

Information on First Reader/Primary Advisor

1. First Reader Requirements

- a. Advisors must have written a dissertation of some sort, whether D. Min or Ph.D.
- b. It is preferred, but not required, that advisors have some expertise in the subject area. The stature of the advisor is a plus to the dissertation, as he or she “signs off” on the signature page.
- c. The best advisors have a personal relationship with the D. Min. Student. Past professors with whom the student had an extraordinarily good relationship and mentors, or even people with doctorates who go to your church, work much better than strangers and acquaintances. The lack of a personal relationship often means the advisor takes a less active role. It helps if he or she has some “stake” in the student finishing, because he or she loves or has a friendship commitment to the student.
- d. The doctoral student is asked to identify and approach their first reader / advisor. The dissertation coordinator will follow up by sending a thank you letter, a contract and forms that enable ATS to pay compensation (four \$300 payments or \$1200 total).
- e. If the doctoral student cannot find a suitable advisor/ first reader. The dissertation coordinator will assign someone, probably from Nyack College.

2. First Reader Duties

- a. Advise on the formulation of the research method, in particular, the wording of the hypothesis, the choosing of an instrument, the arrangement for the participant pool, the analysis of the data (the IRB approval application)
- b. Assist the Coordinator in the governance of the dissertation during the data collection and writing stage.
- c. Go line by line over chapter drafts. Offer feedback to the student, primarily through track changes and comments in a WORD document, on chapter drafts. The main need is for quality control. Comments on professionalism in presentation are especially appreciated. Chapter 1 (ministry problem), chapter 2 (literature review), chapter 3 (method), chapter 4 (findings) and chapter 5 (conclusions).
- d. Assist student with re-writes and revisions if defense draft does not pass inspection.
- e. Attend oral defense and sign the approval signature page