

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
130 Essex Street, Box 241
So. Hamilton, MA 01982
978/646-4119, Fax 978/646-4197
khorvath@gordonconwell.edu

Raymond F. Pendleton, Ph.D.,
Director of Mentored Ministry
Katherine Kyte Horvath, M.A.,
Assistant Director
Paul Borthwick, D.Min.
Director of OMP

GUIDELINES FOR OVERSEAS MISSIONS PRACTICUM MENTORS

This mentor guide is exclusively for the use of those who are working with the Overseas Missions Practicum (OMP) of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Approved Mentors: All mentors working in ministry with Gordon-Conwell students must be approved by the Mentored Ministry Department of the Seminary. Prior to commencing a mentoring relationship with a student the mentor must have completed an *Application to Mentor* and have been approved by one of the Directors of Mentored Ministry.

The school requires that mentors have at least five years full-time experience in ministry before seeking approved mentor status. It should be noted that long years of experience and excellent skills in ministry do not necessarily qualify one for supervising ministry students. Any exception to this requirement would need to be made on a case-by-case basis by conferring with one of the Mentored Ministry Directors.

If you are residing overseas, then you will need to meet the following criteria:

- 1. At least five years experience as a missionary.**
- 2. Good recommendation from your mission organization.**
- 3. The ministry must be a member of EFMA or IFMA, unless an exception is provided in unusual circumstances by Gordon-Conwell.**
- 4. Mentor Application form is approved by Paul Borthwick, Director of the Overseas Missions Practicum, and Katherine Horvath, Assistant Director of Mentored Ministry.**

Mentors will be expected to uphold the standards of the Mentored Ministry program in order to continue their status as mentors. Please reference the Gordon-Conwell Community Life Statement found at www.gcts.edu/studentlife/ethos.php#comm_life_statement.

OMP Mentors and Ministries: Churches or para-church organizations desiring to work with a Gordon-Conwell student must be a part of an approved Gordon-Conwell OMP project or partnership. A student working and living overseas does not automatically qualify that student for Mentored Ministry credit.

Expectations of the OMP Mentor: The Seminary looks to mentors to provide the highest quality supervision of the students who are training for various forms of Christian ministry. The supervisor is a mentor—one who teaches, models, and enables the student to grow as a minister. This involves active participation with the student and first-hand observation of the student at work. Being a mentor is being a teacher.

While the Seminary recognizes the needs of churches and Christian ministries to engage students to help in given projects, emphasis must be equally placed on the educational development of the student. Students should not necessarily be seen as experts in a given area nor employed for that purpose. They may or may not have skills in certain areas of ministry. Field placement, therefore, should provide exposure to a broad range of tasks and situations to help students gain competence and awareness of the many facets of ministry in your context, as well as provide experiences which will foster personal, professional and spiritual development.

Mentoring Sessions: Each student must spend at least **6 hours** in supervision with the mentor during the six week OMP project, and is to take the initiative in establishing the agenda for these meetings according to his/her needs. As a mentor the supervisor should take an active role in planning for these sessions. Be intentional and direct but also gentle and fair. This is a time to talk about the student's development and to evaluate performance as well as to plan for the future. The mentor is encouraged to make use of the reflection tools found in the Mentored Ministry section of the Gordon-Conwell web site (www.gordonconwell.edu, *Current Students* Pull-down menu, *Mentored Ministry* link). Be willing to share yourself and your life experiences in ministry. Make prayer and reflection on spiritual issues a part of this time together as well. Regular meetings at specified times with a planned agenda are expected.

Number of Students: Mentors are not allowed to supervise more than two students at a time unless special circumstances such as denominational concerns or unusual time availability on the part of the mentor would warrant it. Exceptions must be discussed with Dr. Borthwick or Katherine Horvath.

Titles: Normally OMP students can be referred to as “mission interns” or “student interns.” Whatever appropriate title you would choose to use would be acceptable.

MENTORS

Qualifications for Mentors

1. The mentor has demonstrated Christian maturity and competence in ministry, possessing the necessary knowledge and practical abilities to do contemporary Christian ministry.
2. The mentor is actively engaged in full-time cross-cultural ministry of a recognized church or para-church organization or ministry involved in Christian service and belonging to EFMA or IFMA.
3. The mentor must have five years of full-time Christian ministry experience. It is also preferable that a mentor also have theological training (usually a seminary degree).
4. A mentor possesses supervisory skills.
5. Mentors should be in essential agreement with the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Statement of Mission (www.gordonconwell.edu/about/mission.php).

Mentor Responsibilities

1. Meet once a week with assigned student for review of the student's progress both in the classroom (if applicable) and in ministry practice.
2. File a Mentored Ministry Report at the end of the OMP and send to both Dr. Paul Borthwick (pborthwick@rcn.com) and to Katherine Horvath (khorvath@gordonconwell.edu) in the Mentored Ministry Office.
3. Participate in an Orientation for new mentors. For those living overseas this will not likely be possible. Therefore, if a mentor is not within driving distance approval as a mentor will rely heavily on the quality of what is communicated in their Application to Mentor.