

PCC 5520 Person in Ministry
Ashland Theological Seminary
Fall Semester 2020
Tuesdays, 6:00-9:00 pm
Columbus Campus
Hybrid Course
Michael B. Thompson, Professor
Cell Phone: 614-546-8796
Email: mthomps5@ashland.edu

I. Course Description

This course equips students to experience ongoing personal development and growth necessary for well-being in ministry. Attention will be given to core identity, character, calling, and competency as it relates to the practice of the ministry. The course will detail the challenges of Christian ministry and their impact on personal and professional wellbeing, highlighting essential commitments clergy must make in prayer, spiritual formation, inner transformation, and supportive community with the context of ministry.

Further Description

This course exists to provide a biblical foundation for identity in ministry. The course also seeks to prepare students for authentic and effective ministry that flows from serious commitments to the spiritual, emotional, and relational priorities necessary for the making of a deep soul. Of special importance is the journey toward a contemplative life vitalized by prayer.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

This course format consistently meets the same quality, assessment, learning outcomes, and requirements of the traditional face-to-face semester offering of this course. For fall 2020, the sessions for this class may be offered 100% face-to-face in a physical classroom (with remote access for pre-scheduled students) 100% face-to-face virtually using technologies such as Zoom or Collaborate, as a combination of face-to-face sessions and digital activities/lectures (virtually or in-person), or as a combination of any of these elements. In the event of extended disruptions of normal classroom activities due to the pandemic, the format for this course may be modified to utilize 100% face-to-face virtual/digital classroom sessions.

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. Demonstrate critical and faithful interpretation and responsible use of Scripture as each relate to well-being in ministry**
- 2. Establish communal and personal disciplines that nourish Christian spiritual formation as each relate to well-being in ministry**
3. Not assessed in this course
- 4. Demonstrate critical theological reflection that is biblically faithful, historically grounded, contextually relevant, and integrated within the minister's pursuit of well-being in ministry**
5. Not assessed in this course
- 6. Demonstrate basic skills sets in developing a personal philosophy of life and ministry that promote growth and well-being**

III. Course Requirements

A. Textbooks

Required:

Day, Dorothy and Eichenberg, Fritz. *The Long Loneliness: An Autobiography of a Legendary Catholic Social Activist*. HarperOne, 1952. ISBN 978-0060617519

Ford, Leighton. *The Attentive Life: God's Presence in All Things*. InterVarsity Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0830835997

Nouwen, Henri. *The Wounded Healer*. Image books, 1972. ISBN: 0-385-14803-8

Peterson, Eugene. *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*. Eerdmans, 1989. ISBN: 0-8028-0114-5

B. Attendance

According to the student handbook, attendance at all class sessions is expected unless the professor has been notified in advance. Students should be on time and should stay through the duration of all classes. Any student missing the equivalent of six class hours will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade or withdraw from the class, or be penalized otherwise at the discretion of the professor.

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

1. Reflection Papers over the Ford, Peterson and Nouwen books. Each student will read each of the designated books. Write a reflection paper of 4-6 pages for the 3 above textbooks. Bring each to class as scheduled in the course calendar. These assignments are not book reviews. I do not want a synopsis of the content of the books. Instead, I want you to share insights that you gained from these books. Discuss how the books altered your thinking, provided you with a fresh understanding, triggered a memory and helped you interpret that memory differently, reinvigorated your sense of calling, and especially contributed to your understanding of ministry. The following suggestive questions may help you to write these papers. Please note these are not the only questions you might ask yourself in writing these papers, but they are representative of the kind of questions you should ask yourself.

1. What new perspectives did I gain?
2. What surprised me?
3. What made me uncomfortable?
4. What in the book was hard for me to accept?
5. What personal challenges do I expect to experience as I try to implement some of the ideas in the book?
6. What annoyed me about this book?
7. What touched my heart in this book?
8. What discovery did I make that revealed a need that I feel compelled to address?
9. How was my desire for ministry invigorated?

10. What information did I receive about ministry that I had not previously considered? Again, this is not an exhaustive list of questions to consider when writing rather the list is intended to help you understand the character of paper I want you to write.

Note: As part of this paper I recommend that you include excerpts from the text you are engaging and meaningfully interact with those important excerpts.

*On the day that you hand them in we will discuss them in class as well as the book you reflected upon.

2. Dorothy Day Reading and Online Exercise. Each student will read Dorothy Day's autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, and will participate in the online exercise involving her work.

*On the day this assignment is due we will discuss the book and student discoveries/reflections from the book in class.

3. Relationship-building. Because the ministry involves the establishment and maintenance of covenant/key relationships each student is to plan 2 special outings for 2 significant persons in his/her life. These persons could be a good friend, spouse, parent, sibling, a student from your Sunday school class, etc. The outings should have the following characteristics:

- 1) It lasts at least 3 hours
- 2) It involves effort in planning on your part
- 3) It creates an opportunity for knowing and appreciating each other better
- 4) It is leisurely paced

The student will write a 1-2 page report describing the respective events and discussing their impact.

4. Reflective-Summative Project. In the final weeks of the course each student will compose a final paper which will involve the student synthesizing all the learning of the course to answer key questions about their own personal calling and direction in ministry. The professor will provide a list of reflective questions designed to guide the student in exploring, addressing, and identifying critical issues related to his/her ministry future. The paper will involve movement toward establishing a personal philosophy of ministry. The finished project of the paper will be about 10-12 pages long.

5. Online Exercises. Each student will complete the online exercises that correspond with the lesson of the day when the class meets online. These exercises will generally be designed to accent the course content of the day. The student will complete these exercises most often in the second half of the class. Each student will submit them to the professor as directed.

*****Additional Comments on the character of Instruction in this Course**

Class Presence, Ministry, and Technology

A foundational component in ministry in any setting is to be truly present with those to whom one is ministering. A ministry in the name of Jesus is one in which the minister is fully present

i.e. attending to others with all senses. We remember that Jesus’ ministry was characterized by being meaningfully “with” others (Matthew 1:23 “...and they will call Him Immanuel”—which means—“God with us”; John 1:14 “and He became flesh and dwelt among us”). Since Jesus is our model and guide in ministry, and since the ministry of those taking class in seminary is to be a student, then one is expected to be fully present to her/his teacher and student colleagues during class sessions.

The Character of the Online Class Sessions.

Most of the synchronous class sessions will involve 2 parts. First, approximately 90 minutes of professor-student screen time, in real time. This time will typically consist of devotional moments, professor lecture, and whole class discussion. Second, following the lecture time the professor will typically provide the student with a corresponding asynchronous assignment where there is deeper exploration of the subject at hand. This assignment may include the reading of an article or the watching of a video plus questions to answer. The subject matter may be considered in the next class through discussion or the students may be required to turn in written responses to questions. The second half of the class time might also be utilized to take an examination or engage in reflective writing. The professor hopes to create a variety of learning experiences in the online sessions that is not simply 3 hours of lecture.

D. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

Assignment	Learning Outcomes	Percentage of Final Grade
Relationship Building Exercise 2X and Accompanying Report Paper	2,4,6	10% (5% for each)
Peterson Reading and Reflection Paper	1,4,6	15%
Nouwen Reading and Reflection Paper	1,4,6	15%
Ford Reading and Reflection Paper	1,4,6	15%
Dorothy Day Reading and Online Exercise	1,4,6	10%
Reflective-Summative Project	1,2,4,6	30%
Online Exercises	1,2,4,6	5%

E. Tentative Course Schedule

Class	Date	Course Content/Lecture	Assignments Due/Online Exercises
1 On Campus	9/1	Course Introduction; Biblical Foundations	Reading: Ford Chs. 1-2
2 Online	9/8	Calling and Ordination	Online Exercise; Reading: Ford remainder of the book;
3 On Campus	9/15	Ministry Qualifications; Key Biblical Words	DUE: Ford Reflection Paper

4 Online	9/22	Finding Your Calling Discussion of “The Attentive Life”	Online Exercise; Reading: Peterson Chps. 1-7; Reading: DUE: Relationship Exercise #1
5 On Campus	9/29	Biblical Models of Ministry— Introduction; The Priest; The Structure for a Life of Well-being in Ministry (Nouwen)	Reading: Peterson Chps. 8-14;
6 Online	10/6	Biblical Models of Ministry: Prophet Peterson Discussion	Online exercise: DUE:Peterson paper; Reading: Day Part 1
7 On Campus	10/13	Biblical Models in Ministry: Wiseperson	Reading: Day Part 2
8 Online	10/20	Biblical Models of Ministry: Shepherd	Online Exercise: Reading Day: Part 3
9 On Campus	10/27	Calling to Community: Challenges Living in Community	Reading: Nouwen Ch. 1-2
10 Online	11/3	Gregory of Nazianzus and Oration 2 The Flight to Pontus	Online Exercise: Nouwen Chs. 3-4; DUE: Nouwen Paper
11 On Campus	11/10	Guided Imagery; Discussing the Reflective Summative Projective	Working on Reflective Summative Project
12 Online	11/17	Ethical Dimensions of Ministry: Sex, Money, Power	Online Exercise; DUE: Relationship Exercise #2
13 Online	12/1	Sustainability in Ministry; Guidance from the Words of Jesus	Online exercise
14 On Campus	12/8	Presentation of Summative Reflective Project; Summative Spiritual Event; Exploring and Sharing our Growth and Learning; Worship	DUE: Presentation of Reflective-Summative Paper Project
15 Online	12/15	Individual Online conferences with Professor if desired	

PLEASE NOTE: The above schedule is tentative and maybe be altered in the service of the aims of the course.

V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning

The Society of Professors of Christian Education (SPCE) is an academic guild devoted to the development of persons to lead in fields related to Christian education and discipleship ministries in the local church, institutions of higher education, and parachurch organizations. The *SPCE* sponsors an annual conference (usually held in October) where important matters related to

Christian discipleship are discussed. This conference is open to all interested in the practice and promotion of Christian ministry. It would be an ideal event to attend annually to receive professional and spiritual support. Information about the *SPCE* can be found at www.spceonline.org. *SPCE* also publishes a journal twice a year entitled *Christian Education Journal*. It contains both scholarly articles and practical-professional pieces on a wide range of subjects related to Christian Education and Discipleship and Personal Ministry Development. Subscribing to this journal could be an important resource in professional development and spiritual enrichment.

VI. Seminary Guidelines

A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary's core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one's own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one's own capabilities to achieve one's fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the *Student Handbook*.

B. Ashland Multiliteracy Center

The Ashland Multiliteracy Center can help you brainstorm, draft, and revise your writing assignments in your graduate Seminary classes. Masters and doctoral qualified Consultants can advise you online or in person.

To schedule an appointment, visit [Ashland Multiliteracy Center](#) and select "Online and Graduate" from the schedule menu.

C. Accessibility Resources and Accommodations.

It is Ashland University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please contact the Student Accessibility Center at 419-289-5904, or send an email to dservices@ashland.edu. The Student Accessibility Center office and the course instructor will work together in order to establish accommodations and to meet your learning needs.

D. ATS Grading Scale

Grade	Quality	Percent	Description
A	4.0	97-100	Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and

			completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.
A-	3.7	92-96	
B+	3.3	89-91	
B	3.0	86-88	Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.
B-	2.7	83-85	
C+	2.3	80-82	
C	2.0	77-79	Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.
C-	1.7	74-76	
D+	1.3	71-73	
D	1.0	68-70	Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.
D-	0.7	65-67	
F	0.0	Below 65	Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.

VII. Selected Bibliography

A list of books, articles, and other materials related to the subject matter of the course will be provided to the student during class sessions in the unfolding of the course over the span of the semester.