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 ideally taken by students who are nearing the end of their seminary studies. 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; Baptism, Dedication of Children, New Members; Communion; Weddings; Funerals and Grief Work; Public (Civil/Community) Services; Visitation; Finances; Church and Personal; Church Discipline; Professional Ethics; Sexual Ethics and Behavior; Staff Relationships; Marriage and Family; Conflict Management; Stress Management; Ordination; Worship; Leadership Development; Interviewing and Candidating; and Terminating, among other issues in pastoral ministry.
IV. Course Textbooks

Required:


**Extra Credit Reading (Either/or):**


Recommended:


Martin Bucer, Concerning the True Care of Souls (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, (ISBN: 978-0-85151-984-5)


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


The Book of Common Prayer

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

Please note: Place your name and box number on the back of the last sheet of all your assignments.

1. Attendance is required 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. (Less than 1,200 pages read will result in no credit.) 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, Friday 16 December.

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, options, fears or concerns, etc. If married, comment on the 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 prelude to the usual paper required in the ordination process for most denominations). The report is to be typed (single-spaced, 12 point type). Due: noon, Friday 16 September.

4. Students will develop a brief two-page (maximum) resume. The resume is to be typed (single-spaced, 12 point type). Due: noon, Friday 16 September.

5. Students will form case study groups, which will take place over the semester. Students will decide on what three cases they will discuss from the Swetland casebooks—in person, not on Skype or over the phone. 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. Primary focus should be on critical issues raised in your discussion; use the questions at the end of each case as a guide for the discussion. Be sure to comment on 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: noon, Friday 16 December.

6. Students will attend the three lunchtime forums offered during the weekends of class. Usually a visiting pastor will be present to discuss a particular aspect of pastoral ministry. Students will report on the session(s) they attended on the form at the back of the syllabus.

7. 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 [not the text written 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 is Due: noon, Friday 16 December.

8. Extra Credit: Students will write a 3-5 page reflection paper (single-spaced, 12 point type) on the novels: Elmer Gantry or Gilead. Due: noon, Friday 16 December.

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, box number, and preferred email address on the back of the last page.
- Always put page numbers on your assignments.
- Please staple the pages of assignments.
- Single-space within a paragraph, and double-space between paragraphs.
- Formal footnotes are not needed.
- Use 12-point type; do not use a sans serif font.
- Submit each paper in a 9 x 12 envelope with your name and box number on the outside (distributed in class), which will be used to return the paper to you. If the paper is to be returned to you by mail off campus, please include the correct postage on the envelope.
- No written work may be submitted as email attachments.
- No late work is accepted.
- Please leave papers outside Gibson’s office (AC 344).
VII. Lunch Forums

Students will attend all three Lunch Forums on the Saturdays of each weekend we meet (12:15-1:15 in a room reserved in the Kerr Building). The room for the Lunch Forums will be announced in class. Please bring your lunch.

VIII. Course Calendar (a detailed calendar will be posted before the first day of class)

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<tr>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>16 September</th>
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Please note: topics and times may change from day to day.
Pastoral Ministry Bibliography


Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Hamilton  
Pastoral Ministry—MC 701  
Sept. 16-17; Sept. 30-Oct. 1; 28-29 Oct.  
Fri 6:00pm-9:30pm - Sat 9:00am-4:30pm

How many class sessions did you attend? __________ (check if) all,  
Or  
___________ (give number).

Attended lunchtime forum(s) on ________________________ and (10%) discussed: ________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Annotated bibliography for required reading __________ (grade 30%).
Total number of pages read __________ (min.1,200 pp.)
Call to ministry paper & resume __________ (grade 10%).
Case reflection paper #1 __________ (grade 5%).
Case reflection paper #2 __________ (grade 5%).
Case reflection paper #3 __________ (grade 5%).
Four Pastoral Ministry Events __________ (grade 35%).

Extra Credit: Elmer Gantry or Gilead __________ (grade).

Final Grade __________

Please note: no late work is accepted after Friday 16 December at noon at Dr. Gibson’s office (AC 344).