience. The discipline of keeping a journal helped me to remember things that I would have forgotten otherwise. I don't know if that is a practice that I will continue, but I certainly saw the value of it. This experience drew on many other skills that I have been learning as a minister in training. For instance, I found myself often in situations of pastoral care where a ministry of presence, listening, warmth, and practical support was very important.

What I wish I had done differently:

I wish I had not waited so long to volunteer on a disaster response site! But I guess better late than never! I also was rushed to finish the reading before I left for the site. I wish that I would have had more time to digest the valuable information before embarking on this intense experience. I anticipated doing some of that on the van ride (2 days) to the site, but I quickly learned that in a van load of people headed to an experience with a common goal, there is a lot of conversation and relationship building. But all that was good, and possibly more important than any self reflection I could have done.

What went well:

I wondered whether I was going to be physically able to do the work that is needed on a disaster site, but I discovered that even someone like me who has few construction skills and is not young can be very helpful. I felt those who were the leaders encouraged me through their pleasant attitudes and their enthusiasm for everything that was done, regardless of the task. I thought about how I might try harder to do that for others, regardless of the ministry setting I am in. I learned a lot, but at the same time I felt that I offered some of my gifts to the process too, and together God used all that was available.

My most significant learning(s):

Many situations of ministry require one to take a deep breath and try to listen without offering too many answers. It is better for the one in the dilemma to find the answer, although I might offer suggestions. As I met new people, I learned that it takes practice and discipline on my part not to be judgmental of people or too "bossy." I learned that anyone who is willing to offer to serve can not only be helpful, but with the right encouragement, feel needed and receive a blessing.

District TRIM Coordinator or other Supervisor Evaluation of Completed Unit

Name of Student: John Kline **Subject Area of Unit:** Brethren Disaster Ministries

Evaluation of Completed Unit by District TRIM Coordinator: Anna Mow

In addition to the attached feedback from the disaster ministries staff, I would like to add that it appeared to me that this was a transformational experience for John. He was open to new learnings, he ventured into new territory, he prepared as best he could, and he was thoughtful and enthusiastic in his response.

Certification of Unit for Credit:

Area in which student receives credit: (check one)

General Education **Bible/Theology** **Ministry**

Number of TRIM units student receives: (check one)

1 Unit (75-90 hours) **.67 Unit (50-60 hours)**

.50 Unit (40-45 hours) **.33 Unit (25-30 hours)**

(If more than one unit, please indicate, and explain the student's additional work).

(Signature of District TRIM Coordinator)

(Date)

Five Required Experiences

Every student in TRIM will participate in at least:

- (a) one learning experience offered by a Brethren college,
- (b) one regular Bethany class or another class taught by Bethany faculty,
- (c) one Annual Conference
- (d) one District Conference
- (e) one ecumenical and/or intercultural training experience

Guidelines for participation in each of these required experiences follow on the next five pages of the TRIM notebook.

TRIM students who have been very active in the Church of the Brethren sometimes wonder why they need to participate in these experiences while in TRIM when they have already participated in these kinds of events in the past. The reason participation is required is that one looks at and responds to church life in a different manner when anticipating leadership in the church.

Plan ahead for these required experiences. Most TRIM students are in the program for at least a couple of years. If your congregation knows you need to attend Annual Conference or District Conference as a part of your ministry training, might they send you as their delegate? The Academy organizes classes around the country periodically which are taught by Bethany faculty and faculty members of Brethren colleges. Watch for these opportunities to complete your required experiences especially if you live a long distance from the seminary or a Brethren college.

The Process

1. Participate in one of the five experiences
2. For each experience, complete a copy of the Five Required Experiences Form located in the TRIM notebook following the descriptive pages of these experiences.
3. Give the completed form to your District TRIM Coordinator so that if approved, it can be forwarded to the Brethren Academy Office. Remember, a form that is emailed from a District TRIM Coordinator to the Brethren Academy Office is considered signed.
4. Credit will be given on the TRIM transcript for the experience.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

One of the requirements for graduation from TRIM is student participation in a Brethren College Experience. The purposes of this requirement are several:

- It provides a context for Brethren formation of pastors who enter TRIM with experience in other denominations;
- It affirms the value of high quality, liberal arts education as preparation for ministry;
- It actively facilitates a trainee's sense of loyalty to the Church of the Brethren denominational family;
- It represents one part of the inherent cooperation among various partners in ministry training.

For purposes of TRIM, a Brethren College Experience may be completed in one of the following ways:

- (1) Attend, with satisfactory academic standing, one of the six Brethren colleges for at least one semester prior to beginning the TRIM program. The experience will then be recorded as "completed" on the student's first official TRIM transcript.
- (2) Attend one regular, on-campus class offered by the college and complete it with satisfactory academic standing.
- (3) Attend and complete one off-campus, or extension class offered by the college or the Brethren Academy and taught by a Brethren college professor.
- (4) Participate in an educational experience sponsored by the college, on or off-campus. Examples might include a lecture series with an outside speaker, or special programs and workshops offered for the community. (The TRIM student may or may not elect to build an Independent Study Unit around such an experience.)
- (5) Invite a Brethren college professor to plan a series of lectures or workshops in a TRIM student's local area. In other words, discuss various creative options with the TRIM Academic Advisor from one's nearest Brethren College. Use the faculty resources from a Brethren College to meet one of the three subject-area requirements in TRIM.

BETHANY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY EXPERIENCE

One important requirement for a student's successful completion of TRIM is participation in a Bethany Seminary Experience beyond Orientation. Some TRIM students may acquire more than one course at Bethany; however, every student is asked to build at least one Bethany opportunity into their program, via an actual course or an Independent Study Unit.

The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that a student has at least one experience with the denomination's only graduate school of theology. This requirement also affirms the value given to the high-quality education offered by the denomination's only seminary, one of the partner agencies in ministry training.

For purposes of TRIM, the Bethany Seminary Experience may be credited in one of the following ways:

- (1) Enroll as an occasional or special student and complete one course (or more), on the Richmond campus, offered by Bethany and taught by a Bethany instructor.
- (2) Enroll as an occasional or special student and complete one course (or more), offered by the Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center of Bethany Theological Seminary from its regular class offerings. (Note: Academy programs alone do not meet the requirement of a Bethany experience unless taught by a member of the Bethany faculty).
- (3) Participate in one of the Intensives or Inter-term events or Travel Seminars, taught by a Bethany instructor.
- (4) Invite a Bethany faculty member to lead a seminar or workshop in your area of the country. (A limited amount of financial assistance toward travel is available from the national budget; honorarium for Bethany faculty is not expected.) Work creatively with the Brethren Academy TRIM Coordinator in designing an option of faculty presentation within a local region.
- (5) The online classes of Bethany and the Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center taught by Bethany faculty offer increasing possibilities for TRIM students.

As you plan this experience, please take careful note of the information in this TRIM notebook entitled "Academy Participation in Graduate Courses" to avoid misunderstandings of how your experience will be interpreted in TRIM. Do not hesitate to ask questions of Bethany and Academy staff to be sure you understand your status if you enroll in a Bethany course.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

The purpose of this exercise is to gain an understanding of the larger church, and how the local church and individuals relate to it. Below find some areas for exploration and development.

1. Give a brief description of Annual Conference officers, duties and how they are chosen.
2. Organizations:
 - Standing Committee - Function, who are your district's representatives?
 - Mission and Ministry Board - Function, number and current Board Chair.
3. Describe the Query process, origin, steps, and disposal of business items.
4. Describe and evaluate the worship experience you participated in.
5. Name a few of the Insight Sessions and ones you found helpful.
6. Briefly describe the age activities that are available.
7. Name some of the Biblical and Theological principles at work in the Annual Conference structure.
8. Offer your personal reflections and response to the Conference being studied.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

District Conference is a shorter, more local experience than Annual Conference, but still important in the Church of the Brethren. Examine some of the areas below for this experience.

1. Give a brief description of the District Conference Officers, duties, and how they chosen.
2. Describe the organizational components:
How is the District Organized?
What function and responsibilities of the various parts of the structure?
Name the District Staff and their main duties.
3. How do the business items arrive at District Conference?
4. A major item at District Conference is the budget. How is the budget prepared and how is it met in a given year? (You may wish to interview someone for this item.)
5. Share how the District Conference is a family venture.
6. What Biblical and Theological Principles become evident in District Conference?
7. In what ways do you see your district relating to the larger Church through the District Conference meeting?
8. Note a few thoughts from the worship services during District Conference.
9. Offer personal reflections and response to the District Conference you attended.

ECUMENICAL OR INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCE

One of the requirements for graduation from TRIM is participation in either an ecumenical or intercultural experience. Some TRIM students will accumulate a number of experiences that might qualify. Every student, however, needs to build at least one such experience into their program of study, whether as a course, an Independent Study Unit, or a special event.

The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that at least some facet of the student's training expands their ecclesial or cultural world beyond its everyday boundaries. We need to be able to see our Brethren experience of the church as part of a larger communion of churches linked together in a common mission. And we need to be able to see the world in which the church lives through multiple cultural perspectives.

For the purposes of TRIM, an ecumenical event will be an experience through which the student learns how the Church of the Brethren works together with other Christian bodies as a part of the larger church. It is not enough simply to attend a service where Christians from several different churches happen to show up. Some examples of ecumenical events include the following:

- (1) Attending a meeting of an interdenominational council of churches, whether worldwide, national, statewide or local.
- (2) Participating in the planning and/or carrying out of a special ecumenical gathering at the local or regional level.
- (3) Participating in the development and implementing of a cooperative interchurch ministry in one's community (e.g. food pantry, shelter for the homeless, etc.)
- (4) Spending a day at New Windsor, where one not only tours the facilities but also learns how churches work together in Church World Service and other agencies.
- (5) Participating in the activity of a local pastors' association (assuming that group not only gathers for fellowship, but also develops cooperative programs and events).

In a similar manner, an intercultural event will be an experience through which the student's perception of human life is expanded by exposure to different cultural settings, cultural values, etc. Some examples of intercultural events include the following:

- (1) Studying in another country, whether for a regular term of study or for a short-term intensive experience.

- (2) Participating in a study tour of another part of the world and reflecting on that experience.
- (3) Participating in an international work camp and reflecting on that experience.
- (4) Taking part in a seminar or workshop specifically designed to provide participants with cross-cultural enrichment.
- (5) Participating in a BVS or similar assignment familiarizing one with a different culture, whether in the United States or abroad.

The lists above are suggestive not restrictive. Other ecumenical or intercultural events that fulfill the purpose indicated above would qualify. If questions arise, consult with the District TRIM Coordinator.

Reproduce form as needed

FIVE REQUIRED EXPERIENCES FORM

Name of Student: _____

Event: Reported: ___ Bethany Experience
 ___ Brethren College Experience
 ___ Annual Conference
 ___ District Conference
 ___ Intercultural/Ecumenical Experience

Name of Coordinator:

Name of College, Experience, or Conference:

Date(s) of Experience:

Brief description of experience and learnings:

Certification for Credit:

Signature of District TRIM Coordinator

Date

The Church Online

As one seeks to share the good news of Jesus Christ and engages in ministry training, the incredible resources available online cannot be ignored. Each entering TRIM student is required to be able to interact in the mode of this technology for the purpose of communication and training. It is a goal of the initial "Introduction to Biblical Studies Course" to develop or increase the competency of technology skills for each TRIM student.

To keep up with the latest news in the Church of the Brethren, it is recommended that students subscribe to *Newsline*, a free bi-weekly newsletter sent only to those requesting a subscription. To receive it by e-mail write cobnews@brethren.org or call 800-323-8039, ext. 260. Newsline is also available at www.brethren.org.

Other valuable Church of the Brethren Web Sites:

The Official Web Site of the Church of the Brethren:
<http://www.brethren.org>

Here you can link to the agencies of the Church of the Brethren, find many past Annual Conference statements, locate resources from Brethren Press... Spend some time exploring this site so that you are familiar with the information it can provide. The "short-cuts" link at the top of the home page is very helpful to find specific information.

The Brethren Academy web site can be found at:

<http://www.bethanyseminary.edu/academy>

Here, among other things, you will find the latest Academy news including the most recent issue of the **Scroll**, the Brethren Academy Newsletter and information about upcoming courses.



*Do your best to present yourself to God as one who has been approved,
a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth.
2 Timothy 2: 15*

Ministry Internship Overview

*All relevant materials will be sent to the Supervisor directly by the
Brethren Academy Office once the Ministry Internship Covenant
has been received and approved*

Each of the models of ministry training recommended by the Church of the Brethren includes a ministry training experience in which practical engagement and thoughtful reflection are key components. The TRIM model of ministry training reflects the heritage of our tradition:

“While Brethren placed great importance upon the equality of all persons under God, they were also concerned about conducting their community in good order. For this reason, from the beginning they ‘set aside’ those of their number to carry out ministerial duties.” (*Fruit of the Vine*, Donald Durnbaugh, pp 110-111) “No one had formal training; however, ministers were put through a system of mentoring and ‘learning by doing’ under the presiding elder and ministers.” (*An Historical Look at Ministry in the Church of the Brethren* by James E. Miller in *Lines, Places and Heritage*, p 142)

Selecting a Supervisor

To guide TRIM ministry interns through this system of mentoring and “learning by doing,” a Supervisor is carefully chosen. Following the best of our Brethren tradition, the Supervisor should be

- a proven and tested minister
- possessing broad perspective, experience and oversight

It is important that a Supervisor be one who

- asks questions that require deep thinking
- is an encourager

- generates options and ideas
- provides accountability
- moves one ahead on the training path

- stays the course
- engages in truth telling
- is self differentiated in their own life
- recognizes and builds on the intern’s gifts
- provides clarity
- encourages self discovery

The Supervisor is *selected in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator* and in some cases, with the District Ministry Coordinating Team. The Supervisor is one who has formal ministry training, enabling him or her to engage the intern in reflection about what is being learned in both study and the current ministry setting. In situations where the intern is already supervised by someone in a ministry setting, effort should be made to secure a different person to provide supervision for this experience to enrich the feedback received. Finally, the Supervisor is one who is *willing to set aside the time* it takes to be faithful to this kind of commitment.

Description of the Internship

Each intern is to spend at least *400 hours* in the Ministry Internship. This includes preparation time for tasks, involvement in ministry, and reflection on and evaluation of the experience. It is preferred that the internship be completed over the period of one year, allowing the intern to become more seasoned in perspective and skill than a shorter time frame allows. In a one-year experience, an intern would average about 8 hours a week in the ministry experience. A time log is provided to help monitor the time spent. This tool will assure interns that they are spending adequate time in this experience and provide them with a self-monitoring system they can use in the future to help balance work with time spent in other activities in life.

The Ministry Internship is planned in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator and the Supervisor. Since this experience is under girded by the maturity and knowledge that comes through the study one does while participating in TRIM, it is *completed toward the end of the TRIM program*. At least 20 units of study (5 or more of which were completed while in TRIM) need to be finished before beginning the internship.

The Covenant for this internship must be submitted at least one month in advance of beginning to the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership to allow time for any adjustments that might need to be made to the plans.

While ministry occurs in many settings, TRIM is primarily a program established to train pastors. Therefore interns may choose one of three recommended options for fulfilling this requirement:

- (1) A ministry experience in a congregation one is already serving.
- (2) A ministry experience in a congregation where there is openness to being a ministry training setting and to providing learning experiences that will strengthen ministry skills.
- (3) In some instances, with the approval of the District Ministry Commission, or District Executive Minister as well as the Brethren Academy TRIM Coordinator, the Ministry Internship may take place in a ministry setting other than a congregation.

Possible settings/established programs:

* Chaplaincy, possible in a variety of settings, preferably under the supervision of a Board Certified Chaplain. Settings might be a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) in a medical setting or an internship in a Brethren retirement home. The website of The Association of Clinical Pastoral Education <www.acpe.edu/> will help locate possibilities for this kind of experience in various areas of the country.

* Disaster Response setting through the Church of the Brethren Disaster Ministries at <www.brethren.org>

* Church of the Brethren Camp setting. Information available through the Outdoors Ministry Association of the Church of the Brethren at www.cob-net.org/oma.htm

* Established programs for the training of Spiritual Directors

Goal of the Internship

Broadly defined, the goal of the Ministry Internship is to provide a structured opportunity to acquire knowledge and expertise about ministry in the context of doing ministry. It is an action/reflection model of learning, one that supplements the learning that occurs through TRIM coursework and the experiences of being part of a Ministry Formation Group.

Within that overarching goal, interns will identify specific learning goals to be achieved through the experience. The document “Competencies for Ministries” from the Ministerial Leadership Manual of the Church of the Brethren is included in the TRIM notebook and can serve as a resource for possible areas of focus that are important to those in ministerial leadership in the Church of the Brethren. Also included in the TRIM notebook is a document “Writing Learning Goals for the Ministry Internship” which provides both explanation and examples for this piece of the program.

Planning the Experience

The planning and carrying out of the Ministry Internship is as follows:

- (1) The District TRIM Coordinator and the intern will have discussed options for the Ministry Internship as they work on the Learning Contract following Orientation. A tentative proposal for the Ministry Internship requirement is listed in the contract.
- (2) If the intern is not already functioning in a regular ministry setting, the District TRIM Coordinator will assist in arranging a setting in which Ministry Internship can take place. The Coordinator will also assist in making arrangements for supervision, preferably helping to negotiate with another qualified person to assume the role on behalf of the district, but in some cases assuming the role of supervisor. The coordinator and/or intern should also be in communication with the District Executive Minister to determine appropriate placement.
- (3) At least one month before the Ministry Internship begins, the intern and the District TRIM Coordinator will prepare a Covenant for the Ministry Internship. A copy of this Covenant will be submitted to the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy for approval. A Covenant form is included in this section of the TRIM notebook.
- (4) The Ministry Internship takes place as covenanted and under the supervision designated in the Covenant. Supervision will normally include a combination of on-site observation of the intern's ministry, analysis of materials prepared by the intern and in-depth regularly scheduled conversations.
- (5) As a part of the Ministry Internship, the intern will prepare at least three activity case studies, reporting on specific ministry experiences. It is recommended that these be focused in the areas of
 - (a) preaching or leading worship
 - (b) teaching a class or small group
 - (c) providing pastoral care

Three response forms for possible use with congregations – for preaching, worship and teaching – can be found in the TRIM notebook.

For students with ministry plans other than pastoral ministry, alternative directions may be taken for these case studies in consultation with the District TRIM Coordinator.

In addition, all interns will prepare a fourth case study reflecting on a transforming experience that has occurred during the Ministry Internship.

Detailed guidelines for all of these case studies are included in this section of the TRIM notebook. These case studies will be submitted to the supervisor, who will review them and offer feedback to the student.

- (6) Alongside this more formal reporting, the intern will reflect on his or her Ministry Internship in the discussions of the Ministry Formation Group, inviting group members to enter into the reflective process regarding the progress made through this experience.
- (7) The District TRIM Coordinator will keep the Brethren Academy staff informed on the Ministry Internship in his or her annual report. When someone other than the District TRIM Coordinator is serving as the supervisor, the coordinator will consult with the supervisor as needed to monitor progress.
- (8) At the conclusion of the Ministry Internship, the intern and supervisor will write evaluations of the experience using the forms provided and the supervisor will certify whether the experience should be given credit. If the supervisor is someone other than the District TRIM Coordinator, the supervisor will send copies of the evaluations and the four case studies to the District TRIM Coordinator.
- (9) The District TRIM Coordinator will send copies of the Ministry Internship evaluations and the four case studies to the Brethren Academy TRIM Coordinator, who will note completion of the Ministry Internship requirement on the student's transcript.

Ministry Internship Covenant

A copy of this Covenant will be mailed to the Supervisor once it is approved

Name of Intern:

Name of Supervisor:

Supervisor Contact Information: Telephone:

Email if appropriate:

Mailing address:

Congregation(s) or Other Ministry Setting(s) for Internship:

Time Frame for Internship:

***What would you like to learn about ministry
as you move through this experience?***

Keep your answer to that question in mind as you complete the following:

*Read the document "Writing Learning Goals for the Ministry Internship"
before beginning*

Learning Goals: Identify three or four specific and measurable goals that you hope to achieve thro

For most students, it is recommended that three of these goals relate to the ministries of preaching, teaching and pastoral care.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Learning Experiences: Describe the activities you will be engaged in so that these learning goals might be achieved. State what will actually be done, not what will be observed. A Ministry Internship is meant to be a “hands on” experience. Below, identify at least one activity for each learning goal, and then, if appropriate, list additional responsibilities that will be a part of this experience:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Other:

Evaluation: For each Learning Goal above, describe how that goal will be evaluated:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Description of Supervision: After conversation with your supervisor, include how he or she will relate to the ministry internship, including opportunities for on-site observation, how often conversations between supervisor and student will occur, other means of evaluating the experience:

Reminder: Three activity case studies related to the goals you have set are required during this experience. For most interns it is recommended that these be in the areas of preaching/worship, teaching and pastoral care. For some, concentrating in ministries other than pastoral ministry, alternative ministry areas may need to be considered. In the list below please list the focus areas that you will report on using the format suggested for each of these case studies:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

A document, "Ministry Internship Case Studies Guidelines," is provided to guide you through the writing of these three case studies. The case studies are to be reported on the "Ministry Internship Case Study Report Form."

In addition, a fourth case study of a general reflective nature is required. This is described toward the end of the "Ministry Internship Case Studies Guidelines."

Student Signature

Date

District TRIM Coordinator Signature

Date

Writing Learning Goals for the Ministry Internship

When writing goals, it is important to consider the areas of ministry that you feel you need to strengthen, and try to create ways to push yourself to do that. Often interns list the activities they will do rather than describe outcomes.

As you write goals, consider this question: Is there a way that someone else – your supervisor – will know that you have accomplished what you set out to do?

Examples:

Learning Goal #1

I seek to expand my preparation techniques in writing sermons and to become more aware of how my sermons are received.

Learning Experiences for Goal #1

I will preach at least 6 sermons. As I do this, I will try three different styles of preparation:

1. using the lectionary scripture
(or the scripture highlighted by the Brethren bulletin)
2. beginning with a topic
3. working with a small group for input

I will ask for sermon feedback from at least 10 people in the congregation using an evaluation form for each of the above sermons.

I will journal about my response to these three methods of preparation as well as about the reaction of those who heard my sermon.

Learning Goal #2

As I minister to youth, I would like to develop strong connections between the activities I plan and the needs of youth and parents.

Learning Experiences for Goal #2

I will visit each member of the youth group in their home, and there have a conversation which will include parents or caregivers. Through that discussion, I will attempt to discern what the most meaningful aspect of congregational life is both to the youth and to the adults present. I will then incorporate that idea into a prayer at some point during the visit. As a follow up, I will make a list of what ideas emerge from both youth and adults. I will write a note to each youth affirming their participation in our church and specifically mentioning the aspect they said they found most meaningful. Taking the information I have gleaned, I will plan one activity for the youth group, providing response forms for youth and parents.

Learning Goal #3

Having spent most of my adult life in one Brethren congregation, I would like to broaden my view of what ministry is like in different congregational settings

Learning Experiences for Goal #3

I will attend worship at a Brethren church where I have never been before, preferably one very different than my own. I will observe the congregation, and take note of aspects of worship that are new or different to me. I will schedule a time to interview both the pastor and one congregational member, talking about what I have observed and asking about the traditions of that congregation. I will then write a reflection paper on what I think it would mean for me to be the pastor of a congregation that is different than the one I am used to.

Ministry Internship Checklist

*A guide through the process for you and your supervisor.
Checklist does not have to be turned in.*

Filling in the date of each completed activity will help you keep track of your progress:

- _____ Completed Covenant in consultation with District TRIM Coordinator
- _____ Covenant sent to Brethren Academy Office
- _____ Covenant approved
- _____ Ministry Internship beginning date
- _____ Case Study Report #1 completed
- _____ Case Study Report #1 discussed with Supervisor and forwarded to District TRIM Coordinator
- _____ Case Study Report #2 completed
- _____ Case Study Report #2 discussed with Supervisor and forwarded to District TRIM Coordinator
- _____ Case Study Report #3 completed
- _____ Case Study Report #3 discussed with Supervisor and forwarded to District TRIM Coordinator
- _____ Case Study Report #4 completed
- _____ Case Study Report #4 discussed with Supervisor and forwarded to District TRIM Coordinator
- _____ Ministry Internship ending date
- _____ Final Evaluation completed and shared with Supervisor
- _____ Final Evaluation given to District TRIM Coordinator
- _____ Ministry Internship Completed

Ministry Internship Case Studies Guidelines

A deep engagement in ministry requires not only completing activities, but reflecting on how those activities either strengthened the faith and skills of the one ministering - or didn't. Writing a case study is an excellent form of reflection that can provide solid feedback to one involved in ministry as well as to the supervisor.

In the Ministry Internship, the intern is required to prepare four case studies to discuss with his or her supervisor. Three of these case studies are directly related to the learning goals the intern planned for this experience. Keep these case studies in mind as you move through the Ministry Internship. Be alert to experiences which will lend themselves well to this form of reflection, and then write the case studies as soon as possible after the experience has been completed so that it is fresh in your mind. It is suggested that the fourth and final case study not be written until toward the end of the internship, but along the way, keep a list of possible experiences to refer back to that might be defining moments for your formation as a minister.

Each case study is to be presented at a different meeting with the supervisor. A Reporting Form is provided for writing the case studies. Depending on the nature of the event, the form might have to be adjusted to be appropriate. These case studies are to be written in a narrative form following the form provided, and then signed and dated at the bottom by both the intern and the supervisor. Put your best writing skills into action on these case studies. In a world of technology is it important for those in ministry to be able to communicate in clear and appropriate ways.

It is anticipated that each case study would be about 8-10 single typed pages in length. If one is concise, this should be long enough to fully complete the expectations of this experience. A case study of a longer length is acceptable, but in ministry it is more important to be deeply reflective than to be long winded. After the case study has been discussed with the supervisor, it is given to the District TRIM Coordinator who will send a copy of each of the case studies on to the Brethren Academy Office for the your Ministry Internship file.

Three Activity Case Studies, One Transforming Experience Case Study

For the first three case studies, choose one event in which you have the primary responsibility for what happens. Be sure this is an event you either planned and carried out or were a vital part of what happened. It is preferable that this incident be related to one of your Ministry Internship goals. For most interns, it is recommended that the three activity case studies are written about events in the areas of preaching/worship, teaching and pastoral care, writing one case study for an experience in each of these three areas. Interns who do their Ministry Internship in areas that do not lend themselves to these kinds of activities are to consult with their supervisor to plan the direction these three case studies will take.

The fourth and final case study, required of all interns, will be written in the same form as the others, but addresses a more comprehensive subject for reflection. For this case study, consider one area in which you have grown in your view of ministry. What has surprised you during this time of hands-on ministry? Think about what prompted growth in you, and write a case study around a stretching, transforming experience of your Ministry Internship that you feel will deeply impact your ministry in the future. For this case study, write briefly on numbers 1-3 in the outline provided, but focus your attention and reflection on numbers 4-6.



Ministry Internship Case Study Report Form

(four reports are required, one incident per form)

*To complete this form electronically,
request a form by email from the Brethren Academy Office*

Name of Student:

Congregation or Other Ministry Setting:

Ministry Incident (check one)

_____ Preaching and leading worship

_____ Teaching a class or small group

_____ Providing pastoral care

_____ A transforming experience (required for all interns)

_____ Other (please describe) _____

Date of Incident:

I. Introduction

- A. Describe what took place in this ministry incident/event: the setting, who was present, its purpose and any expectations. Include both your expectations and ones that might be held by others involved.

C. Summarize the content of this incident/event. In some cases, this might be attached as an addendum. You may want to include a sermon manuscript, notes or video if your coordinator was not able to be present, a lesson plan, publicity materials used, a brief description of readings you did to prepare, power point content... Whatever you had ready to use to carry out your plan.

D. Describe the method of evaluation you planned to use to decide whether this incident/event met the goals you hoped for or not. Remember that often we learn more from failure than from success.

II. Verbatim Account

A. Choose a few minutes in the incident/event that seemed significant to you in terms of your ministry or your reflection process. As accurately as possible, write down the actual words spoken during this key moment. For a preaching case study this might be comments made to you following worship. Include interchanges which show what gain you made in relation to your objectives.

Use the following format:

P = parishioner M = minister

P1 Can you give me a few minutes?

M1 Of course. Come into my office.

P2 It's about my daughter. She's thinking about leaving her husband again.

M2 Please, sit down. I'm sorry to hear this.

I know that you've been concerned about her.

B. If there were oral or written evaluations of the participants, include those.

III. Self-Awareness

A. What was the mood present during this time? What are your immediate hunches about the effect of this ministry on those involved?

B. What happened to you in the process of planning, carrying out the event or conversation? What personal issues did this incident/event raise for you?

IV. Theoretical Reflection

A. What are your assumptions about the ways that persons in this context are transformed in their spiritual lives?

B. Apply one or two relevant ideas to the incident/event you described. (for example: As early as age 11, some are beginning to realize the difference between God and Jesus, or the tears this person shed told me that something touching had been brought to mind for them.)

V. Theological Reflection

A. How do your faith assumption(s) about God, the church, the Bible, and/or humanity influence the content of your ministry and relate to the process of the incident/event?

B. What faith assumptions did other persons contribute to this act of ministry?

VI. Conclusion

A. What was going on here? What was God doing? What ministry was occurring? What did you learn from this incident/event and its evaluation that will help you the next time you minister in this kind of context?

Comments by the Supervisor:

a. Note ways in which you were able to observe or assess this ministry incident/event:

b. What feedback do you have for the intern?

Date Report Form Completed:

Intern's Signature _____

Supervisor's Signature _____

6. What illustrations or stories do you remember? How were they related to the main point?

7. What suggestions do you have for improvement?

8. What would you particularly like to affirm about today's intern preacher?



Ministry Internship

Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership **Worship Leadership Response Form**

Name of Intern: _____

Date: _____

- A. What words describe how you felt when you entered the sanctuary this morning?
- B. What words describe the worship leader's
1. voice/diction
 2. mannerisms/gestures
- C. Comment about the worship leader's use of vocabulary/choice of words.
- D. Did the worship service as a whole help you better understand the scripture for the day?
- E. What do you consider to be this person's strongest qualities as a worship leader? In what ways did he/she facilitate or aid your worship?

(over)

- F. What do you consider to be this person's weakest qualities as a worship leader?

- G. In what ways did he/she hinder or interrupt your worship?

- H. What words describe how you felt at the end of this worship service?



Ministry Internship

BRETHREN ACADEMY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP
Teaching Response Form

Intern/Teacher _____

Class topic _____

Date _____

1. What did you understand the topic for today's class to be?
2. Was there something in the lesson that touched you personally?
3. How did this time of study help you in your Christian life? How did it help you understand God better?
4. Were there ways in which gestures, voice level, facial expression, and other forms of communication help you understand the lesson better? Were any of these forms of communication distracting?
5. Did the lesson have a clear flow to it? Were you able to follow the teacher's points?

(over)

6. What illustrations or stories do you remember? How were they related to the main point of the lesson?

7. Did you feel there was a good balance of activities – discussion, lecture, small group work if appropriate?

8. What would have made the lesson more meaningful to you?

9. What would you particularly like to affirm about today's intern teacher?



Ministry Internship

BRETHREN ACADEMY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP

Intern's Final Evaluation of Ministry Internship:

(Reflect on your experience. Were your learning goals helpful to your growth in ministry? Did you identify other areas of ministry which you hope to explore and strengthen in the future? What do you wish you had done differently? Were there parts of this experience that make you feel pleased with what you accomplished? Share your completed form with your supervisor and your District TRIM Coordinator.)

Intern's Signature

Date



Ministry Internship

BRETHREN ACADEMY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP

Supervisor's Final Evaluation of the Ministry Internship:

(Please share this completed form with the intern and the District TRIM Coordinator)

My evaluation of the Ministry Internship of _____
(intern's name)

What areas of growth did you see in the intern? Did the intern work adequately at achieving their learning goals?

Where does the intern continue to need to stretch in their understanding/practice of ministry?

How was this experience for you?

(over)

Checklist for Case Study Reports

___ Report on preaching/worship incident submitted on _____

___ Report on teaching incident submitted on _____

___ Report on pastoral care incident submitted on _____

___ Report of transforming experience submitted on _____

Certification of Experience for Credit:

Signature of Supervisor

Date



*“To the glory of God and my neighbor’s good.”
May it be so in your ministry.*

Congratulations, Graduate!

You felt a call. You responded. You have studied, practiced, prayed.

This final section of your TRIM notebook readies you for graduation from this ministry training program. It includes:

- A reminder of Graduation Competencies
- Instructions for the exit Biblical Theological Awareness Inventory
- Final Evaluation Forms for both student and District TRIM Coordinator

All TRIM graduates receive a certification indicating completion of an approved Church of the Brethren program of ministry training. For those seeking ordination, this certification documents that the educational requirements for ordination in the Church of the Brethren have been fulfilled.

Some graduates will also receive a certification at the college level. This will vary from person to person, depending on the amount of college work completed. Other graduates may also receive a degree or other certification from Bethany Theological Seminary. Graduates are encouraged to consider the important milestone of TRIM graduation as the launch pad to further training in ministry, as life long learning is needed in an ever changing, always challenging profession!

When all requirements have been completed for graduation, the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership will inform the graduate’s District Executive Minister of this accomplishment. Districts are encouraged to recognize TRIM graduates by presenting the graduation certificate to the graduate at District Conference. All TRIM graduates are also recognized at the Bethany Theological Seminary luncheon at Annual Conference and become Bethany alumni.

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed,
knowing from whom you learned it and
how from childhood you have known the sacred writings
that are able to instruct you
for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
2 Timothy 3: 14-15*

Determining Competency in Prospective Graduates

A TRIM student approaching graduation from the program is expected to be competent in three overall categories of: (1) general education, (2) biblical and theological studies, and (3) ministry and ministry skills.

The Ministry Advisory Council has determined that competency in these various areas will be demonstrated as follows:

I. GENERAL EDUCATION

- A. Satisfactory completion of course work in the various areas of general education designated for TRIM students,

II. BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

- A. Satisfactory completion of course work and other units in the related subject areas designated for TRIM students,
AND
- B. A satisfactory exit score on the Biblical/Theological Awareness Inventory (85/125).

III. MINISTRY AND MINISTRY SKILLS

- A. Satisfactory completion of course work and other units in the related subject areas designated for TRIM students.
AND
- B. A satisfactory evaluation of the Ministry Internship experience.

When competency has been demonstrated in the areas above, the student and District TRIM Coordinator complete the Final Evaluation forms found in this section of the TRIM notebook. These forms are mailed to the Brethren Academy Office for review by the TRIM Coordinator.

Biblical and Theological Awareness Inventory

The Biblical and Theological Awareness Inventory consists of a basic body of information that every leader in the Church of the Brethren should possess.

Students are given a copy of this inventory as they enter TRIM and are encouraged to find the correct answers for all 125 questions as they proceed through their TRIM studies.

When the student has completed all of her or his work in TRIM, either the District TRIM Coordinator will administer the exit version of the Biblical and Theological Inventory Assessment or in cases where schedules or distances make administration of the BTAI difficult, the student may take the exit BTAI on the honor system. This exit version contains the same questions as the BTAI that the student was given upon entering TRIM, however the questions are organized in a different order. The exit BTAI is available either in paper or electronic form from the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy.

Upon completing the BTAI, it is to be mailed to the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy for grading. A student is required to achieve a grade of approximately 70% (correctly answer 85 of the 125 questions) in order to graduate from TRIM. Should that not happen, the student will then be given more time to prepare and another BTAI will be administered.

The student and the District TRIM Coordinator will be informed of the results of this assessment.

FINAL EVALUATION

TRIM Graduate

*How has your TRIM program gone for you? Where were you stretched?
What do you wish had been done differently?*

To complete your file prior to graduation, please submit this evaluation to your District TRIM Coordinator and the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership.

Suggested topics to include are: Ministry Formation Group participation; completion of the various levels of coursework; personal and spiritual growth that was particularly memorable; work with your District TRIM Coordinator; your District Ministry leadership; the TRIM Coordinator of the Brethren Academy, other general comments. Please make your evaluation the length it needs to be to adequately describe your response.

Graduate's Signature

Date

FINAL EVALUATION

District TRIM Coordinator

*Please return this evaluation to the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership
and share it with the graduate*

The final evaluation of the student and coordinator completes a student's file prior to graduation. Suggested issues to include are: Ministry Formation Group leadership; mentoring the student through the TRIM process; particular gifts seen in this student including those that were strengthened in the process, support from your District Ministry leadership and/or from the Brethren Academy staff, other general suggestions. Please make your evaluation the length it needs to be to adequately describe your response.

District TRIM Coordinator's Signature

Date