Reflection and Formation for Ministry (MC507)

Dr. Steven Klipowicz, Professor

Class Dates:
September 8 – December 19, 2015

Professor of Record
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Course Definition
Reflection and Formation for Ministry (MC507) is a one-hour, fully online course that fosters critical self-reflection by students on their theological and vocational formation during seminary in light of their current and future ministries. The course introduces the practice of reflection and its potential as a means to direct and deepen development for various Christian callings in light of life-long vocational formation. Promoting the importance of metacognition and self-awareness as significant aspects of personal maturity and ministry practice, MC507 opens students to the formational potential of self-reflection though narrative, relational and heuristic processes and
practices. Finally, the course will orient students to the philosophy and function of the GCTS formational matrix (*My Journey Matrix*) found on SAKAI. Coupled with the capstone course, *Ministry Formation and ePortfolio Review* (MC847), MC507 provides a comprehensive framework for promoting and monitoring student self-development and progress throughout the seminary program.

**Relationship to the MACM Program**

MC507 is the second of a three-part series of one-hour courses designed to prepare students for and augment their learning and formation in the MACM program. Combined with the *Writing and Research Seminar* (CT500) and coupled with the capstone course, *Ministry Formation and ePortfolio Review* (MC847), MC507 will equip students to successfully complete their degree programs while preparing them for future vocational development. Students beginning the MACM program after December 31, 2014, or transferring into it after August 31, 2015, are required to complete this sequence of three one-hour courses (CT500, MC507, and MC847).

**Grading**

The course is a pass-fail course that requires a total of 80 points out of a possible 100 points earned as a passing grade. Points are earned on the basis of successfully completing the activities in the five online lesson models found in the student’s SAKAI site (https://sakai.gcts.edu/xsl-portal/). Students failing to pass the course will be required to repeat it early in their degree program.

The course is taught by Dr. Steve Klipowicz, who works closely with selected teaching assistants to provide relevant and prompt feedback to student work.

**Course Objectives:**

At the conclusion of MC507, students should be able to demonstrate the following:

1. Students will be able to define the key aspects of the process of reflection and express several primary benefits of reflection as a meta-cognitive process for their vocational development during seminary and in subsequent ministry.
2. Students will understand the primary aspects and models of reflective writing and show their understanding of these aspects through production of writing samples in their *My Journey* formational matrix and in an online journal.
3. Students will be able to explain the importance of personal narrative as a powerful tool for self-reflection and demonstrate their own ability to reflect on incidences of vocational formation as they develop and construct a personal reflection narrative.
4. Students will be able to explain the key aspects of an approach to reflection (Killan and DeBeer) and show their understanding of the model for their current vocational development by analyzing a recent personal experience.
5. Students will be able to describe the nature of an ePortfolio and the benefits it provides for their vocational development.
6. Students will be able to both explain the structure of the My Journey Matrix in terms of its categories and analyze how this framework comprehensively promotes their learning progress throughout their program.
7. Students will demonstrate their operational proficiency in the use of the My Journey Matrix through their ability to upload, post and save specific reflections and artifacts.

Required Reading

The primary text for the course is:


In addition to the primary text books, a number of articles posted in the SAKAI site will be required reading.

Additional books useful to this study are:


Course Schedule:

9/ 8 -13: Getting Started
9/14 -20: Lesson One: Foundations of Reflection
9/21 -27: Lesson Two: The Nature of Personal Reflection
9/28 – 10/11: Lesson Three: Promoting Personal Reflection

10/12 - 25: Lesson Four: Introduction to Reflective Writing

10/26 -11/1: Lesson Five: Orientation to the My Journey Reflective Matrix

11/2 – 15: Lesson Six: Beginning Your Journey on My Journey

**Syllabus Addendum**

**Academic Standards**

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

**ADA Policy**

The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

**Cancellation of Class**

In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

**Extension Policy**

Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the end date for the semester as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required in this case. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.
However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized end date for the semester must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the stated date. Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

**Grades**

Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

**Returned Work**

Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self-addressed and postage-paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.

**Virtual Writing Center**

Free assistance in writing papers is available to students through the Virtual Writing Center at Gordon Conwell. The Virtual Writing Center is staffed by Gordon Conwell graduates, or writing tutors with specialized knowledge in writing and/or ESL. Generally, this service is available to students who have completed or are currently enrolled in one of the following three classes:

- CT500 (Introduction to Theological Research)
- CO501 (Introduction to Counseling Research)
- IS502 (Theological Research and Writing)

If you enrolled in GCTS before Fall 2008, you were not required to take one of the three pre-requisites above, and you may request access to the Virtual Writing Center. Also, ESL writing tutors are available to ESL students even if they are not currently enrolled in a degree program. If you do not meet one of these qualifications, but feel you would benefit from using the Virtual Writing Center, contact us and we will evaluate your status.

Email writingcenter@gordonconwell.edu for more information.