Theological Field Education Orientation (TFE)
Supervised Ministries

- Ministry education in clinical settings through Clinical Pastoral Education and Clinical Pastoral Care (CPE and CPC)
- Ministry education in a church-based setting or other Christian service agency through Theological Field Education (TFE)
- Connections to ministry opportunities/employment and denominational contacts through Placement (Limited)
Students in the Master of Divinity program earn 3-9 credit hours in internships (which varies by track).

Internships are congregational/agency/non-profit and clinical-based.

TFE, which is the focus today, are congregational/agency internships.
Consult with your Academic Advisor

- There are a number of options for completing the internships which will vary by student and degree program/track

- Consider your specific needs as you understand them now and as you consider your life beyond seminary. This will help you in selecting options in fulfilling your internships (clinical & pastoral) to meet requirements for graduation

- Consider also your specific needs as it relations to requirements for ordination or ministerial recognition within your denomination or faith tradition
**TFE at Palmer-Course Structure**

- Theological Field Education is a year-long program earning 3 credit hours in a year beginning in August and ending in May of the following year. *(Both semesters must be completed in order to receive credit)*

- **TFE 1A & 1B = Level One (SUPV525 & SUPV526)**

- **TFE 2A & 2B = Level Two (SUPV535 & SUPV536)**
Students on the Pastoral Leadership Track are required to take:
› TFE 1A and 1B
› CPE ½ unit or CPC

Students on the Adaptive Leadership Track are required to take:
› TFE 1A&1B
› AND May Select CPE or CPC as one of their electives if they so choose
Course Prerequisites

- Must meet all program prerequisites for TFE 1A & 1B:
  - 30 credit hours of credit by beginning of fall
  - **Completed** Foundations of Pastoral Care and Counseling
  - **Completed** Nurturing Spiritual Life and Character I
  - **Completed** Systematic Theology and Ethics: Vision of Community, or Systematic Theology and Ethics: Reign of God **OR** have registered for Systematic Theology and Ethics I: Vision of Community **or** Systematic Theology and Ethics: Reign of God & complete it in the upcoming fall semester.
Course Prerequisites, cont.

- for TFE 2A & 2B:
  - have completed TFE 1A & 1B
  - and 54 credit hours
TFE at Palmer-Course Structure

- A minimum of 10-12 hours per week in an approved ministry setting
- Weekly seminar group on campus
- Students **must remain in same** weekly seminar group and ministry site for the **entire** academic/program year.
What Happens in Theological Field Education?

- Students grow in their understanding of the dynamics of ministry, their skills, and their professional identity and call as Christ’s servants.

- Students learn by doing ministry and reflecting on the experience under supervision from an experienced practitioner.
Students who come with ministry experience also grow during this time as they identify their growing edges and develop goals that will lead enhancement of existing skills or the learning of new ones.

Provides an opportunity to look at a specific area of ministry and gain skill in that area.
Increase your ability to...

- Develop personal and professional skills
- Integrate theory, theology, and tradition while practicing ministry
- Manage matters related to ministry in the context of covenant
- Perform in ministry context with increasing competence
Desired Learning Outcomes

Increase your ability to...

- Deepen awareness of one’s call to ministry
- Learn methods of theological reflection
- Engage in relationships of support
- Intentionally grow in cross-cultural understanding and application
- Develop a philosophy of life-long learning and collegiality
These outcomes will occur at all levels but will look different depending on the starting point of each student.
Theological Field Education Community

Seminarian

- Pastor/Mentor and Ministry Site
- Or
- Off Site Pastor/Mentor

- TFE Seminar Group (Seminarians and Seminar Leader)

- Supervised Ministries Office

- Site Team (Chair and Members)
“TFE Partners”
Participate in Covenant & Assessments

- Supervised Ministries Office Staff/Palmer Seminary
- Seminarian Intern
- Seminar Leader
- Pastor/Mentor (Off Site Pastor/Mentor)
- Site Team
Seminar Leaders

- Experienced Clergy
- Represent the diversity of our student population in gender, race and culture
- Represent several denominations
- Seminar leaders may teach both levels of TFE.
Seminar Group
Teaching and Learning Strategies

- The course is structured in small group formation and uses a variety of learning models, including:
  - Didactic
  - Case study
  - Theological Reflection
  - Media
  - Role play
Theological Field Education Ministry Site

- All sites must be approved by the Supervised Ministries Office
- Students must observe the Home Church Policy in selecting a site
- Provide ministry hours and diverse experience (students who are Pastors identify a segment of ministry that is TFE)
- Remuneration (recommended, not required)
Pastor/ Mentor

- Must...
  - Have earned a Master’s level degree in theology & have 2 or more years experience or have at least 10 years professional ministry experience
  - Be certified through Palmer Seminary by taking TFE 700- “Ministry of Supervision”. One time fee for this one day session.
  - Attend each year the designated fall seminar class with their pastoral intern.
Must...

- Meet with students weekly for supervisory conference
- Prepare and submit reports and assessments
- Covenant with Department for a 3-year cycle of participation

No Seminarian or member of the Seminarian’s family may serve as their Pastor/Mentor
Some Qualities of an Effective Pastor/Mentor

- Model
- Available
- Competent
- Experiential Theologian
- Team Player
- Open and Vulnerable
Some Qualities of an Effective Off-Site Pastor/Mentor

- Extensive Ministry Experience
- Model of Life Long Learning
- Schedule Time for Meetings
- Willing to Challenge You
- Experiential Theologian
- Team Player
- Open and Vulnerable
What is a TFE Site Team?

- Small group of approximately 3-5 persons
- Assist seminarian and congregation in forming a relationship
- Offer support and accountability
- Participate in assessments
Formation of an Effective Site Team

- Diversity of ages, gender, thought, experiences
- Supportive and able to give constructive feedback
- Able to be reflective and to think through issues theologically
- Willing to work as a team
- Familiar with scripture
What is a TFE Site Team?

- Meets at least 3 times each semester
- No member of the Seminarian’s family or Pastor/Mentor’s family may serve on the Site Team
- No current Palmer Seminarian may serve on the Site Team

Training sessions for members of the Site Team are offered during the fall semester
What is TFE Site Team

- Students who are also Pastors
  the Site Team will be a different group than
  your Pastoral Relations Committee, the Site
  Team’s only function is to look at the areas
  of ministry designated as TFE
Finding a Ministry Site

- Consider places you know
- Consult with pastors, colleagues & other Palmer students
- Ministry Site Opportunities Listing available in office and online after Registration Period.
September 25 is latest for the start of the internship. It will create difficulty for you, however, if all the pieces of TFE are not in place when classes begin the last week of August.

This date, Sept. 25, is the “drop dead” date after which it may be determined that you need to do TFE in a later year in order to receive the required educational experience.

“Tip Sheet” available in office during Registration to help with the site selection process
Process

- Satisfy prerequisites for TFE & meet with your Academic Advisor to discuss readiness
- Register for Theological Field Education during Palmer’s Registration weeks.
  - with Academic Advisor
  - with Supervised Ministries Office (required)
- Because Seminar Leaders are contracted, seats and section are only guaranteed if you register by May 30. Seats and Section are not guaranteed for registration that occurs after May 30.
Process, cont.

- Select Site & Obtain Ministry Approval
- Contact the office with needed information/forms, (specific instructions issued during Registration process)
Credit for the TFE year is contingent upon successful completion of both fall and spring semesters.

Students may not serve in their ‘Home Church’ (churches of origin or significant time of membership).*

*Waivers are granted on a yearly basis only after receipt of a Home Church Waiver Application and supporting documents.
Requirements and Policies, continued

- Students should check with their denomination / faith tradition for any requirements (particularly those who are preparing for ordination) concerning selecting their TFE internship site (also may have implications for clinical choices).
Resources

- Welcome to Theological Field Education edited by Matthew Floding. Alban, 2011
- TFE Handbook, updated annually
- [http://palmerseminary.edu/supministries](http://palmerseminary.edu/supministries)
Next Steps

- During the Palmer Registration Period
  - Meet with Academic Advisor to Register in WebAdvisor
  - Meet with a member of Supervised Ministries Team to Register with our Office (Hours Will Be Posted on McInnis 247/241)
- Begin to think about Possible Pastor Mentors and Possible Sites
Supervised Ministries Office

Administrative Leadership Team:
Rev. Dr. Marsha Brown Woodard, Director
McInnis 247

and

Supervised Ministries Student Assistant
Ms. Emily K. Stein, MSW, CSW
McInnis 241

http://palmerseminary.edu/supministries or

PTS>Current Students>Supervised Ministries