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## SYLLABUS (2010)

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a directed and interactive experience in ministry formation. Through a shared discernment process between class and instructor, students will reflect on their aptitude for various dimensions of pastoral ministry and their sense of vocational call. In addition to this they will engage with the theological, philosophical, psychological and social perspectives of contemporary congregational life and the role of the pastor within that context. As well, some students may have a pastoral inclination but will not pursue pastoral ministry. For these students, this course will help them discover how a pastoral heart can shape one's role in other vocations as well.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will learn to identify and express their current desires, fears and questions about their future in pastoral ministry.
2. Non-pastoral students will learn to reflect on how pastoral aptitude can express itself in other anticipated vocational settings other than the conventional church.
3. Students will learn to assess their strengths and weakness for vocational pastoral ministry by evaluating their character, family backgrounds, and temperament.
4. Students will reflect on the discernment process necessary to ground one's personal life, discern pastoral call, and develop congregational leadership.
5. Students will develop a tentative ministry philosophy that incorporates the various elements of the course.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

Dawn, Marva and Eugene Peterson. *The Unnecessary Pastor: Rediscovering the Call* (Vancouver: Regent College, 2000).

Job, Reuben P. *A Guide To Retreat For All God's Shepherds*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994).

Richardson, Ronald W. *Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor's Own Family*. (Minneapolis MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2005)

Smith, Gordon T. *The Voice Of Jesus: Discernment, Prayer and the Witness of the Spirit*. (Downer's Grove, Ill: Intervarsity, 2003).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Note:

- Attendance and participation are required. Because the class is only 2 credits and is scheduled as a modular course, it is imperative that students avoid absences. **Absences per half day of class are 2% of participation mark. Any paper/assignment submitted after the due date will incur a 2% deduction for every day it is turned in late.**
- It is also important that students **plan ahead to complete pre-course assignments**. Checking out the requirements for the course and making the necessary arrangements with the registrar's office will also ensure that students can receive the instructor's notes in advance of the class. Attention to these details will be considered a sign of self-management, a necessary discipline for pastoral ministry.
- Generally students will not be granted extensions by the instructor unless serious extenuating circumstances occur and validation of those circumstances is offered. In such a case students will need to confirm their need for an extension with the instructor.

### Pre-Course Assignments – (By the first class)

1. If you are enrolled as an MDiv student you must complete an ATS Profile (a requirement for graduation for all MDiv Students). This involves an audio taped questionnaire for which you must provide the tape. Please make all necessary appointments to complete this test **immediately**, with Gayle Penner, the seminary secretary. Late completion of this test will result in the loss of your ATS grade. Review of the test results will occur some time after the October intrasession.
2. Students must **finish reading all three text books except** for *A Guide To Retreat For All God's Shepherds* (total 800-900 pages) and provide a statement for the first class to that effect. Note: *A Guide To Retreat For All God's Shepherds* has a different purpose. It serves as a compendium of reflective readings useful in a retreat setting. For that reason, the book may be scanned to identify the chapters which most strike a chord with one's current mindset about ministry (pastoral ministry or ministry in general). This book may be used in one of the post-course assignments.
3. Students must **write out a series of questions for class discussion** based on their readings. The number of questions is as follows:
  - *Two* discussion questions from Richardson, *Becoming a Healthier Pastor*
  - *Four* from Smith, *The Voice of Jesus*
  - *Four* from Peterson, *The Unnecessary Pastor*

**\*\*\*\*A copy of all questions must be turned into the instructor by the start of the first class and the student should retain a copy for themselves.**

4. By the first class, students must also **complete a 10 page reflection paper** which includes the following elements:
  - 4.1 – A **two page** critique (not merely a review) of Richardson’s book, *Becoming A Healthier Pastor* highlighting its strengths and weaknesses, and your opinion of the benefits and limitations of family systems theory in relation to pastoral ministry.
  - 4.2 – A **seven page** reflection on how your family background might function positively in pastoral leadership and how it might create issues in church conflict. Also discuss how you are likely to work with others in a team setting based on your family system. Additionally, include some discussion of how your temperament type might respond in a conflict environment.  
**Re. Temperament Type: Included in this reflection paper, students should reference their temperament type to some commonly recognized testing. Examples of this type of testing may include a DiSC profile, a Myers-Briggs test, a Ministry Match, Style of Influence Test, Keirsey Bates test, etc. If no such testing has been taken, students are encouraged to research and take such a test since acknowledgment of such testing is to be included in the reflection paper. Some of these tests can be taken online.**
  - 4.3 - **One page for distribution to other students** and the instructor on which you have written out a three generation diagram of your family system. Indicate any significant crises in your family using the symbols on p.82 of Richardson. (Note: Any serious crisis which the student may not want revealed can be omitted in favour of using the term “crisis event”).

### **Post-Course Assignments**

- 1 After reading *The Voice Of Jesus*, **write a five page response to the two questions** Gordon Smith poses at the beginning of his book (p. 9): “*What do you think Jesus is saying to you at this point in your life in the context of the challenges and opportunities you are facing?*” and “*What indicators give you some measure of confidence that is indeed Jesus speaking to you rather than someone or something else?*” Think particularly of how these questions pertain to your sense of call to pastoral ministry (or some variation of it). Write an additional **two** pages describing how you think you would lead a congregation to engage in the process of hearing the voice of God more clearly. How would you do this differently with a whole congregation, a church board, an individual parishioner? **DUE – Nov. 17, 2010 (submit hardcopy)**
- 2 After completing the book the *Unnecessary Pastor*, **write a seven to ten page philosophy of ministry** that describes your call to ministry as far as you can discern it, your vision of the church and its future, your personal leadership style

and how it is likely to fit with current and future trends in church life, your response to conflict, success and failure, and your plans for endurance and longevity in ministry. Incorporate Scripture and theological descriptions from which your philosophy arises. **DUE: Dec. 1, 2010 (submit hardcopy)**

**OPTION A:**

For students who are unsure about whether to enter pastoral ministry, describe how a philosophy of ministry would be carried out as a lay person within a local congregation or as a leader within a parachurch or secular setting. Use some of the same categories listed above such as your vision of the church, leadership style based on temperament, response to conflict and team work. Incorporate Scripture and theological concepts.

**OPTION B:**

For students who are in ministry or who resonate with one of the themes in Reuben Job's, *A Guide To Retreat For All God's Shepherds*, plan a one day retreat following the outline at the beginning of his book and write a **seven to ten page reflection paper**. Include the following:

- The theme which served as the focus for the retreat (see chapter headings in Reuben Job's book)
- Reflections on any tension with the process of retreat (i.e. – challenges with solitude and silence, struggle with journaling, reading of Scripture, prayer, etc.)
- Key things you learned about God, yourself and ministry, etc.

**COURSE SCHEDULE (Tentative)**

- Oct. 12**(Tuesday) – Introduction – A starting place and a place to stand  
-Pastoral Identity, Temperament Type and Family Background  
-Hearing the Voice of God in Personal Experience
- Oct. 13**(Wednesday) – Hearing the Voice of God in Pastoral Call, Vocation and Practise  
-Hearing the Voice of God with Christian Leaders  
-The Countercultural Pastor
- Oct. 14** (Thursday) -Communicators of the Mystery and Power of God  
-Pastoral Leadership, Discipleship and the Development of Community

**GRADING**

Attendance and Participation	15 %
Readings and Discussion Questions	15 %
Reflection Paper on Family Background	20%
Reflection Paper on Discernment and Call	20%
Philosophy of Ministry (or Option A or B)	30%

## Recommended Reading

Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor : abridged and edited.* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1982)

Belton, Joyner F. *Life in the Fish Bowl: Everyday Challenges of Pastors and Their Families.* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006)

Carroll, Jackson W. *God's Potters: Pastoral Leadership and the Shaping of Congregations.* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2006).

Dawn, Marva J. *The Sense of the Call: A Sabbath Way of Life for Those Who Serve God, the Church, and the World.* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2006).

Fagerstrom, Douglas L. *Ministry Staff Member: A Contemporary, Practical Handbook to Equip, Encourage, and Empower.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006).

Fernando, Ajith. *Jesus Driven Ministry.* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2002).

Fisher, David. *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Pastor: A Vision Based On The Ministry of Paul.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).

Gushee, David P. and Walter C. Jackson (ed's). *Preparing For Christian Ministry: An Evangelical Approach.* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1996).

Job, Reuben P. *A Guide To Retreat For All God's Shepherds.* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994).

Keirse, David. *Please Understand Me II: Temperament, Character and Intelligence.* (Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Book Co., 1998).

Langford, Daniel L. *The Pastor's Family: The Challenges of Family Life and Pastoral Responsibilities.* (New York: Haworth Pastoral Press, 1998).

London, H.B. and Wiseman, N. B. *Pastors at Greater Risk.* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2003).

Oden, Thomas C. *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry.* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983).

Peterson, Eugene H. *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction.* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Word Publishing, 1989).

Richardson, R.W. *Becoming a Healthier Pastor: Family Systems Theory and the Pastor's Own Family* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005).

Salter, Darius. *What Really Matters In Ministry: Profiling Pastoral Success in Flourishing Churches*. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1990).

Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash the Power of Authentic Life in Christ*. (Nashville, TN: Integrity Publishers, 2006).

Smith, Gordon T. *The Voice of Jesus: Discernment, Prayer and the Witness of the Spirit*. (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 2003).

White, John. *Excellence In Leadership: Reaching Goals with Prayer, Courage and Determination*. (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1986).

Willimon, William H. *Pastor: The Theology and Practise of Ordained Ministry*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002).

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