

# PANELIST MIDDLEL REVIEW GUIDELINES

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## Middler Review Objectives

The Middler Review meeting is a time of support, assessment, review, and planning for the PSR M.Div. student. The materials provided to the Middler panelists support your assessment of the student's academic progress and their ability to articulate their vocational formation within the Master of Divinity program. The panelists read these materials to provide input during the Middler meeting about the student's

- strengths observed during praxis and classes,
- the "growing edges" in their theological/spiritual clarity,
- vocational skills, and
- recommendations for further education through academic courses, workshops, and other resources.

As the central element of the Middler Review, the student's **Middler Theological and Vocational Essay** demonstrates the student's ability to

- reflect theologically, critically, and practically on their formation to date in the M.Div. program,
- demonstrate their integration of scholarly theological and social analysis disciplines with their vocational models, spiritual practices, and leadership praxis, and
- articulate a vision of their plans for transformative, spiritually rooted leadership.

## Topics covered in this document

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- ❖ Middler Review [Panel Members: Roles & Responsibilities](#)
- ❖ Middler Review [Materials and Preparation](#)
- ❖ Middler Review [Meeting Structure](#)
- ❖ Middler Review [Essay: Student Guidelines and Assessment Rubric](#)
- ❖ Middler Review [Panelist Post-Middler Student Assessment](#)

# MIDDLER REVIEW PANEL MEMBERS

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The Middler Review Panel is usually comprised of 3 to 5 people selected for their expertise in one or more components of the review and for their experience with the student's formational journey. Based on the Middler materials provided, all panelists should come prepared with input and questions about the student's demonstrated growth and strengths, important growing edges, and plans for continued development of their growing edge skills. Panelists should also be prepared to complete an online final assessment of the student based upon your Middler meeting observations.

## Panel Member Roles & Responsibilities

Each member of the panel has a specific responsibility for assessing the materials provided to you:

- **Faculty Advisor** (required): The faculty advisor
  - reviews current transcript and discusses student's Vocational Academic Plan, Spiritual Formation Plan, and degree worksheet;
  - consults with student to review and revise the Theological & Vocational Essay;
  - chairs the review meeting process.
- **Field Education Mentor or CPE Supervisor** (required)
  - This panel member is a minister, church leader, agency administrator, or certified CPE Supervisor who provided direct engagement with your work in a field setting for a vocation of service praxis. The mentor/supervisor reviews all materials distributed to the panel from their observation of the student's practice of the ministry of care.
- **Student Peer** (required)
  - This peer should have engaged with the student in the academic environment and should be able to offer personal assessment of their formational journey. If requested, the peer may take notes to assist the student with their post-review reflection.
  - It is not necessary for the peer to be in the M.Div. program. However, the peer should have taken several 1st tier Stackable Curriculum courses with the student (e.g., Rhetorical Use of Text, Transformative Leadership, Spiritual Formation, Design Thinking. For Social Change.)
- **Denominational Representative** (required if student is pursuing ordination)
  - This panel member is an ordained church leader who is familiar with the Minister-in-Training expectations and process for the student's denomination. The denominational representative examines these materials from the perspective of ordination requirements and the status and needs of the student's progress in meeting them.
- **Second Faculty Member** (optional)
  - In some cases, the Office of Academic Affairs appoints this panel member, in consultation with the faculty advisor and the student. This member's primary role is as a second academic reader of the written essay and to provide additional academic response to the oral presentation.

## Middler Review Materials and Preparation

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The student is responsible for scheduling, planning, inviting, and gathering all Middler attendees (panelists.) Their faculty advisor chairs the meeting and provide the Zoom meeting link.

All panelists should receive the following materials for review **at least one week before** the scheduled Middler meeting:

PANELIST MATERIALS	PSR STUDENT RESOURCE
❖ <b>Panelist Middler Review Guidelines</b>	This document.
❖ Copy of current transcript, including grades	Registrar
❖ Current Stackable Master of Divinity Program Worksheet	Registrar
❖ CPE Supervisor or Field Education Mentor Final Evaluation	From the student's personal field praxis records
❖ Student <a href="#">Pre-Middler Self-Assessment</a>	Online form
❖ Theological and Vocational Essay	Final copy approved by Advisor.
❖ Ordination Requirements	If applicable. Student gets these documents from their denominational representative.

## Middler Review Meeting Structure

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1. Each panel member introduces themselves and their role in the Middler Review process.
2. The student speaks for 10-15 minutes about their formational journey, emphasizing aspects of their Theological and Vocational Essay.
3. The student informs panel members of any areas about which they would like specific input (e.g., nervousness about speaking publicly outside of church.)
4. The student leaves the meeting or are put into Zoom breakout room (for about 15 minutes.)
5. The advisor/chair facilitates the panel members in producing discussion points: questions, need for clarification, observed growth over time, strengths, current growing edges, etc. The panel determines how to consolidate and organize the order, questioner, and examples of input for the discussion with the student.
6. The student returns to the room. Panelists engage in presenting and discussing their input with the student. **This discussion should be warmly interactive; criticisms should be presented within the context of the student's strengths and growing edges.** The student is expected to engage the panel during this discussion, asking for clarification, advice, and examples.
7. The advisor/chair checks with everyone to determine when the Middler Review has been successfully fulfilled. Final statements do not need to be formal; often everything is covered during your discussions.
8. The advisor/chair provides the panel members with a link to the **Panelist Post-Middler Student Assessment** and the advisor's email address. As each panelist submits their assessment, a pdf copy will be sent to the advisor, the panel member, and the PSR Office of Academic Affairs. (see Appendix for printout of this form.)  
  
<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7722061/PANELIST-MIDDLER-STUDENT-ASSESSMENT>
9. The student's advisor will create a summary of these assessments, meeting within 2 weeks of this Middler to discuss this summary.

## Midler Review Essay

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The student has reviewed and discussed these guidelines for their essay as part of their Field Education course work, discussions with their Field Education cohort, and final editing with their faculty advisor:

The **Midler Theological and Vocational Essay** offers an opportunity for you to reflect critically and theologically on your formation to date in the M.Div. program, demonstrate your integration of scholarly disciplines with community spiritual practices, and articulate a vision of your vocational goals for transformative and spiritually rooted leadership.

This **15–20-page essay** is a statement of deep reflection of your personal and academic journey. It is explicitly **not** an autobiography. It should include how the classes you have completed and are currently taking, your community participation at PSR and beyond, and the social justice advocacy you have engaged have deepened your vocational call.

It should articulate your comprehension of the Learning Outcomes of the M.Div. program in conversation with the teachings of your religion/wisdom tradition and your vocational goals. It should cogently articulate the specific experiences—through course work and praxis—that have shaped your formation toward a ministry of service, and how this journey has deepened and clarified your "transformative leadership identity" and your vocational plans.

This essay should be a congruent narrative that **demonstrates your intentional and comprehensive integration** of:

1. Your awareness of the theological/spiritual perspectives and vocational goals you held at the program's start,
2. Your process of being changed in your understanding and perspectives (with explicit references to insights from academic and praxis experiences,) and
3. How these changes are the foundation of your current theological/spiritual perspectives and your vocational plans.

This assessment rubric is used by both faculty and students as they work on drafts toward their final Theological and Vocational Essay submitted to you.

- **Content: Clarity of Vision** -Does the flow of the narrative clearly move from where the student began upon entering seminary, to what they learned, to how they see themselves leading going forward?
- **Integration: Clarity of Formation** - Are specific authors, articles/books, lectures, sacred texts, and other class content cited to highlight what has impacted the student in their theological and vocational formation?
- **Leadership: Clarity of Vocational Identity** – Does the student’s self-description present levels of a nuanced and mature understanding of vocation and a deepening of the call to a ministry of care?
- **Style: Clarity of Written Expression** – Does the essay demonstrate the standard of graduate-level academic writing Does the content flow; is it written and organized in a logical manner; are grammar, spelling, and citations properly done?

## PANELIST POST-MIDDLER STUDENT-ASSESSMENT

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At the close of the Middler Review meeting, the Faculty Advisor/Chair will provide each panelist with a link to an online assessment form and the faculty's email address. See form printout at the end of this document.

The panelist will respond to each statement as "**The student is able to....**," based upon their perceptions and insights about the student's formation discussed at the Middler meeting.

Although this assessment uses the same statements as in the student's self-assessment, the panelists are **not** evaluating the student on the **accuracy** of that assessment. You are providing the student with additional input for reflection based upon their perspectives on what you demonstrated to them during your Middler Review.

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7722061/PANELIST-MIDDLER-STUDENT-ASSESSMENT>

(see next pages from printout)

# Panelist Post-Middler Student Assessment

## ASSESSMENT CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Thank you for your participation in an important milestone in this student's journey of transformative, spiritually rooted leadership formation.**

The Meeting Chairperson (Faculty Advisor) will collect your responses and include your input in their final meeting with the student. They will review and capture the student's understanding of the valuable wisdom and guidance provided during this meeting.

Your Name \*

Your Middler Role \*

- Field Education Mentor/CPE Supervisor
- Peer
- Denominational Representative
- Other - Write In (Required)

Your email address \*

Middler Student's Name \*

Faculty Advisor/Middler Chair Name \*

Faculty Advisor/Middler Chair Email Address \*

**ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT'S FORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT based upon your experience of this student during today's meeting**

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**Page description:**

**Assessment Instructions:**

- Respond to each statement as “*Student is able to...*”
- You only need to assess the main statement. Use the list of reflection questions to interpret each statement.
- Use the Comments section to expand on your assessment. While not required, it is useful to provide comments in order to assist the student with deeper understanding of your assessment. This may be something you discussed in the Middler that you want to make sure is captured.
- Once you submit your responses, you will receive an email with an attached pdf copy of this assessment.
- The Faculty Advisor/Middler Chair will receive assessments from all panelists. They will include your input in their meeting with the student to complete their final report.



**1. Demonstrate critical engagement with texts and traditions, cultures, and practices involved in the lived experience of religion and spirituality. \***

Reflection questions to consider for this assessment

- Have sacred texts, cultural narratives, and forms of intellectual and artistic expression become part of this student's ministerial identity?
- Has this student's formation in the MDiv program provided them with new or transformed ways of addressing the inequities and resistances to change in their communities?
- Has this student demonstrated a competency for critical inquiry to provide analysis, relevance, and insight?

1 = no ability  
to

2 3 4

5 = excellent ability  
to

YOUR  
ASSESSMENT

Comments

## 2. Employ the contextual and queer study of knowledge, social systems, and/or digital spaces \*

Reflection questions to consider for this assessment

- Has this student provided examples of how course readings, discussions, and assignments developed your ability to articulate the complexities of social justice issues?
- Has this student articulated how the expanded awareness of the values and problems with digital technology has impacted the ways that they engage their vocational practices?
- Has this student expressed the best practices they will use to manage ethical accountability for how they use digital technology?

1 = no ability  
to

2 3 4

5 = excellent ability  
to

YOUR  
ASSESSMENT

Comments

**3. Express an engaged, informed spirituality and a respectful, compassionate way of being and doing. \***

Reflection questions to consider for this assessment

- Has this student identified practices for resilience, health, and spiritual groundedness?
- Has this student described how these practices are essential to transformative leadership?

1 = no ability to                      2   3   4                      5 = excellent ability to

YOUR  
ASSESSMENT

                                                

Comments

#### 4. Convey the self and interpersonal awareness necessary for sustainable social change\*

Reflection questions to consider for this assessment

- Has this student expressed how their awareness of their intersectional social location helps them stay connected as they work for social change and in how they speak/preach/teach about and address social issues?
- Has this student clearly described how academic studies, social engagement, and praxis expanded their understanding of the complexities of transformative leadership?

1 = no ability  
to

2 3 4

5 = excellent ability  
to

YOUR  
ASSESSMENT

Comments

**5. Generate knowledge that fosters effective collaboration across difference \***

Reflection questions to consider for this assessment

- Has this student described what methods they will use in their collaborative leadership with issues of social justice?
- Has this student expressed what awareness they will bring to the impact of language and behavior to discern value and harm?
- Has this student sufficiently delineated their strategies for accountability and restorative action?

1 = no ability  
to

2 3 4

5 = excellent ability  
to

YOUR  
ASSESSMENT

Comments

**6. Apply theological, ethical, spiritually informed, and contextual approaches to leadership and/or pastoral practices \***

Reflection questions to consider for this assessment

- Has this student expressed the core values that provide the congruence of their theology/spirituality?
- Has this student shown how these values help them provide spiritual care and leadership through the processes of conflict, change, and fear?
- Has this student described how these values shape the rituals & practices that are developing through community engagement?
- Has this articulated awareness of how these values affect the ways that they work to create a radically inclusive community that lives its values through action?

1 = no ability to                      2   3   4                      5 = excellent ability to

YOUR ASSESSMENT

                                                

Comments

**CONFIRM ASSESSMENT COMPLETED**

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Use the BACK option to change any of your responses

Use the SUBMIT button to complete your self-assessment.

**Thank You!**

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Thank you. Please check your email for this document.