

Associated Canadian Theological Schools of Trinity Western University

Graduate Course Syllabus

Course Number: PTH 600 OL

Course Name: Formation for Ministry

Semester and Year: Spring 2023

Instructor: Kevin O'Coin (DMin), Associate Director of Admissions

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Pre-requisites: none

Semester Hours: 3

Course Dates: February 27 – April 22, 2023

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 12pm; at other times by appointment

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Course Description

This course deals with the theology and methodology of Christian ministry. It is designed to help shape the student into an effective ministry team member and leader who can be used of God to help produce spiritual formation and leadership development. It seeks to further the ministry formation process by immersing the student in principles of ministry and applying those principles to the calling of ministry leadership within contemporary culture.

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Objectives

The overall purpose of this course is to help students acquire and/or reinforce attitudes, understandings, skills, and practices that will position them for long-term personal growth and increasing ministry effectiveness as pastors. This course may also be helpful for those in other vocational ministry roles, such as missions or within parachurch organizations.

By the end of this course, students should:

- distinguish and appraise the potential influence of risk factors such as burnout, stress and family dysfunction that can undermine their personal growth and ministry effectiveness as Christian leaders;
- formulate a biblically informed theology of key attitudes, understandings, skills, and practices that will help them engage in effective and sustainable ministry; and
- develop and reinforce skills for performing various duties such as conducting funerals, officiating at weddings, speaking publicly, managing conflict, and successfully navigating the political nature of ministry life.

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Course Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and its Application

- Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the theory and practice of pastoral formation and skills
- Apply knowledge about pastoral formation and skills to strengthen their own and other's leadership
- Identify and interpret new ideas and research related to pastoral formation and skills

Cognitive Complexity

- Engage in academic research, writing, and communication as skilled practitioners who think critically and deeply about issues related to pastoral formation and skills
- Undertake inquiry and analysis, to solve problems with a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking and risk taking
- Engage in interdisciplinary thinking that bridges multiple disciplines
- Integrate ideas and experiences in a way that generates novel insights related to pastoral formation and skills

Inter- and Intra-personal Wellness

- Appreciate the role of community in wellness
- Grow in emotional intelligence
- Demonstrate increased professional capacity and autonomy as leaders who employ pastoral formation and skills best practices in ways that strengthen individuals and the groups of which they are a part
- Exhibit superior organizational and time management skills
- Demonstrate academic and personal integrity

Aesthetic Expression and Interpretation

- Consider and practice creative engagement and interdisciplinary thinking
- Demonstrate the ability to engage in a dynamic educational environment within which intellectual and imaginative products are brought into relation with the most pressing human issues of our time

Social Responsibility and Global Engagement

- Analyze, appraise, and evaluate their insights about pastoral formation and skills in a social context
- Develop the ability to become socially responsive agents with a commitment to understanding global issues
- Build healthy multicultural teams that allow diversity to flourish

Spiritual Formation

- Cultivate a growing relationship with God that increasingly manifests itself in godly character, loving relationships, and missional living
- Demonstrate greater understanding of and active participation in God's work in the world
- Utilize spiritual practices to deepen their love for God and increase their ministry effectiveness
- Exemplify a Christian ethic in pursuit of truth, reconciliation, compassion, and hope

Leadership

- Demonstrate a growing capacity to help themselves and others grow in their relationship with God
- In partnership with the Holy Spirit, develop godly character and guide others to do the same
- Discern and live out their God-given calling as evidenced in their biblical purpose, core values, and personal vision
- Participate in and build loving communities that practice the "one another's of Scripture
- Build healthy teams that work well together to accomplish team goals
- Grow leadership skills and other competencies for living out their calling with devotion and excellence

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Course Textbooks

Campbell-Reed, Eileen R. *Pastoral Imagination: Bringing the Practice of Ministry to Life*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2021. 264 pgs.

Gregory the Great. *The Book of Pastoral Care*. Edited by Daniel Keating. Translated by Jerome K. Williams. Providence, RI: Cluny Media, 2021. 182 pgs.

** This is a very readable, current translation, but many other serviceable translations exist.

Laniak, Timothy. *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*. New Studies in Biblical Theology Series. Vol. 20. Edited by D.A. Carson. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015. 288 pgs.

Tan, Siang-Yang. *Shepherding God's People: A Guide to Faithful and Fruitful Pastoral Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2019. 272 pgs.

Total pages = 1,006

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Course Assignments

The assignments for this course include the [Online Forums](#), [Ministry Skills assignment](#), a [Philosophy of Ministry](#), and the [Course Evaluation](#). If you ever have an idea for an alternative assignment that you believe would have greater personal value and would still meet the objectives of the course, feel free to talk with me about it. In addition, feel free to use other formats (e.g., PowerPoints, Prezi, storyboards, videos) for your assignments. Please double-space all written assignments.

Assignments are due by midnight (Pacific Time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in the Moodle online classroom. When you go to the online classroom, you will see where you can upload your assignments. Once I have marked your assignment, I will put it in your grade book in the online classroom where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I put a graded assignment in your grade book). Please note that I will typically deduct 5% of an assignment's total possible value for each day that it is late. Having said that, if you find that you are unable to complete an assignment on time, I will grant one extension of up to one week for one assignment during the course (without penalty) when you inform me of your need for an extension before the due date for that assignment. I will also consider extensions under exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency. For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take a full letter grade of the assignment's value before assigning a grade to the rewritten assignment.

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them (you can click on the assignment links to go right to the description):

Overview of Assignments (click on link to go to description)

Week	Due Date	Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade	Cumulative Percentage
Week 2	Mar 6 - 11	Forum #1 (required reading – <i>The Book of Pastoral Care</i>)	7.5%	7.5%
Week 4	Mar 20 - 25	Forum #2 (required reading – <i>Shepherds After My Own Heart</i>)	7.5%	15%
Week 6	Apr 3 - 8	Forum #3 (required reading – <i>Pastoral Imagination</i>)	7.5%	22.5%
Week 8	Apr 17 - 22	Forum #4 – (required reading – <i>Shepherding God’s People</i>)	7.5%	30%
Weeks 3, 5, 7	Mar 14, Mar 28, Apr 11	Ministry Skills	35%	55%
Week 8	Apr 22	Pphilosophy of Ministry	35%	100%
Week 8	Apr 22	Course Evaluation	-----	-----

Online Forum Participation (4 x 7.5% ea. = 30% of the final grade)

This course has four online forum weeks where you will have an opportunity to interact with others in the class around the required reading for that week and the instructional content. Please note that each forum week is from Monday to Saturday.

Each forum week will have two sections:

Reflections on Assigned Readings

You will post a reflection (approximately 600 words) on the text for the week. *These are due on Monday* (worth 40 points). To help you prepare, here are the assigned readings and related forum questions:

Forum #1: *The Book of Pastoral Care* (due March 6)

Reflect on each of the three main parts of the text (Part One: The Pastoral Office. Part Two: The Life of the Pastor. Part Three: How the Pastor Ought to Teach and Admonish) in approximately 200 words each,

drawing on both your own experiences and what you have observed of those in vocational ministry. What in each section strikes you as most true and why? What insights challenge you the most?

Forum #2: *Shepherds After My Own Heart* (due March 20)

In Chapter VI. Concluding Observations and Reflections, the author traces major observations, along with relevant subthemes. I have highlighted several of these below.

- Shepherd leadership is comprehensive in scope (with the primary functions being provider, protector, and guide).
- Bad or “false” shepherds are those who use their position to serve their own needs. They forget whose flock they serve.
- God shows a “divine preference for human agency.” The God of the Scriptures seeks passionately humans to enlist in God’s mission, risking it regularly in their hands.
- Pastoral imagery is part of a larger redemptive-historical *narrative* that depicts God’s leadership in wilderness settings.

Trace the development of one of these four themes through the text and provide your reflections on what you find. What strikes you as most true and why? What insights challenge you the most? What do you disagree with and what would you suggest as an alternative?

Forum #3: *Pastoral Imagination* (due April 3)

At the end of each chapter are some questions for reflection. Choose the sets of questions from the ends of three different chapters and write your reflections on them (about 200 words per chapter). I encourage you to share as honestly as you feel comfortable.

Forum #4: *Shepherding God’s People* (due April 17)

Choose three areas of pastoral ministry mentioned in the text (chapters five through 16). These areas should be different than the ones you focused on in your two Ministry Skills presentations. In 200 words per chapter, drawing on both your own experience and what you have observed of those in vocational ministry, articulate (a) what strikes you as most true and why, (b) what insights challenge you the most and (c) what you disagree with. Suggest alternative methods or points of view.

Reflections on Instructional Content

A question will be posted in Moodle focused on the instructional content from both the current and previous week. *These are due on Tuesday* (worth 20 points, 250-300 words).

Responses

Students are expected to contribute to the forum discussions by posting a minimum of four responses (worth up to 10 points each, 150-200 words) per forum week. *Your first response is due by Wednesday.* I’d encourage you to ask good coaching questions that invite others in the class to think more deeply or in different ways.

We have a tremendous opportunity to build upon one another’s knowledge, insights, and experiences. Our goal is to collaborate in the forums. At times, we will respectfully challenge each other. We

anticipate that this will be a rich time of dialogue. To create a safe environment for this to take place, we must build a supportive culture that encourages one another. Disagreeing and challenging can be stimulating if done in an edifying manner.

Substantive participation may include (among other things):

- ❖ Providing and developing a new thought, idea, or perspective.
- ❖ Citing an experience or example of what we are learning and showing how it applies.
- ❖ Adding a new twist on a perspective.
- ❖ Critically reflecting on an idea/concept.
- ❖ Questioning or challenging a principle/perspective and giving reasons for your questioning.
- ❖ Integrating Scripture and other sources in a meaningful way

What Substantive Participation is NOT:

- ❖ Very basic comments such as “I agree” or “I disagree.”
- ❖ Restating what someone has said (*unless there is a direct purpose in doing so*).
- ❖ Disrespectfully disagreeing.
- ❖ Pat answers that are not thought-provoking.

Below are examples of how to stimulate your own and others’ thinking:

- ❖ What would happen if...
- ❖ Other times it may be helpful to...
- ❖ It is my understanding...what is your experience with this?
- ❖ You might approach this from...
- ❖ Is it possible that...
- ❖ Would you consider...
- ❖ Maybe...
- ❖ Possibly...
- ❖ Sometimes...
- ❖ I'm wondering if...
- ❖ Do you think...

Have fun!

Note: You can use any of your forum posts in other papers for this course. I would also encourage you to view the posts of others as sources that you can cite in your papers. Everyone brings a wealth of insights into the class!

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Ministry Skills (35% of total grade)

Each student will complete two presentations. Each presentation involves an interview with at least one ministry leader (a different one for each topic) and a five-minute presentation in the online forum (this could be a video, audio recording, narrated PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.). For the interview part of the assignment, I would ask that you interview at least one ministry leader not in our class who has considerable experience in ministry, about tips and best practices related to the selected ministry skill (alternatively, you could shadow the person as he/she carries out the skills). To save time, you may want to interview the leaders about both skills at the same time. If you are taking a CLD class this semester, this would be a good focus for one or more of your mentoring meetings. You will then come up with an informative and creative presentation where you present a summary of the tips and best practices you gleaned from the interview (and from your own experience and other sources) to the rest of the class in the online forum.

Presentations are due Tuesday. Each presentation is worth 35 points. Students are also expected to respond to at least two other presentations each week, even on the week that they don't post a presentation (6 x 5 points each = 30 points, 150-200 words each).

Here is a list of the ministry skills. If you have in mind a different skill you would like to research/present, please check with me as to how it might fit:

Week 3 (due: March 14)

- Conducting baptisms
- Baby dedications
- Negotiating salaries
- Setting budgets
- Developing effective multicultural teams
- How to recruit and manage volunteers
- Providing pre-marital counselling
- Leading a celebration of the Lord's Table

Week 5 (due: March 28)

- Managing conflict
- Visitation
- Developing a discipleship plan for your ministry
- Officiating at weddings
- Crisis Intervention
- Developing leaders
- Honouring your predecessor (the former leader who carried out your current role) while preparing for your successor
- Conducting ministry leader searches

Week #7 (due: April 11)

- Conducting funerals
- Dealing with ministry politics
- Working with boards
- Building teams
- Bi-vocational ministry
- Building/renovation projects

You can sign up for topics in the Moodle classroom one week before the class starts.

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Philosophy of Ministry (35% of final grade)

Due: April 22

Maximum length: 3500 words

For this assignment, develop a personal philosophy of ministry. This paper must reflect on the nature and demands of ministry work. This paper will not address all the specific duties of a ministry leader, but rather provide an overarching philosophy that will inform your ministry work. The paper will be based on the following:

- (a) Scripture. Your paper should be biblically informed and theologically nuanced. Endeavour to draw on biblical texts across the canon (OT and NT). You may want to trace a relevant metaphor of theme throughout Scripture.
- (b) Course textbooks and other materials. Draw on insights from the forum discussions, assigned textbooks, and at least five other resources (e.g., books, videos, articles, blogs, podcasts) related to Christian ministry.
- (c) Ministry leader interviews. Interview three ministry leaders (from different denominational traditions, if possible) about their reflections on the nature of ministry and the role of the ministry leader. You can use the same ministry leaders for this assignment as for the ministry skills assignment.

Note: Feel free disagree with what you hear in the interviews and encounter in other sources. There is a lot of conflicting material out there and articulating what you oppose can be helpful in clarifying your position.

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Course Evaluation

Because your feedback is very important to me (I will change the course based on the feedback I receive from students), I have made the course evaluation a required part of the course. You will find the course evaluation under the Week 8 tab in Moodle.

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Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description	Grade Point	Meaning in Graduate Work
A+	97-100	Superior	4.30	Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable.
A	93-96.99	Excellent	4.00	Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use.
A-	90-92.99	Very Good	3.70	Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage.
B+	87-89.99	Proficient	3.30	Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage.
B	83-86.99	Good	3.00	Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
B-	80-82.99	Average	2.70	Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources.

				Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws.
C+	77-79.99	Adequate	2.30	Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Several issues related to coherence and style.
C	73-76.99	Acceptable	2.00	Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar.
C-	70-72.99	Needs Work	1.70	Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision <i>or</i> references and resources not taken fully into account <i>or</i> examples are basic or not completely convincing <i>or</i> barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with significant weaknesses in one or more respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies.
F	Below 70	Below Standard	0.00	Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above.

Assignment Assessment

When I assess written assignments and presentations, I tend to look for the following:

- Substantiveness (40%) – The content reveals deep thinking. This may take the form of critiquing existing ideas and proposing new ones. It may involve applying ideas from the readings and class discussions in deeply personal ways. It could also include a novel integration of ideas from various sources. As you think about substantiveness, I would also ask you to go beyond “left brain” thinking that focuses on systematic and logical thinking. Add “right brain” analysis that views concepts in intuitive and more holistic ways. This may involve viewing assignment topics from creative vantage points by using word pictures, analogies, metaphors, pictures, diagrams, drama, poetry, music, and other creative devices that can often enrich conceptual meaning and make it more personal. To get an A on an assignment, **you really need to present your ideas in an integrative and creative way**. Go beyond the stated expectations of an assignment (not in terms of length ☺). Surprise me with a novel combination and/or expression of ideas.
- Appropriateness (30%) – The content matches the requirements of the assignments.

- Coherence (20%) – The content flows in a consistent and meaningful way.
- Engaging (10%) – The writing style does not distract from the content (e.g., grammatical mistakes), but rather engages the reader’s attention. Turabian citation format must be used consistently.

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Important Academic Notes from ACTS

WEB SUPPORT – STUDENT PORTAL

All students at TWU have a TWU Student Portal username and password. Your student email account is also available through this Student Portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

ADD/DROP POLICY

All OL courses are open for registration until the first day of class. Once the class has begun, students wishing to drop or withdraw from the class must contact the Registrar’s Office by submitting a request through the TWU Service Hub (twu.ca/help). Tuition (excluding fees) refund rates are as follows:

Weeks 1-2 - 100%
Week 3 - 60%
Week 4 - 50%
Week 5 - 40%
Weeks 6-8 - 0%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM AT TWU

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student’s responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic misconduct. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the:

[University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar](#) (p. 47).

<https://prezi.com/od62fxnkbmxh/plagiarism-how-to-get-it-out-of-your-life/> (Prezi presentation)

<http://bit.ly/1p00KX3> (Google Slide presentation offering more comprehensive information)

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY

The TWU Centre for Accessible Learning is a great place to connect with someone about physical, mental health, and learning challenges that have the potential to affect your studies. Head to <https://www.twu.ca/learning-commons/centre-accessible-learning> for more info about seeking necessary academic accommodations.

HOSPITALITY IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

TWU is committed to an ethic of inclusion, centered on the principles of Christian hospitality, reciprocity, and reconciliation. We seek to cultivate generous learning spaces that are based on respect for differences and are open to diverse views, opinions, and identities that are thoughtfully expressed in a collegial manner. We welcome and value all voices, including those from under-represented groups or those who have been marginalized.

CAMPUS CLOSURE AND CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to the <https://www.twu.ca/campus-notification>.

COURSE GRADE APPEALS

Students can appeal their grade to the course instructor by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of the grade. Students not satisfied with an instructor's response can submit a formal course grade appeal to the ACTS Seminaries Academic Success Committee via the ACTS Main Office.

PAPER FORMATTING

The preferred manner for citations is the Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format. For information and accuracy, you may wish to reference the following style guide: Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 9th ed. Students may find the following website helpful:

http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that ACTS Seminaries is located on the Trinity Western University campus, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Kwantlen First Nation, the Katzie First Nation, and the Stó:lô First Nations.