I. **Course Description:** This course is offered in conjunction with the ACTS Youth Ministry Leadership Training. It is a practical training course ideally structured for those presently engaged in youth ministry.

This course presents an overview of youth ministries today and works through necessary ministry support bases, community research and networking, contacting youth and families, activities, counseling, Gospel-preaching, discipleship formation, recruiting volunteers and sustaining ministries. Each week experienced youth leaders who work in church, para-church and community youth ministries and organizations will provide conferences and workshops on all aspects of youth ministry.

Each session will make a special emphasis on the core principles of Calling, Capacity, Context, and Commitment. These will be supported by a diversity of tools including: class projects, journaling, ACTS Leadership Manual, media, group exercises, case studies, guest speakers and youth leadership discussion panels.

II. **Course Goals:**

1. provide training in urban youth leadership principles that informs and supports the practice in the urban church, para-church, and the local community organization
2. equip urban youth ministry leaders with practical skills and tools that help meet the complex challenges faced in urban youth ministry
3. partner with churches and para-church organizations in support of the personal transformation (leadership) journey of the urban youth leader
4. understand how the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, psychology and theology apply to youth ministry
5. appreciation for the need of research in any ministry and added skills for topical and especially community research in youth ministry
6. ability to apply understanding of various ages and stages of development to youth ministry
7. understand of how youth ministry may be developed and an ability to evaluate youth programs
8. increase skills in relating, listening, and communicating to young people
9. improve Organizing and Thinking Skills (Seminary goals: MDiv.,3-4,6). Improving reasoning and critical thinking skills for writing. Acquiring a Christian worldview
10. discover and applying practical research methods and sources (MDiv., 2,4,6-7; MAUM 1-3,5-6). Learning how to find useful sources of information. Applying research methods to understand youth and their context. Applying research methods to understand the church and holistic ministry
III. Required Texts:
• Ramos, David, et al. *ACTS Youth Leadership Training Manual* (provided at class site)

Recommend Texts:
• Bakke, Ray. *A Theology as Big as the City*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997 (221 pgs.) ISBN – 978-0830818907

IV. Course Requirements
A. Attendance Policy & Class Participation (10%) – attendance at all class sessions is critical to the learning process. Class participation enhances the learning process by making space for the diverse voices of knowledge and experiences of the students to become shared wisdom of the community. Attendance will be evaluated based on sign-in sheets. The student is responsible to fill these out each week.

B. Class Assignments (15%) – students are responsible for the class assignments and readings indicated in the syllabus. Each chapter of the ACTS Leadership Training Manual contains practical exercises that are to be completed. If you are not currently engaged in youth ministry you may not be able to complete some of the exercises. In such a case, please see the professor.

C. Reading Log (15%) – Failure to read the material will affect the student’s comprehension of the lectures and capacity to participate during class sessions. The attached reading log is to be submitted with the other written work *four weeks after the last class meeting date*. Please note that class lectures do not summarize or review the readings due. Rather, they assume that the reading has been done and build on it.

D. Youth Ministry Critical Reflection Journal (30%) – The journal is an exercise in ministerial creativity and imagination. Following a long tradition in the history of the Church, students are required to participate in journaling assignments on a weekly basis. It should include critical reflections on your readings, small group exercises, the lectures, and case studies. No references are required. Entries should be 1-2 double-spaced pages. They should be written in font no greater than 12 points. Margins should be no more than 1” in the top and bottom, 1.25” in the left and right. The journal is to be submitted *four weeks after the last class meeting date*. 
E. **Critical Reading Papers (30% = 15% x 2)** – students are to provide a critical reflection on any two (2) of the assigned texts. Each student will engage the readings critically from a ministerial and theological perspective. Please note that these papers are not meant to be a summary, bible study, opinion statement or a sermon.

1. The papers are to address the following:
   a. Brief summary of the reading(s) – no more than 2 paragraphs
   b. What did you find interesting or particularly noteworthy?
   c. How do the readings relate to the Scriptures?
   d. What were discipleship principles derived from reading(s)? (i.e., how does the book help you grow as a believer, a youth ministry leader and as one who helps others in their walk?)
   e. What is the connection/relevance of the readings to the present day context?
   f. How do the readings resonate with or challenge your own spiritual journey?

2. **Paper Format** – The papers are to be 5-7 pages in length, double-spaced, 12pt. font. Margins should be no more than 1” in the top and bottom, 1.25” in the left and right.
   a. References to the readings are to be made using a parenthetical style (do not use footnotes). Parenthetical referencing places the author’s last name, the date of publication, and the page number in parenthesis after the sentence. e.g, This is an example. (Turabian 1996, 175-184)
   b. The paper will be evaluated on its ability to respond to the questions indicated above, reference to the readings, grammar, coherence, and creativity
   c. Provide bibliographic reference ONLY IF sources outside the required reading material are used. However, do not use outside sources at the expense of the assigned readings

3. **Due Date** – Critical Reading Papers are due as indicated in the “Assignment Due” column of the “Course Overview” section of the syllabus. Lateness will be penalized 1/3 letter grade per week beginning the day after the due date

F. Please do not create cover pages for any of your papers. Simply place your name at the end of each of the assignments

G. Please submit the Reading Log, Critical Reflection Journal, and the Critical Reading Papers via email to icmorales@gordonconwell.edu.

V. **Grading scale and Plagiarism** – refer to guidelines as indicated in the GCTS Student Handbook
## VI. Overview of Class Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 1</td>
<td><strong>Urban Theology</strong> – this session will explore Biblical principles for urban ministry. Participants will engage in strategic dialogue and explore dynamic principles for the work of urban ministry</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 2</td>
<td><strong>SoulCare</strong> -</td>
<td>• Questions and exercises in chpt.1 of ACTS leadership manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 3</td>
<td><strong>Leadership Principles</strong> – this session provides the learning framework for semester. The four core leadership principles will serve as a catalyst for this session of leadership dynamics in an urban settings</td>
<td>• Critical Reading Paper - Arzola – Prophetic Youth Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 4</td>
<td><strong>Understanding Your Temperament &amp; Leadership Style</strong> – temperament affects leadership style. Students will complete a temperament assessment tool and participate in exercises that explore the impact of leadership style on ministry and followers</td>
<td>• Questions and exercises in chpt.3 of ACTS leadership manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 5</td>
<td><strong>Designing A Self-Development Plan</strong> – A leader's long-term effectiveness is related to his or her understanding of personal and ministry mission, core values, and overall ministry philosophy. Participants will complete a leadership self-development plan aimed at building clarity around mission, core values, and personal development/ growth goals.</td>
<td>• Questions and exercises in chpt.4 of ACTS leadership manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 6</td>
<td><strong>Developing Leaders on Your Team</strong> – today’s complex ministry environment requires that every ministry team member assume some form of leadership role. This session will focus on exploring ways setting the leadership tone for the ministry using practical techniques for growing leaders and creating a learning environment</td>
<td>• Questions and exercises in chpt.5 of ACTS leadership manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Strategic Planning</strong> – ministering in an urban context can be a very exciting yet overwhelming challenge. This session will help participants focus on the building blocks: how to develop a ministry plan, identify desired results, and create a reality-based implementation plan</td>
<td>• Critical Reading Paper - Dean – Almost Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 7</td>
<td><strong>Developing a Holistic Approach to Ministry</strong> – this session will further explore and expand upon the foundational biblical principles for urban ministry discussed in the first class week. Participants will be</td>
<td>• Questions and exercises in chpt.6 of ACTS leadership manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEEK 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Questions and exercises in chpt.7 of ACTS leadership manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Managing Projects &amp; Events</td>
<td>Youth leaders are frequently called on to manage multiple youth events or projects. This session will expose the student to project management tools to help effectively plan, prioritize, and implement successful events and projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates TBD</td>
<td>ACTS Leadership Retreat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Conducting a Community Assessment</td>
<td>Youth ministry can often take an insular slant, serving young those who are in the church community. This session will help youth leaders explore their community context within the framework of developing a community assessment. Students will learn to identify a community’s strengths and assess its needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Shalom in the City</td>
<td>What does it mean for to “seek the peace of the city”? This session will focus on exploring a Biblical framework for the various kinds of Biblical justice as it relates to community issues. Emphasis will be made on social justice that is practical and relevant to urban youth and local church youth ministry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Life Vision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9th</td>
<td>ACTS Graduation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAME: 

Reading Log
(THIS PAGE IS TO BE SUBMITTED WITH YOUR WRITTEN WORK)

Arzola, Alfredo. *Holistic Youth Ministry.*
Percentage (or page numbers) of the book read: _____________

Borgman, Dean. *Hear My Story: understanding the cries of troubled youth.*
Percentage (or page numbers) of the book read: _____________

Dean, Kenda Creasy. *Almost Christian: what the faith of our teenagers is telling the American Church.*
Percentage (or page numbers) of the book read: _____________

Rah, Soon-Chan. *The Next Evangelicalism.*
Percentage (or page numbers) of the book read: _____________