

## **Boston University School of Theology Doctoral Teaching Preparation**

Boston University School of Theology offers two research doctorates aimed at preparing the future professoriate: the Doctor of Theology (ThD) and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Practical Theology. In 2010, the School of Theology implemented a new Doctoral Teaching and Research Internship Program (DTRIP) for all incoming ThD and PhD students that shifted our degree programs more toward a teacher training, research training, and mentoring model.

The DTRIP asks all doctoral students to accept one research internship, one junior teaching internship, and one senior teaching internship during their degree program. While these internships are not paid positions but rather requirements of the degree program, students are supported by yearly fellowships in amounts much higher than previous levels of funding during the first three years of their doctoral work. Research internships may be fulfilled during the first year of studies, but teaching internships may only be fulfilled in the second and subsequent years of a student's doctoral program.

Faculty Mentoring and Evaluation of Students: Faculty members who are mentoring doctoral interns are responsible for providing an evaluation of the intern during and at the conclusion of each assignment.

Other Doctoral Students: While the new program is only offered to and required of STH doctoral students matriculating in 2010 and thereafter, other doctoral students in the School of Theology and in the Division of Religious and Theological Studies continue to be assigned paid teaching assistant and research assistant positions as those become available, based on student qualifications, faculty requests, available funds, and class needs. DTRIP students, once they have completed their three internships, are eligible for paid assistantships as well.

Teacher Training: To better accomplish the aims of the Doctoral Internship program, all doctoral students are required to participate in a series of colloquia during the first year of their program and periodically thereafter. These colloquia are also made available to returning doctoral students. The colloquia treat the following topics: (1) Research Methods, (2) Pedagogy, (3) Professional Identity, and (4) Prospectus and Dissertation Writing. The Prospectus and Dissertation Writing colloquium are not be taken until that topic is relevant, but the other three are covered in the first year. Students have the option of taking a particular colloquium multiple times if they want (indeed, they are encouraged to do so. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs office coordinates the colloquia, with oversight by the ASC.

- (1) *Research Methods:* The purpose of this 4-hour colloquium is to introduce doctoral students to primary research methods in the study of scripture, theology, history, and the social sciences with special attention to library research strategies and digital resources appropriate to those primary methods. The colloquium includes an overview of the various information discovery tools provided by libraries, crafting a bibliography and resources for bibliographic management, use of research collections and archives, the social construction of information, and intellectual rights. Some reading in advance of the colloquium is required. *Colloquium co-facilitated by faculty and library staff.*

- (2) *Professional Formation*: Professional formation is more than just diligently working on courses, taking exams, writing a prospectus, finishing and defending the dissertation, though it is clearly all of this. Over the course of the doctoral program, students also should be prepared to become a member of the world of academe, or as it was called long ago, The Republic of Letters. Of course completing the formal educational program is critical and the first part of the process, but it is only one part of the theory and praxis of joining a new professional world in the academy, religious leadership, or other kinds of professional goals and careers. This colloquium offers practical and professional training designed to assist students as they enter the teaching profession and the sometimes arcane world of the academy. Topics covered will include: joining professional learned societies, submitting papers to conferences and professional meetings, presenting articles and reviews to publication and learning about how to conduct a successful job interview, both at an initial stage and the more intense on campus interview at a prospective college, university, or other job site.
- (3) *Pedagogy*: These colloquia include all aspects of teaching including syllabi construction, preparing a lecture, classroom management, evaluation, etc.
- (4) *Prospectus and Dissertation Writing*: This colloquium includes practice in the successful development of each element of the prospectus, advice and information regarding length, breadth and depth of the prospectus, and a discussion of the elements of the submission process. The goals of the colloquium include: familiarizing students with the elements of a successful prospectus; encouraging students at the prospectus writing stage to share resources, information and support throughout the process; and creating a culture of academic rigor and intellectual excitement capable of easing students into the next phase of their program.

**Boston University School of Theology**  
**Findings for April 2012 Summative Conference**

- (1) Boston University School of Theology's doctoral programs have always provided outstanding faculty mentoring and preparation in fields of study that have led to its international reputation as a leader in the shaping of the theological professoriate. However, students would benefit from more systematic teacher training rather than sporadic mentoring dependent upon a few key faculty persons. That training would include at a minimum: syllabus preparation, pedagogy and teaching philosophy, class mechanics, grading/evaluation, professional identity, academic publishing, and negotiating institutional politics and their impact on the classroom. It would also include facilitating the learning of graduate students in the skill of reading cultures and contexts (moving from one kind of graduate institution to teaching in a very different kind of setting).
- (2) The teaching program and culture at Boston University School of Theology is undergoing significant change with the development last year of a Doctoral Teaching and Research Internship Program (DTRIP) that includes an emphasis on intentional faculty mentoring and teacher training. Three internships (a Research Internship, a Junior Teaching Internship, and a Senior Teaching Internship) are augmented by participation in a series of colloquia during the first two years of a doctoral student's program. The colloquia include research methods, professional formation, pedagogy and teacher training, and prospectus/dissertation writing. This shift in the teaching culture at Boston is significant and radically fosters the development of teachers for undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as those whose contexts of teaching include parish and denominational settings. The new directions offer incredible gifts to current and future students in the program, as well as to the faculty itself. The changes will require ongoing faculty development around issues related to mentoring and a continual reflection upon the internship and colloquia, particularly those more focused on teaching.