

Austin Graduate School of Theology  
MINISTRY 4350LC

## **Leading Christian Organizations**

Instructor: Greg Neill

Spring 2018  
Monday Afternoon: 1:00-3:40

# Leading Christian Organizations Course Syllabus and Class Schedule

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## I. Course Objectives

1. Students will reflect critically on how their identities and roles in a ministry context influence the production of knowledge about organizational culture and how their roles and identities impact the leadership of the organization.
2. Students will demonstrate an increased competence in reading, assessing, and interpreting varied cultural contexts of ministry through introductions to practical theology, family systems theory, ethnography and social game theory.
3. Students will develop the ability to lead and equip the church and other Christian organizations for their various ministries.
4. Students will gain insights to pastoral leadership as presented in the Biblical text, especially through the writings of Paul.
5. Students will gain insights to cross-cultural awareness and leadership styles and forms within various cultures and contexts.

## II. Required Texts

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*, Harper Collins, 2009.

Friedman Edwin H. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, The Guilford Press, 2011.

Moschella, Mary Clark. *Ethnography as a Pastoral Practice*, The Pilgrim Press, 2008.  
**(Required for Graduate Students, Recommended for Undergraduate Students)**

Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology*, William B Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

Thompson, James W. *Pastoral Ministry According to Paul*. Baker Academic, 2006.

Other selections from theological journals and blogs that will be provided by the instructor.

### III. Means of Assessment

#### 1. Weekly Reflection Papers (250 Points) – Due According to Class Syllabus Schedule

**Instructions:** Students will submit a 350-500 word theological reflection paper on weekly assigned readings from Bonhoeffer's, *Life Together*, Thompson's, *Pastoral Ministry According to Paul* and other assigned readings. There will be eleven total reflection paper assignments and students may omit one at any point in the semester.

#### 2. The Practice of Leadership Paper (250 Points) – Due March 19

**Overview:** In this assignment, you will integrate scripture, course readings and classroom discussions to construct a paper that demonstrates your current theology as a reflective leader of Christian organizations.

**Instructions:** Using the course readings, scripture, class discussions and other resources you will reflect upon your own informed understanding of ministerial leadership. This will allow you to develop a theology of ministry rooted in biblical foundation, formed through practical theology, and directed toward mission renewal and transformation of a church or other Christian organization. **The paper should be 7-10 pages in length.**

**Step 1:** This paper will cause you to reflect upon some important questions that should be addressed in your paper. Drawing mainly upon scripture, and integrating other sources (course readings, course lectures, etc.), consider and integrate responses to the following questions about practical theology:

- How does the Hebrew Bible, the gospels, and Pauline literature inform your understanding of ministry?
- What biblical metaphors or theological themes emerge that shape your practice of ministerial leadership?
- What role does the Bible play in leadership in a ministry context?
- How does history, culture, and theological reflection shape the practices of ministerial leadership?
- What is practical theology? What are its sources? Who are the participants?
- As a preacher, minister, chaplain, teacher, or lay leader how would you engage in practical theology that participates in God's activity?

**Step 2:** In relation to your definition of practical theology, integrate the questions below into your paper. Pay careful attention to the ways in which the witness of Scripture shapes your understanding of practical theology and your implementation of ministerial leadership in a located context. Additionally, consider the ways in which the larger theological tradition and cultural contexts shape your practice of ministerial leadership. Avoid proof texting or vague generalization in your theological and historical reflection. Attempt to capture a multifaceted conversation about the nature of God, the church, and the world as a basis for your constructive practical theology. Questions for integration:

- In what ways does cultural understanding serve the practice of ministry?
- How does the larger church tradition inform you?
- What does it mean to be a practical theologian in your context?
- How does your own personhood and spiritual journey both contribute to and provide challenges to ministerial leadership?

### **3. Case Study Exercise (150 Points) – Due April 9**

**Instructions:** Students will read a case study with a focus on cultural awareness and cross-cultural leadership. Students will be provided a list of questions to answer in conjunction with the case study.

### **4. Final Projects (350 Points) – Due May 10**

#### **Undergraduate Project – Appreciative Inquiry Proposal (5-7 Pages)**

**Instructions:** Students will create a proposed appreciative inquiry for their current ministry context based on the guidelines of Mark Lau Branson's book, *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations* (this material will be provided to students). Include in the assignment a brief overview and history of the ministry context in which you currently serve and/or worship. Submit 5-6 proposed interview questions for the appreciative inquiry, the proposed number of interviews you would conduct and the demographic make-up of those you would propose to interview.

**Note:** All written papers are to be in Times New Roman, 12 point, and double spaced. Format and cite using Turabian/Chicago manual of style.

**MIN 4350LC – Leadership in Christian Organizations  
Proposed Class Schedule**

<b>January 15</b>	MLK Holiday
<b>January 22</b>	What Is Practical Theology? Course Introduction/Syllabus/Assignments
<b>January 29</b>	The Tasks of Practical Theology (Part 1) Reading Assignments – Osmer: Chapters 1-2 Bonhoeffer: Introduction-Chapter 1 <b>Reflection Paper on Bonhoeffer Reading Due</b>
<b>February 5</b>	The Tasks of Practical Theology (Part 2) Reading Assignments – Osmer: Chapters 3-4 Bonhoeffer: Chapter 2 <b>Reflection Paper on Bonhoeffer Reading Due</b>
<b>February 12</b>	Family System Theory (Part 1) Reading Assignments – Friedman: Chapters 1-2 Bonhoeffer: Chapter 3 <b>Reflection Paper on Bonhoeffer Reading Due</b>
<b>February 19</b>	Family System Theory (Part 2) Reading Assignments – Friedman: Chapters 3-7 Bonhoeffer: Chapter 4 <b>Reflection Paper on Bonhoeffer Reading Due</b>
<b>February 26</b>	Family System Theory (Part 3) Reading Assignments – Freidman: Chapters 8-12 Bonhoeffer: Chapter 5 <b>Reflection Paper on Bonhoeffer Reading Due</b>
<b>March 5</b>	No Class (Instructor Out of Town) <b>Reflection Paper – Identifying a Congregational Issue</b>
<b>March 12</b>	No Class – Spring Break
<b>March 19</b>	Ethnography and Appreciative Inquiry (Part 1) Reading Assignments – Moschella: Introduction-Chapter 2 Branson Notes Provided By Instructor <b>Practice of Leadership Paper Due</b>

- March 26** Ethnography and Appreciative Inquiry (Part 2)  
Reading Assignments – Moschella: Chapter 3, Chapter 10  
Figure 6 (Page 205)  
Branson Notes Provided by Instructor
- April 2** Social Game Theory and Leadership  
Reading Assignment – Lingenfelter Handout.  
**Grid and Group Exercise Due**
- April 9** Leading With Cultural Intelligence  
Reading Assignment: Livermore Material provided by instructor.  
Why You Need Cultural Intelligence (Blog Article)  
Leading With Cultural Intelligence (Toastmaster, September 2015)  
**Case Study Exercise Due**
- April 16** Pastoral Ministry in Paul (Part 1)  
Reading Assignment - Thompson: Chapter 1-2  
**Reflection Paper on Thompson Chapter 1 Due**
- April 23** Pastoral Ministry in Paul (Part 2)  
Reading Assignment – Thompson: Chapter 3-4  
**Reflection Paper on Thompson Chapter 2 Due**
- April 30** Pastoral Ministry in Paul (Part 3)  
Reading Assignment – Thompson: Chapter 5  
**Reflection Paper on Thompson Chapter 4 Due**
- May 7** **Reflection Paper on Thompson Chapter 5 Due**
- May 10** **Projects Due**

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[http://davidlivermore.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Chapter-1\\_Leading-with-CQ\\_Livermore.pdf](http://davidlivermore.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Chapter-1_Leading-with-CQ_Livermore.pdf)

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