



INDIANAPOLIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A Vision for Closer Collaboration for Ministerial Formation

The Vision: Indianapolis Theological Seminary runs an MDiv curriculum that is conducive to students serving in local churches, that hire them as **PASTORAL INTERNS/RESIDENTS** to serve and learn through the experience. The details of the INTERNSHIP/RESIDENCY would be determined by the needs and vision of the church leadership; the ITS curriculum is flexible to fit a variety of schedules.

The Rationale: It is our conviction that it is the primary responsibility of local churches to raise up leaders in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). As an example of this, in 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul exhorts Timothy—a local church pastor—saying, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses *entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*” ITS exists to collaborate with local churches to fulfill this enduring command. Churches that have a PASTORAL INTERNSHIP/RESIDENCY programs have found them effective means to such ends. It is ITS’s desire, therefore, to support local churches in establishing such programs in a symbiosis with our curriculum. Such a marriage of local church training and academic study would better prepare the INTERN/RESIDENT for a life of God-glorifying ministry than if the school or church operated alone.

What this Synchronization would Look Like: The local church hires an INTERN/PASTORAL RESIDENT who splits his time between:

- ITS classes, study and practicum (approx. 26 hours per week)
 - ITS runs 2 day-classes on Wednesdays (one before lunch, one after), as well as 3 or 4 week-long intensives throughout the year. So in addition to Wednesdays, there will be 3 or 4 weeks where time is committed entirely to class.
 - With such a course load a student should plan on 10–12 hours of study outside the classroom each week.
 - Practica include specific time commitments. This is hard to calculate in such an arrangement, however, because many practicum experiences will overlap in time with regular job responsibilities.
- Serving in the church (≤ 25 hours per week).
 - The time committed to serving the local church can take on a number of forms (administration, teaching, assisting, book-keeping, or overseeing a specific ministry like music, youth, children, small groups, etc.) and would overlap in scope and time with the ITS practica.
 - The number of hours would vary depending on the church’s needs and the compensation available.
 - Equally and INTERNSHIP/RESIDENCY could also be run without any work commitment or compensation.
- Duration (one year with expectation of renewal)
 - The ITS MA curriculum can be completed in two years of fulltime study. The MDiv can be completed in 3 years, though it is not uncommon to take 4 years.
 - An optimal church experience would match these timelines, however there is wisdom in setting up INTERNSHIPS/RESIDENCIES as one-year commitments with a review and renewal procedure.

Upon completion, the INTERN/RESIDENT would be prepared to serve with sensibilities that have been honed through pastors, leaders and congregation. In some cases, he might even be hired by the church where he served as a INTERN/RESIDENT.

The Cost: The following numbers are a suggested starting point for consideration; they are based on the idea above that the INTERN/RESIDENT would also work for the church at 20–25 hours/week. Fewer work hours would, of course, mean lower pay. Moreover, compensation would depend on a number of additional factors as well: the INTERN’S/RESIDENT’S family size, what in-kind resources a church has, what the funding model is, etc.¹ For example, if a church member is willing to host an INTERN/RESIDENT with free or reduced housing, that significantly lowers the funds needed.

<i>With housing provided:</i>	\$12,000 – \$20,000/year
<i>Without housing provided:</i>	\$25,000 – \$40,000/year
ITS M.Div. tuition (95 credits, <i>currently</i> at \$165/credit) ² :	\$15,675 over three years

Examples: There are a variety of examples of churches in the area that runs such programs.

- Two churches offer 3-years paid internships to the level that the interns can focus fulltime on the church and his studies (he doesn’t need another job). In both cases the intern is married; one has children.
- One church has a flexible model that offers between \$500 and \$1,000/month depending on the number of hours the intern can invest at the church. The majority of that time is given over to study, completing practica and pursuing the ministerial interests of the intern. That internship lasts one year with the hope that the student will continue for another year or two in completing his education.
- Still another church has a one-year long internship that does not pay at all and is very flexible to fit the student’s school and work schedules.

ITS has these churches’ documents (application, handbooks, etc.) that describe the internship that we can share with other churches looking for ideas.

The Next Steps: Contact the ITS Dean, Nicholas Piotrowski, at npiotrowski@indysem.org to talk about the details of the ITS curriculum and to learn of what other churches are doing in their INTERNSHIPS/RESIDENCIES.

¹ See the living wage estimates for your county in Indiana at livingwage.mit.edu/states/18/locations.

² Please note that as a young institution our financial model is still very nimble and open to change, and this document represents tuition cost at the time of writing. As a comparison to ITS, the average tuition cost for United States seminaries in 2020 was \$540 per credit.