Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Hamilton  
MC 701 - Introduction to Pastoral Ministry  
Syllabus: Spring, 2013  
Tuesday-Thursday (9:35-11)

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I. Course Description
This course examines the roles, function, and theological considerations for the practice of pastoral ministry. Ministry identity, call, and foundational pastoral tasks will be discussed.

II. Course Relationship to the Curriculum
The course in Pastoral Ministry (MC 701) is best taken by students who are nearing the end of their seminary studies (If you are more than a year from graduation you should take it later). The course takes into consideration all the studies in exegesis, theology, history, ethics, education, counseling, preaching and polity—and challenges students to consider how their studies actually are applied in practical ministry.

III. Course Objectives
The purpose of this course is to provide general information about pastoral ministry in order to help students: (1) understand the dynamics of pastoral ministry, (2) be acquainted with specific tasks of pastoral ministry, (3) to develop a biblical and theological vision for pastoral ministry, (4) to clarify calling and identity as a pastor, (5) to engage with issues, challenges, and obstacles toward faithful and effective pastoral ministry, and (6) to be better prepared to engage in the practice of a biblically-based and theologically driven ministry. Emphasis will be made on the practical matters of ministry.

Items presented include the following: Identity, Roles and Expectations of the Pastor; Worship and Liturgy; Baptism (children and adults) and Dedication of Children; Lord’s Supper; Weddings; Funerals and Grief Work; Pastoral Care; Visitation; Church Finances; Personal Finances; Church Discipline; Professional Ethics; Sexual Ethics and Behavior; Staff Relationships and Evaluation; Interviewing and Terminating staff; Conflict Management; Ordination; Leadership Development; and other issues in pastoral ministry.

IV. Course Textbooks

Required:


**Extra Credit Reading:**


**Recommended:**


*The Book of Common Prayer or The Book of Common Worship*  
Minister’s Manual of some sort or denominational resource for ministers

Students may read supplemental material from the “Pastoral Ministry Bibliography” below.

**V. Course Requirements and Grading**

1. Attendance is expected at all lectures and workshops and case sessions. Students are expected to be on time for class.

2. Students will read a minimum of 1,200 pages from all required texts and supplemental reading. Students will submit an annotated bibliography with two or three paragraphs reflecting on each book read. Do not report on the content of the book, but rather reflect on how you interacted with the material in terms of questions raised, insights gained, areas to be explored further biblically and theologically, etc. The report is to be typed (single-spaced, 12 point type). Due: noon, **Monday, May 6**

3. Students will write a brief two-page paper on your sense of call to ministry. Describe what you see as God’s leading in your life for ministry vocation, including circumstances, affirmation from others, whether the call is firm or loose at this point. Include what are your fears or concerns, etc. If married, comment on the kind of support you receive from your spouse. This paper will be treated with utmost confidence by the professor and is intended to help the student process his/her call (and can be a part of to the usual paper required in the ordination process for most denominations). The report is to be typed (single-spaced, 12 point type). This paper is not “graded,” but required. Due: **January 31**.

4. Students will form case study groups, which will take place during lunches. Students will decide on what three cases they will discuss from the Swetland casebook (more cases available in the supplemental Swetland book). Case discussions will last at least 45 minutes per case with at least three people in each group. Spouses are welcome to participate in the discussion if desired. Each student will write a two-page (single-spaced, 12 point type) reflection on each case (total: **three short two-page papers**). Begin with brief comments on the composition of the group as well as when and where the discussion took place. Write a brief summary of the case. Then describe the critical issues that emerged in your discussion. You may use the questions at the end of each case as a guide for the discussion. Be sure to conclude with how you would handle the situation as a pastoral leader if you were involved in the case as portrayed. The quality and depth of interaction will determine your grade. Due: **February 5, March 5, and April 2**.

5. Students will prepare a paper on Four (4) Pastoral Events: Write an Order of Service (1 to 2 pp. for each service) for each of the following services: (1) Baptism, (2) Lord’s Supper/Eucharist, (3) Wedding, and (4) Funeral (including interment). Please Note: On each
paper, include details such as call to worship (reference to Scripture selection only [not the text written out] or brief litany), hymns and songs (titles only), responsive reading (refer to the Scripture selection only – text does not need to be typed out), gist of pastoral prayer, benediction, etc. For the sermon part of the service, state the textual reference and provide an outline or summary of the sermon. *The Order of Service must be the complete worship service, not just the particular event.*

- Be concise. Complete sentences are not necessary, but cover the service from beginning to ending.
- Students who follow a Book of Order for these events (e.g. *Book of Common Prayer,* or PCUSA *Book of Order*) may note the section to be used in the paper, but should (1) fill in any details of how they might personalize the service as well as (2) give more details on the sermon outline/summary.

The Four (4) Pastoral Events paper. Due: **March 12**

6. Final Exam – case study essays that will pull together material from the semester.
   On the exam will also be a set of questions about the name and background of those in the class. Part of a pastor’s job is quickly learning the names of the flock and their life stories. So begin learning about each other at every opportunity. **May 2 (9:35-11)**

7. **Extra Credit:** Students will write a 3 page reflection paper (single-spaced, 12 point type) on the novel, *Elmer Gantry.* Due: **May 6**

**Grading:**

- 10% - attendance and participation in class, plus completion of the call paper
- 30% - papers on case studies
- 15% - paper on 4 pastoral events
- 15% - reading total and reflections on the reading
- 30% - final exam
- 100% - The maximum total of points is 100.

**Point Scale:** 98 - 100 A+; 94 - 97 A; 91 - 93 A-; 88 - 90 B+; 84 - 87 B; 81 - 83 B-; 78 - 80 C+; 74 - 77 C; 71 - 73 C-; 68 - 70 D+; 64 - 67 D; 61 - 63 D-; below 60 F.

In keeping with the grade scale defined in *The Student Handbook,* a grade of A is given for high excellence, B for exceeding minimal achievement, C for attaining a basic understanding of materials, D for a low passing mark indicating below basic mastery of material, and F for failing the course.

NB: Plagiarism is usually not an issue in this class, but if you are interested in seeing a document defining plagiarism and giving examples, the faculty of the seminary recommends students access the information on the Indiana University website: [http://indiana.edu/-wts/plagiarism.html](http://indiana.edu/-wts/plagiarism.html)
VI. Written Work

*Please Note:* Requirements for ALL written work:
- Do not put papers in any kind of binding or use a title page.
- Put your name on the upper right hand corner
- Please *staple* the pages of assignments.
- Single-space within a paragraph, and double-space between paragraphs.
- Footnotes are not needed.
- Use 12-point type; do not use a *sans serif* font.
- Papers may be handed in during class or under the door of my office (Library 119) or attach to an email.

VII. Course Calendar

**January 29, 2013 - Introduction to the Class and to Each Other**
Reflections on the Sense of Call

**Read:** Hansen, 7-45
Kim, 11-24

**Write:** Call Paper

**January 31, 2013 – The Stories of Our Calling**

**Read:** Holifield, Chapter 5, 145-181
Chapter 8, 235-274
Chapter 18, 311-344

**Read:** Swetland, “Snot-Nosed Pastor” (61-69)
**Write:** Case Study #1

**February 5, 2013 - The Historic Role of the Pastor and Changes in Pastoral Identity**

**Read:** Berkley, Part II, Chapter 10, 137-208

**February 7, 2013 – Shaping the Worship Life of a Congregation**

**Read:** Berkley, 261-315

**February 12, 2013 – Worship and Music within the Liturgy**
**Read:** Berkley, 339-379
Hansen, 100-113

**February 14 – The Nature and Practice of Sacraments**

**Read:** Berkley, 3-17, 37-49, 119-136
Hansen, 100-113

**February 19 and 21 – Reading Week**

**February 26 - The Identity and Calling of the Preacher**
Styles and Forms of Preaching

**Read:** Book of Common Worship or Book of Common Prayer on Weddings
And Funerals

**February 28 – Weddings and Funerals**

**Read:** Baxter

**Write:** 2nd Case Study (group choice)

**Due:** March 5

**March 5 – Care of Souls – Pastoral Care**
Crisis Situations
Abuse
Mental Illness
Referrals to Other Professionals
Systems of Care

**Read:** Baxter

**March 7 – Care of Souls – Discipleship and Nurture**

**Read:** Baxter

**Write:** 4 Pastoral Events Paper

**Due:** March 12

**March 12 – Care of Souls – Lost Sheep**

**Guest – Pete James, Vienna Presbyterian Church**
March 14 – Care of Souls – Conflict
  Guest – Pete James, Vienna Presbyterian Church

  **Read:** Welch, Church Administration

March 19 – A Theology of Administration and Finance
  Church Typologies
  Styles of Church Government

  **Read:** Welch, Church Administration

March 21 – Church Budgets

  **Read:** Welch, Church Administration
  **Write:** 3rd Case Study (group choice)
  **Due:** April 2

March 26 and 28 – Reading Week (Holy Week)

  **Read:** Welch

April 2 – Stewardship – Theology and Practice

  **Read:** Welch

April 4 – Staffing – Nurture, Evaluations, Hiring, Firing

  **Read:** Peterson

April 9 – The Spiritual Life of the Pastor

  **Read:** Peterson

April 11 – The Spiritual Life of the Pastor
Read: Webster

April 16 – Ethical Issues for Pastors – Money, Sex, and Power

Read: Webster

April 18 – Leadership in Vision and Mission

Read: Webster

April 23 – Leadership in Evangelism

April 25 – Leadership in Discipleship

Read: Kim
Write: Annotated Bibliography
Due: May 6

April 30 – Pastoral Identity and the First Steps
The Relational Web
Time Management
Transitions

May 2 – Final Exam (9:35-11)

Please note: topics and times may change from day to day

VIII: Pastoral Ministry Bibliography

Anderson, Leith. *Leadership That Works: Hope and Direction for Church and Parachurch*


Douglas, Philip D. What is Your Church’s Personality?: Discovering and Developing the Ministry Style of Your Church (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2008).


Fisher, Roger, William Ury and Bruce Patton. Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without


