



## Associated Canadian Theological Schools of Trinity Western University

### CHM 596 OL: Building Healthy Boards

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Leadership Studies and Practical Theology  
Summer – 2021  
3 credit hours

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Course Duration: May 3 – August 28, 2021  
Online Portion: May 3 – June 26, 2021

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#### Course Description

This course provides key insights into how to build a healthy ministry board. The topics were selected based on a survey of denominational leaders, pastors and other ministry leaders. They were asked to imagine that they were able to bring together many of the church boards in their denomination for a day of training. They recommended key topics that they would want to cover in this kind of training event. Several training themes emerged in their recommendations: models of ministry governance, team-building, discerning God's will together, spiritual leadership, board member training, managing conflict, leading meetings, financial management, visionary thinking and strategic planning, and dealing with paid staff. This course will equip you in these areas so that you can serve well on a ministry board and help the board function more effectively.

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## Objectives

This course will help students:

- Appreciate the importance of guarding the heart and mission of the church
- Evaluate various models of ministry governance and apply key ideas to their ministry context
- Discern God's will with others
- Analyze current meeting practices to make them more missional and life-giving
- Create meaningful human resource policies that will maximize the potential of paid staff
- Apply financial best practices to their ministry board
- Welcome conflict as a means to deepening relationships and sharpening thinking
- Move a board from maintenance to visionary thinking and planning
- Develop an orientation and training program for board members
- Build a strong board team that cares for each other and functions well
- Construct a plan for helping a board and the organization's membership navigate through leader transitions

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## Course Textbooks

Addington, T. J. *High Impact Church Boards: How to Develop Healthy, Intentional, and Empowered Church Leaders*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010. 212 pages.

Note: The author has made a PDF version of this book available for this course. It will be available in Moodle under the Home tab.

Barton, Ruth Hailey. *Pursuing God's Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups*. IVP Books, 2012. 256 pages.

Hotchkiss, Dan and Anthony B. Robinson. *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2016. 264 pages.

Perkins, Larry. *The Art of Kubernesis (1 Corinthians 12: 28): Leading as the Church Board Chairperson*. 2019. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock. 254 pages.

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## Course Instructional Content

You are required to watch, listen to, and/or read the course instructional content and interact about the content in the online forums. This course utilizes ACTS World Campus video content from CLD 534 OL: Vision, Strategic Planning and Organizational Leadership and video content from FaithLife’s Mobile Education Library.

## Course Assignments

The assignments for this course include [Pre-reading](#), [Participation in Online Forums](#), [Theology of Discerning God’s Will Together](#), [Board Analysis and Enhancement Project](#), and the [Course Evaluation](#).

Assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in Moodle. Once I have marked your assignment, I will return it through Moodle where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I return an assignment). Please note that I will 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 particular assignment. I will also consider extensions in exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency (when a doctor’s note accompanies the request). For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take off 20% 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 1	May 3	<a href="#">Pre-reading</a>		
Week 1	May 3-8	<a href="#">Online Forum #1 and Pursuing God’s Will Together</a>	5%	5%
Week 3	May 17-22	<a href="#">Online Forum #2 and Governance and Ministry</a>	5%	10%

Week 4	May 29	<a href="#">Theology of Discerning God's Will Together</a>	30%	40%
Week 5	June 1-6	<a href="#">Online Forum #3 and High Impact Church Boards</a>	5%	45%
Week 7	May 31 - June 5	<a href="#">Online Forum #4 and The Art of Kubernesis</a>	5%	50%
Week 8	June 26	<a href="#">Board Analysis and Enhancement Project</a>	50%	100%
Week 8	June 26	<a href="#">Course Evaluation</a>		100%

### Pre-reading

Due to the condensed nature of the online portion of the class, I would ask that you read at least one of the course textbooks by May 3 (we will discuss *Pursuing God's Will Together* during the first week in the online forum, so that would be a good one to read first).

### Online Forum Participation (20% 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 key questions, assignments, course readings, and/or additional lecture material. You should plan to invest approximately four hours into each forum week. Each forum is worth 5% of your final grade. Please make sure that you do the prescribed reading and watch the instructional videos (or access the instructional content in other ways) for each forum week, so that you can participate fully in the forum discussions.

Here is a schedule of the forum weeks that shows the required readings for each week (please note that the forum weeks start on a Monday and end on a Saturday):

- Form Week #1 – *Pursuing God's Will Together*
- Forum Week #2 – *Governance and Ministry*
- Forum Week #3 – *High Impact Church Boards*
- Forum Week #4 – *The Art of Kubernesis*

Students are expected to contribute to the forum discussions by posting a minimum of four conversational (worth up to 10 points each) and three substantive contributions (worth up to 20 points each) per forum week. Each forum week has three forums that correspond to the readings and instructional content. The first substantive post for the first forum is due on the Tuesday, the second substantive post for the second forum is due on the Wednesday, and the third substantive post for the third forum is due on the Thursday.

By conversational contributions, I mean simply joining the flow of discussion with shorter responses (e.g. questions, affirmations, quick thoughts about what someone has said). I'd encourage you to ask good coaching questions that invite others in the class to think more deeply or in different ways.

By substantive responses, I mean responses that show a deep processing of relevant ideas (200 or more words). We have a tremendous opportunity to build on one another's knowledge, insights, and experience. Our goal is to collaborate in the forum. At times, we will respectfully challenge each other. I 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 subculture 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 resources that you can cite in your papers. Everyone brings a wealth of insights into the class!

### **Theology of Discerning God’s Will Together (worth 30% of grade)**

Boards make many decisions. Obviously, we want to make the best decisions in keeping with God’s will. For this assignment, develop a theology of discerning God’s will together. Based on Scripture, the *Pursuing God’s Will Together* text, and other relevant sources, describe a biblical approach to discerning God’s will as a board. What is the role of prayer in this discernment process? How might a board grow in its capacity to hear from God? To what extent should discussion and strategic thinking/planning influence a board’s sense of God’s leading? What are other factors that contribute to discerning God’s will together? Even though this is primarily a theological paper, I would ask that you begin to apply your theology of discerning God’s will together to your current board. What would your theology look like in practice?

The total length of the paper is seven pages and is due May 29.

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### **Board Analysis and Enhancement Project (worth 50% of grade)**

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to assess the current health of your board and to develop processes and/or resources that will enhance it in a significant way. The assignment has two parts:

#### Part 1: Board Analysis (worth 20% of the assignment grade)

For this part, attend at least two meetings of a ministry board (if you are not currently a member of a ministry board, you will need to ask permission from the board chair at your church or some other ministry to attend their board meetings) and interview the board chair. Using the course texts and class discussion as a grid, evaluate the effectiveness of the ministry board based on your observations and the input you receive from the board chair. In addition, make at least five recommendations for strengthening the board and describe why you believe they would be helpful. Share your recommendations with the board chair (please include a note saying that you have done so).

The total length of this section is three pages.

#### Part 2: Board Enhancement (worth 80% of the assignment grade)

Based on your analysis of your board in Part 1, develop processes and/or resources that you believe will help your board apply at least one of your recommendations. I’ve included some ideas below (feel free to use as many of them as you want – you don’t have to just pick one). Of course, you don’t have to use any of these ideas. You’re free to use your own ideas to develop whatever processes and/or resources you believe will help your board become healthier.

The total length of this section is 12 pages.

### Idea #1 - Models of Ministry Governance

What are the models of ministry governance? Which model of governance does your ministry follow? What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of your approach? Based on what we have discussed and read in this course, how would you strengthen the current approach? Develop a detailed strategic plan for changing or strengthening your board's current model of ministry governance that includes major objectives, rationale for including those objectives, and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound) action steps for achieving the objectives.

### Idea #2 - Human Resources Manual for Your Ministry

For this assignment, develop a Human Resources (HR) Manual for your ministry that addresses key staff issues. I'm also fine with you doing a major revision on an existing HR Manual if it needs serious updating.

### Idea #3 - Spiritual Leadership

What does it mean for board members to serve as spiritual leaders (think of a theology of spiritual leadership)? What are the characteristics of spiritual leaders? What do spiritual leaders do? Develop a series of six devotionals on spiritual leadership (each one approximately 10-15 minutes in length) that you could share with your board.

### Idea #4 - Board Financial Practices

For this assignment, develop a board financial practices handbook that describes the financial policies that your ministry follows (and should follow). As with the HR Manual idea, I'm also fine if you do a major review and revision of existing financial policies.

### Idea #5 – Discerning Strategic Priorities for Your Ministry

As a way to discern strategic priorities for your ministry, do a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis with your board members. If you want, you can use the [SWOT Analysis](#) I used with the Langley Food Bank as a guide (you would likely need to tweak some of the questions). With the process I used with the Langley Food Bank, I had board members work through the questions in each of the four areas of the SWOT Analysis before we met as a board. During the board meeting, board members shared their answers which I listed on large sheets of paper (in this time of physical distancing, you could use the whiteboard feature in Zoom to capture these ideas). We then discerned the top three priorities for the ministry moving forward. After the meeting, I sent board members a [Summary](#) of our discussion.

### Idea #6 - Team-building

Develop a set of 10 principles for healthy teams in the form of a team covenant. In addition, include a clear description for each principle. As always, draw on other sources to deepen your theological (e.g. how would a theology of team-building based on Scripture inform your list of principles for healthy teams) and theoretical engagement of the relevant issues.

Use the 10 principles to assess your ministry board. Get the board involved in the assessment (e.g. have a group discussion about how the board is doing with the 10 principles), so that they are more likely to own the results (include a note in your paper as to how you involved them in a meaningful way).

Develop a strategic plan for helping the board become a healthier team (you can do this in point form). The strategic plan should include at least three major objectives with a minimum of three SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound) action steps for each objective. If possible, include the board in the creation of the action plan (make sure you include a short description of how you included them). They are much more likely to act on something that they have helped to create.

Note: For those of you who have already taken CLD 533: Mentoring, Team-building and Equipping, you are free to use some or all of the 10 Principles for Healthy Teams you developed for that course.

### Idea #7 - Leadership Retreat

You have been given the amazing privilege of developing a leadership retreat for your ministry board/staff (and perhaps other leaders from your ministry) that starts at 7 pm on Friday and ends at 6 pm on Saturday (this is flexible depending on what would work best for your board). Develop a theme for the retreat, a schedule and clear outcomes and descriptions for each session/activity.

### Idea #8 – Orientation

Develop a one-hour orientation session for new board members. Include a PowerPoint (or other media presentation) along with detailed teaching notes. Your PowerPoint should have at least 10 slides. Please include detailed teaching notes so that anyone could take your presentation and teach it to others.

### Idea #9 – Board Training

Thinking about your ministry board and what it needs most, create a 10-month training process that includes 10 training sessions (each one should be 20-30 minutes) that you and/or others could facilitate for your board. Each session should include a one-page description where you describe the topic, learning outcomes, and the learning experiences you plan to use to achieve those outcomes. Be sure to describe other learning activities that are a part of the 10-month training process (e.g. book/blog/article readings, videos, site visits to other ministries, one-on-one coaching, etc.).



Idea #10 – Staff and Board Evaluation

Construct a staff and board evaluation process that provides a framework for regular evaluation of individual staff and board members. Include a description of the process, rationale, and assessment approaches (and any surveys, etc. you use). Make sure that you watch the Week 8 *Effective Staff Evaluations* video as a part of your research.

As noted above, you are completely free to come up with your own ideas for this assignment.

The total length of this assignment is 15 pages.

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**Course Evaluation**

Because your feedback is very important to me (I will often change future offerings of a 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. Once you have completed it, you will be able to submit your final assignment.

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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. Considerable number of 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 or references and resources not taken fully into account or examples are basic or not completely convincing or barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some 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. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level.

Note: This grading rubric is an adaptation of the one used in the MA in Leadership and MA in Educational Leadership programs at TWU.

### Assignment Assessment

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

- Appropriateness – The content matches the requirements of the assignments.
- Substantiveness – The content reveals deeper level 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. In order 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.
- Coherence – The content flows in a consistent and meaningful way.
- Engaging – The writing style does not distract from the content (e.g. grammatical mistakes), but rather engages the reader’s attention. By the way, I love creative title pages that introduce a theme or multiple themes from your assignment in an engaging way.

## **Assignment Grade Appeals**

Students can appeal their grade to me by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with the ACTS Academic Director's Office.

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## **Important Academic Notes from ACTS**

### **Web Support – Student Portal**

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. 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.

### **Campus Closure**

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the following radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), STAR FM (107.1 FM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM). As well, an announcement will be placed on the University's campus closure notification message box (604.513.2147) and on the front page of the University's website (<http://www.twu.ca> – also see <http://www.twu.ca/conditions> for more details).

An initial announcement regarding the status of the campus and cancellation of classes is made at 6:00 AM and covers all classes beginning before 1:00PM. A second announcement is made at 11:00AM that covers all classes which begin between 1:00PM and 5:00PM. A third announcement is made at 3:00PM and covers those classes which begin after 5:00PM.

### **Paper Formatting**

Students need to adhere to Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format except for in counselling courses, for which APA format is used and for CanIL courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to use EndNote Basic/Web (see the tutorial at <http://libguides.twu.ca/EndNote/>) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to "clean up" most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples:

[http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian\\_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html) or [www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/). Note that in EndNote the available formatting styles are those of Turabian Bibliography, 8th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 6th

edition. For Turabian, note that there are two formats –Bibliography and Reference List (a short format citation style). ACTS uses the Bibliography format, not Reference List. The university no longer subscribes to RefWorks.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

For free online programs that will enable you to create properly formatted bibliography citations, go to <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> ("Chicago stands for "Turabian").

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. CanIL students can locate this on the CanIL intranet, under the “student” side.

**Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!**

### **Course Evaluations**

Course evaluations are an important aspect of improving teaching outcomes and for students and faculty professional development. Therefore, completion of course evaluations are considered a course expectation. Professors will schedule time to fill out the online course evaluation (20-30 minutes) during their last scheduled class of the semester, for students to complete on their personal laptop or a collegium computer. Students who are absent or otherwise unable to complete the online course evaluation in the last class, will be expected to make every effort to do so by the last day of exams. Information about how to access online evaluation forms will be provided to the faculty and students prior to the last week of classes by the ACTS Administration.

### **Research Ethics**

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Those needing additional clarification may contact the ACTS Academic Dean's office. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

### **Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU**

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar). Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. Excellent resources describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke:

<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)\_

### **Equity of Access**

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.

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