CL 630: The Person of the Christian Leader
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary-Charlotte

Instructor: Rodney L. Cooper, Ph.D.
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Class Schedule: Feb. 17-18; Mar. 23-24; Apr. 27-28

Course Description and Relation to Curriculum

“A leader is someone with the power to project either shadow or light onto some part of the world and onto the lives of the people who dwell there. A leader shapes the ethos in which others must live, an ethos as light filled as heaven or as shadowy as hell. A good leader is intensely aware of the interplay of inner shadow and light, lest the act of leadership do more harm than good”. ..(Parker J. Palmer, Let Your Life Speak, pp.76,78)

This course will concentrate on the nature of the Christian leader as well as uncovering theological, sociological and developmental foundations in becoming a “redemptive” leader. Special attention will be given to the developmental processes that work in forming a redemptive leader as well as the barriers and obstacles that can inhibit such development. The person and character of the leader are paramount and foundational to developing a team and establishing a redemptive climate in which growth is facilitated.

Gordon-Conwell Mission

This course is intended to help develop holistic leaders. Leaders who are self-aware and do not allow their own issues to impact those around them or the organization.

Course Objectives

A. Gain an understanding of the Developmental stages and models concerning spiritual development in a leader’s life.
B. Focus on a leader’s “World View” and how that impacts how they work with people, develop culture, develop a team etc
C. Gain insight and develop an intentional plan to work with “Dark Side” issues and personal obstacles that would inhibit a leader from growing
D. The importance and maintaining of a leader’s family and marriage will be addressed with an intentional plan to maintain each of these areas
E. The importance of developing a “care group” to combat isolation in a leader’s life will be addressed.
F. Understanding the Redemptive Leadership model
G. Knowing your own personal leadership style
H. Gaining insights from your family of origin and how that has impacted your leadership style.
I. Gain insights concerning the nature of leadership as well as the history of leader
Course Requirements

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below. The successful completion of these activities will require each student to spend approximately 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and out of class. The following break-down of assignments indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. Descriptions of the assignments are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time Comm.</th>
<th>Actual time comm.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family History paper</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinton Book</td>
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<td>Jekyll and Hyde paper</td>
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<td>Required Reading</td>
<td>50 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation and paper</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
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<td>Class Time</td>
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Required Reading


Write Brief reflective notes on each book (typed). Notes are to be concise and reflective in nature, not repeating what the book says, but recording crucial reflections on new insights gained, questions you have, or issues to be explored and probed further. **Notes are to be submitted to the instructor and will be assessed as part of the grade. 15%  DUE: MAY 28TH**

Various inventories not totaling not more than $60.00

**Course Assignments**

**Family History**

Write a paper on your family. Focus on how your family shaped your world view in the following areas:  
A. VIEW OF HUMANITY  
2. VIEW OF THE WORLD  
3. RULES CONCERNING LIFE ITSELF  
4. RULES CONCERNING RELATIONSHIPS.  **This paper should be no longer than 10 pages. Be prepared to share your findings in class. 15%  DUE: MARCH 24**

**Clinton Book**

Read Clinton’s book, **The Making of a Leader**. Then map out your leadership journey describing in each stage the events which seem to match those stages of your journey. Especially mark those events which deeply impacted you and why.

Choose 5 high points and five low points and how they shaped you. **Clearly indicate the stage you are now entering. 15%**

**Jekyll and Hyde Paper**

Write a reflective paper on the Jekyll and Hyde syndrome. For instance, do any of the issues mentioned mirror in some ways your own personality struggles and issues. **Describe two or three instances where you have seen “the dark side” manifest itself in your ministry context and personal life. 15%  DUE: APRIL 28**

**Presentation**

There is to be a team presentation dealing with an issue concerning leaders and their own personal development. Such issues could be: sexuality and leaders, isolation and leaders, developing accountable relationships as leaders. Each team (no more than 4) is to do significant research (no less than 20 key sources) as well as write a paper addressing the following categories: theology concerning the topic, the scope of the problem, the nature of the problem and solutions to the problem.
The paper is to be no longer than 20 pages long without the bibliography. The presentation is to be done in PowerPoint. 40%

Grading criteria for written work:

A. Promptness,
B. Organization,
C. Comprehensiveness and content concerning the topic,
D. Writing style,
E. Gender-inclusive language, and
F. Practicality and evidence of personal impact of the information.

No late papers or e-mail papers will be accepted. It is acknowledged that life circumstances cannot be avoided and in such cases consideration with some penalty will be noted. Computer breakdowns and printer problems do not count as life circumstance issues. No work will be accepted after the date indicated for it to be turned into the professor.

Attendance

We will not take roll each time we meet. This is a stewardship issue. The direct impact of the course material, the richness of the discussions and the application of said material are directly proportional to you being in class. So—be there and reap the benefits.
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 “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” 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
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. Those individuals, who need an official grade report issued to a third party, should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade.

Returned Work
Submitted course work will be returned to the student provided s/he provides a self addressed and postage paid envelope with his/her final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed once the grade has been assessed and issued.
COURSE SCHEDULE

**FEB:17-18**
Definitions and History of Leadership  
Biblical Framework for Leadership  
Developmental Stages of Leadership  
Five High and Five Low Exercise

**MAR. 23-24:**  
World View and Spiritual Maturity  
Family of Origin issues  
Dark Side of Leadership  
View and use of Power as a Leader (stage view)  
The Leader and their Marriage  
Leadership Styles based on the MBTI-Q form

**April 27-28:** Presentation of Leadership Issues by Teams
Leadership and Spiritual Formation


Too many clergy and laity understand success in ways more at home with American culture than biblical truth. For Christian pastors and leaders, success must be defined in terms of faithfulness to God’s purposes, loving and serving others, and a life of prayer and holiness.


Effective leaders resist compartmentalizing their lives. They focus on developing their inner lives.


An autobiographical reflection by a veteran Presbyterian pastor and Fuller seminary professor. The church today, according to Munger, needs “a leadership that leads from below, that understands its profound role as servant, that knows how to listen and respond to the real needs of real people. The church today needs leaders who demonstrate the capacity to communicate and live the good news so there is no question as to where their loyalties lie” (10).


A theological reflection on the centrality of Word and Sacrament to the pastoral task. “I very much doubt,” in the author’s words, “that the pastoral ministry can be sustained or vibrantly exercised by those who do not share” a commitment to Word and Sacrament (ix). Central to effective ministry is the pursuit of personal holiness in word and deed. “Holiness is no
abstract perfection but obedience in mission, and finally, nothing less than our union with the life of God” (208).


Christians in leadership roles are tempted by urges to be relevant, popular, and powerful. In response, Nouwen challenges his readers to practice contemplative prayer, confession to God of their own mixed motives, ample forgiveness for others, and theological reflection on the mysteries of God. “The long painful history of the church is the history of people ever and again tempted to choose power over love, control over the cross, being a leader over being led. Those who resisted this temptation to the end and thereby give us hope are the true saints... The way of the Christian leader is not the way of upward mobility in which our world has invested so much, but in the way of downward mobility ending on the cross” (60; 63).


People are “paralyzed by dislocation and fragmentation, caught in the prison of [their] mortality” (15). Even clergy share “in the human condition of isolation” and find that their “professional impact on others is diminishing” (85). Instead of denying those realities, Nouwen suggests that effective Christian clergy will cultivate “a constant willingness to see one’s own pain and suffering as rising from the depth of the human condition which all men share” (88).


“Vocation does not come from willfulness no matter how noble one’s intentions. It comes from listening to and accepting “true self” with its limits as well as its potentials.” Writing from a Quaker perspective, Palmer suggests that leaders must deal with five inner issues: insecurity about identity and worth, our fear of losing, functional atheism, our fear of the natural chaos of life, and our ultimate denial of death. “We have places of fear inside of us, but we have other places as well—places with names like trust and hope and faith. We can choose to lead from one of those places, to stand on ground that is not riddled with the fault lines of fear, to move toward others from a place of promise instead of anxiety” (94).
American pastors, according to Peterson, are becoming “a company of shopkeepers,” preoccupied with image and standing, with administration, measurable success, sociological impact, and economic viability. The core of the pastoral vocation involves three basic acts—prayer, reading Scripture, and providing spiritual direction.


Classic insights about the qualities of a spiritual leader.


