Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Hamilton  
MC 701 - Introduction to Pastoral Ministry  
Syllabus: Spring, 2014  
Wednesday-Friday (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; Leadership Development; and other issues in pastoral ministry.
IV. Course Textbooks


**Recommended:**


*The Book of Common Prayer or The Book of Common Worship*

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

**V. Course Requirements and Grading**

1. Attendance is expected at all lectures and case study sessions. Students are expected to be on time for class. (You need to be on time for preaching when you are a pastor!)

2. Students will read a minimum of 1,500 pages from all required texts and supplemental reading. Students will submit an annotated bibliography with three or four paragraphs reflecting on each book or part of a book read. Summarize briefly the content of the book, but then 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, **Tuesday, April 29, 2014**

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 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 30, 2014**

4. Students will form case study groups, which will take place beyond class time. Students will decide on what three cases they will discuss from one of the Swetland casebooks (more cases available in the supplemental Swetland book). Several of the cases are on Sakai and can be downloaded, including the first assignment - “Snot-Nosed Pastor.” 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, 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. Then suggest any possible solutions which you see. 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 12; March 12; April 9**.

5. Students will prepare a paper on Four (4) Pastoral Events: Write an Order of Service for each of the following services: (1) Easter Sunday; (2) Lord’s Supper/ Eucharist (thematically craft this into a Maundy Thursday service); (3) Wedding, and (4) Funeral/ Memorial Service (including burial). Please Note: On each paper, include all words you and congregation will say - such as call to worship (including Scripture references), hymns (titles only) and songs (words if I might not know them), responsive readings (refer to the Scripture selection only – text does not need to be typed out), full prayer of confession, pastoral prayer, benediction, etc. For the Lord’s Supper portion, please type all introductory statements which you might make, and the full prayers around communion and the words of institution. For the sermon portion of the service, state the textual reference and provide a thorough outline or summary of the sermon. **The Order of Service must be the complete worship service, not just the particular event.** The Four (4) Pastoral Events paper: Due: **February 26, 2014**

6. Final Exam – short answer 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 the other students 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. **April 30**

(9:35-11)

**Grading:**

- 10% - attendance and participation in class, plus completion of the call paper
- 30% - papers on case studies
- 20% - 4 pastoral events
- 20% - reading total and reflections on the reading
- 20% - 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
- Always put pages numbers on your assignments
- Please *staple* the pages of assignments.
- Formal Footnotes are not needed.
- Use 12-point type; do not use a *sans serif* font.
- Make a copy of everything you turn in, just in case something gets lost
- Papers may be handed in during class or under the door of my office (Library 119). I prefer a **hard copy**, but in an emergency you can attach it to an email.

**VII. Course Calendar**

**Read Ahead:** Hansen, 7-45

Kim, 11-24
January 29, 2014 - Introduction to the Class and to Each Other
Reflections on the Sense of Call and the Practice of Pastoral Ministry

Write: Call Paper
Read: Baxter, The Reformed Pastor (Ch. 1-2)

January 31, 2014 – The Stories of Our Calling

Read: Baxter, (Rest of the Book)
See: Holifield (Suggested Reading)

February 5, 2014 - The Historic Role of the Pastor and Changes in Pastoral Identity
Emotional/Relational Intelligence

Cursory Read: Brink and Witvliet, eds. Worship Sourcebook
Book of Common Worship or
Book of Common Prayer
Plus: Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4-5

February 7, 2014 – Shaping the Worship Life of a Congregation

Read: Swetland, “Snot-Nosed Pastor” (61-69 or on Sakai)
Meet: Group Discussion
Write: Case Study #1 (Turned in at the beginning of class on February 12)

February 12, 2014 – Shaping the Worship Life of the Congregation
Brief Discussion of 1st Case Study

Read: Hansen, 100-113
Begin Preparing: 4 Worship Bulletins (Turned in February 26)

February 14, 2014 – The Nature and Practice of Sacraments

Write: 4 Worship Bulletins (Turned in February 26)
See: Berkley, Handbook on Preaching and Worship

February 19 and 21, 2014 – (Reading Week)

Write: 4 Worship Bulletins (Turned in February 26)
Read: Arthurs, Public Reading of Scriptures (Suggested List)
February 26, 2014 - Leading in Worship
Brief Discussion of Worship Bulletins (Turn in at conclusion of class)
Practicing Leading in Worship
Styles and Forms of Preaching

Read: Hansen, 49-99, 114ff.

February 28, 2014 – Care of Souls – Pastoral Care
Crisis Situations
Abuse
Mental Illness
Referrals to Other Professionals
Systems of Care

Read: Swanson, 9-186

March 5, 2014 – Funerals and Ministry Surrounding Death
(Ash Wednesday)
Meet: 2nd Case Study Discussion (Due March 12)
Read: Weddings on Sakai

March 7, 2014 – Weddings and Premarital Counseling

March 12, 2014 – Case Study Discussion in Class

Due: Second Case Study

March 14, 2014 – Care of Souls – Conflict

March 19-21 (2nd Reading Week)

March 26, 2014 – A Theology of Administration and Finance

Read: Berkeley, Leadership Handbook on Church Administration and Finance
March 28, 2014 – A Theology of Administration and Finance
   Church Typologies
   Styles of Church Government

   **Read:** Berkeley, Administration and Finance

April 2, 2014 – Stewardship – Theology and Practice (Interview of Pete James)

   **Read and Write:** Midterm Bibliography
   **Read:** 3rd Case Study of Your Choice (Swetland or Sakai) – Meet with Group

April 4, 2014 – Long Range Planning (Guest Teacher)

   **Read:** Sinclair Lewis, *Elmer Gantry*
   **Finish:** 3rd Case Study

April 9, 2014 – Staffing – Nurture, Evaluations, Hiring, Firing
   Discussion of Case Study #3

   **Read:** Sinclair Lewis, *Elmer Gantry*

April 11, 2014 – Dangers in Ministry: Discussion of Elmer Gantry
   Ethical Issues for Pastors – Money, Sex, and Power

   Read: Worship Sourcebook on Holy Week

April 16, 2014 – Discussion of Holy Week
   Leadership Issues

   **Read:** Matt Kim

April 18, 2014 – Good Friday
   The Spiritual Life of the Pastor
April 23, 2014 – Leadership Issues

Read: Kim

April 25 – Pastoral Identity and the First Steps
The Relational Web
Time Management
Family in Ministry
Transitions

Continue to Write: Annotated Bibliography
Due: April 29

April 30 – Final Exam (9:35-11)

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

VIII: Pastoral Ministry Bibliography

Bridges, William. Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change 2nd ed. Cambridge,


-----------. *Values-Driven Leadership*. Grand Rapids, MI: 1996, 2004


Oden, Thomas C. *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*. San Francisco: Harper Collins,


