

The Christian Public Leader in Context
MA Leadership Concentrations – Section 1
Fall 2014 - revised

Course Title: FE0521 Course Credit: .5
Course Time: Monthly throughout the semester - Fridays 12:30 -3:20 pm
with 3 additional precept times
Location: NW 100 or live streaming
Instructors: Terri Elton telton@luthersem.edu NW 210G
Timothy Coltvet coltvet001@luthersem.edu Con Ed Office

Course Description

This course will explore Christian Public Leadership by attending to leadership *in the midst of particular communities and their distinct contextual realities*. In this course students will expand their leadership capacity by leading and being in dialogue with a particular ministry context. With this ministry context as their primary conversation partner students will critically reflect on themselves as leaders, discover the communal nature of leadership, and develop their own leadership practices. Particular attention will be given to praxis, contextualization, integrative approaches to ministry, and competencies connected to student's concentration. Each of the four sections will focus on a particular topic. Section one's focus is: *who am I as a leader in community – assimilation into a new community*.

Learning Outcomes (for all four sections)

1. Students will be able to participate in and lead **action-reflection praxis**.¹
2. Students will develop the capacity to **contextualize** theology, theory, and practices of ministry within a particular community.²
3. Students will **integrate theology, theory, and practices** for missional leadership in a particular community.³
4. Students will be able to competently **lead ministries** in their area of concentration.⁴
5. Students will **deepen their understanding of themselves** as Christian Public Leaders, be able to critical reflect on themselves as leaders, and inhabit practices of a lifelong learner.⁵

Required Readings: (on e-reserve)

- Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*. Maryknoll: New York, Orbis Books, 2004, 3-15.
- Kyle Small, "Successful Leadership in the Early Years of Ministry: Reflections for Leadership Formation in Theological Education." *Journal of Religious Leadership*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring 2011, 51-80.
- Craig Van Gelder, "The Hermeneutics of Leading in Mission," *Journal of Religious Leadership*, Vol. 3, No. 1 and 2, Spring/Fall 2004, 139-171.

¹ CML MA PLO 3; CYF MA PLO 1 and 3; CCC MA PLO 1

² CML MA PLO 4 and 5; CYF MA PLO 2; CCC MA PLO 1, 3 and 4

³ CML MA PLO 1 and 3; CYF MA PLO 2 and 3; CCC MA PLO 2 and 4

⁴ CML MA PLO 2 and 3; CYF MA PLO 4; CCC MA PLO 3

⁵ CML MA PLO 2 and 3; CYF MA PLO 2; CCC MA PLO 3

Suggested Readings:

- Ammerman, Nancy, Jackson Carroll, Carl Dudley, and William McKinney, eds. *Studying Congregations: a New Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.
- Branson, Mark Lau. *Memories, Hopes, and Conversations: Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change*. Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2004.
- Snow, Luther K. *The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on its Gifts*. Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2004.

Course Format:

This course is foundational for all MA Leadership students. (MA Leadership students focus in the areas of Congregational and Community Care, Congregational Mission and Leadership, and Children, Youth and Family Ministry.) It lives at the intersection of contextual leadership, theology and theory of ministry, and action-reflection praxis. This course accompanies student's experience of leading in ministry within one of these concentrations areas. ***Class gatherings, which take place four times during the semester (once a month) for three hours***, focus on a topic of Christian public leadership. The topic introduced in class is reflected on in context, through personal reflection, and group conversation for the rest of the month. Group conversation takes place in precept groups. Precept groups are small groups of students, all within the same ministry concentration, who meet with a ministry practitioner to discuss and reflect on various ministry topics. ***Precept groups, and their ministry practitioner, meet each of the four class period, as well as three additional times in-between class sessions***. The monthly class sessions are video streamed for DL students (or commuter students who arrange for this option). Precept groups take place face-to-face for residential students and via conference call/video chat for DL students.

Course Requirements:

1. *Students will serve in a leadership role in their ministry concentration area in a particular ministry context during this course.* Leadership capacity and time will vary. Time varies from a minimum of **20 hours a month** to working full-time. Leadership capacity varies from a volunteer exploring a ministry area to the staff person responsible for this area of ministry. Students who do not have a ministry context in which they are already leading should contact Tim Coltvet in the Contextual Learning office for assistance *prior to the beginning of this course*.
2. *Students will participate in personal and group reflection on what it means to be a Christian public leader in ministry.* One of the outcomes of this course centers on action-reflection praxis and the key way this outcome is addressed is through personal and group reflection. Students engage in and lead various reflection practices.
 - a. To address personal reflection, *students will journal four times per month, or once a week, about their own leadership.* Questions are intended to explore the theme for the month and help students prepare for their final project.
Journals are 25% of the student's grade and are to be turned into the professor during the final class time, December 5th, 2014.
 - b. To facilitate group reflection, *students will be placed in precept groups (with students in their ministry concentration area) facilitated by ministry practitioners experienced in the ministry area in which they are concentrating.* These groups will meet two times a month, once as part of the monthly class time, and once in-between class periods. Readings and contextual assignments are discussed in these "in-between" precept meetings.
Participation in precepts and class discussions is 25% of the student's grade.

3. *Students will complete assigned readings and contextual assignments.* Various readings and contextual experiences are assigned throughout the course. Students are to complete the readings and contextual assignments for each month *after* the monthly class gathering and before their precept gathering.
4. *Students will create a final project.* This final project will have two parts.
 - a. *Part one* centers on the student as a *Christian public leader*. It includes: a self-assessment of themselves as a Christian public leader as they enter their program, naming their ministry questions, imagining their leadership post graduation, and stating contextual learning goals for the duration of their degree program.
 - b. *Part two* centers on the student's *ministry context*. It includes: laying out a thick description of the ministry itself, describing the context in which the ministry exists, and naming the ministry's challenges and opportunities for the future.
The final project is 50% of the student's grade, should be 10-12 pages in length (with each part approximately the same length) and posted in MyLutherNet no later than Wednesday, December 10th, 2014.

Grading:

A word on grading. **This course is pass/fail.** To pass the course, students must *turn in all assignments*. While there are no formal research papers in this course, it is the expectation of the professor that papers are *free of grammatical errors and sources are cited properly*. Deductions will be given if sources are not sited and/or grammatical errors are problematic. *Late assignments* will be accepted only if the student gets permission and makes alternative arrangements with the professor before the due date.

Grades will be determined by the following percentage:

- Class and precept participation 25%
- Reflection Journal 25%
- Final Project 50%

Course Outline:

September 12, 2014	Theme: <i>Who am I? Who are you?</i>	Reading: Kyle Small, "Successful Leadership in the Early Years of Ministry..."
	Class time: Introduction to the importance of contextualization in Christian public leadership.	Assignment: Interview three people in the ministry context about what they see to be the most important aspect of this ministry. (See Appendix A for an idea of some questions.)
	Precept time: Share about your sense of call and hope for the future as a Christian public leader.	Skill/Competency: <i>Interviews:</i> the art of asking good questions

<i>September Precept Group</i>	<i>Reading a ministry setting:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why is reading a ministry so important? - How do leaders get to know the culture of a ministry? - What are some best practices for reading a ministry setting?
--------------------------------	---

<i>September Journal</i>	<p><i>Exploring your call and questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What brought you into Christian public leadership? Why come to seminary? - What are your expectations for theological education in relation to your developing as a Christian public leader? What questions drive your learning? - What gifts do you bring into ministry? What are some areas of passion? - What environment/s bring out the best in you and your leadership?
--------------------------	--

October 10, 2014	Theme: <i>Where are we?</i>	Reading: Bevens, <i>Models of Contextual Theology</i> . Suggested Reading: Ammerman, et. al, <i>Studying Congregations</i> , Chapter 2.
	Class time: Location. Location. Location. Ministry is always particular. Understanding the larger ecology of ministry.	Assignment: Explore the neighborhood in which your ministry resides. What assets and challenges does it offer? (See Appendix B for some ideas.)
	Precept time: Describe your ministries to one another.	Skill/Competency: <i>Contextual exploration: the art of fostering curiosity</i>

<i>October Precept Group</i>	<p><i>Reading a ministry's neighborhood:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why is it important to be attentive to a ministry's neighborhood? - How do leaders get to know and become connected to their ministry's neighborhood?
------------------------------	---

<i>October Journal</i>	<p><i>Who are you in this ministry setting?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which of your gifts and passions might connect with this ministry setting? How do you see yourself connecting? - How do your questions and curiosities align with the musings of this ministry? - What would you like to learn from this ministry setting? - What do you need to know more about in this setting to be an effective leader?
------------------------	--

November 7, 2014	Theme: <i>What time is it?</i>	Reading: Craig Van Gelder, "The Hermeneutics of Leading in Mission," <i>Journal of Religious Leadership</i> .
-------------------------	---------------------------------------	--

	Class time: Creating a conversation between the past, the future, and the present.	Assignment: Something having to do with the 5As in the article.
	Precept time: What have your interactions outside of your ministry setting taught you about the ministry itself?	Skill/Competency: <i>Discernment:</i> the art of being open and listening

<i>November Precept Group</i>	<p><i>Leadership and discernment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where did you discover alignment between your ministry setting and its neighborhood? - Where did you see gaps or tensions? - What questions do you have about this ministry setting moving forward?
-------------------------------	---

<i>November Journal</i>	<p><i>What do you see in your ministry setting?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What gets you excited about the ministry taking place in this setting? - What are some concerns you have about this ministry setting? - What would you want to explore more deeply in this ministry setting? - What are the core commitments of this ministry? How do they align with your core commitments for ministry? Would you be a good long-term fit for leading in this ministry? Why or why not?
-------------------------	--

December 5, 2014	Theme: <i>Putting it all Together</i>	
	Class time: The Art and Science of Christian Public Leadership	Assignment: Journals turned in during class.
	Precept time: What do you know now that you didn't know at the beginning of the semester? What do you want to know more about?	

Final Paper Due: Wednesday, December 10th, 2014.

Policies of Luther Seminary:

ADA Compliance Statement

Reasonable accommodation will be provided to any student with a disability who is registered with the Student Resource Center and requests needed accommodation.

If you are a student with a disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or accommodation in this class or any other class, please contact the Director of the Student Resource Center or contact your instructor directly.

Academic Honesty

Members of the Luther Seminary community are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and honestly in academic matters. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses against this expectation and are subject to disciplinary action.

If instances of cheating or plagiarism are detected, one of the disciplinary actions shall follow: either the instructor records a failure for the assignment or examination, or the instructor records a failure for the course. In either case, the instructor shall bring the matter to the Office of the Academic Dean and the Office of the Dean of Students, and the question whether further disciplinary action should be considered will be determined in consultation with the instructor, the Office of the Academic Dean, and the Office of the Dean of Students. See the current Student Handbook for more details on this matter.

Course Workload

Throughout this half course students will be expected to engage in a total of 67.5 Student Learning Hours, which breaks down to roughly 18.5 hours of Guided Learning (lectures and precepts) and 48.5 hours of self-directed learning (reading, writing and other course work)

Appendix A
Ideas for Interview Questions

1. If you could describe this ministry in one sentence, what would it be?
 - a. What is their mission and vision? values?
 - b. What is this ministry known for in the community?
 - c. Has this congregation had any major events in the past few years? What are they and what has been their impact?
 - d. Describe a moment in this ministry's history when they were at their best.
 - e. Why are you connected to this ministry?
 - f. How do you describe this ministry to other people who are not apart of it?
2. What makes this ministry work?
 - a. Who are the central leaders of this ministry?
 - b. What would happen if one of them stepped away suddenly?
 - c. What's ahead for this ministry?
 - d. How are people connected here? How are you connected?
 - e. If this ministry connected to the neighborhood? Why or why not?
 - f. Tell about a time when this ministry tried something new. What happened?
 - g. If you had one wish for this ministry's future, what would it be?
 - h. How do things get done around here?
3. Describe the personality of this ministry.
 - a. Name some of the high points in this ministry's history.
 - b. What issue/s has this ministry fought over in the past?
 - c. What aspects of this ministry have most impacted people's lives? Why?
 - d. How do the people here talk about God?
 - e. How do the people in this ministry care for each other?
 - f. What one word describes the character of this ministry?
4. What else is important to know about this ministry?

Appendix B
Ideas for Exploring the Neighborhood of a Ministry

1. Take a walk through the neighborhood and visit the local community *hang-outs*.
 - a. Where do people eat? What's the best place to have lunch? Dinner? Others?
 - b. Visit a grocery store. What do you discover? What does it tell you about the community?
 - c. Where do the locals gather? Are there more than one place people gather? Which "groups" gather in which places?
2. Describe the fabric of the neighborhood.
 - a. Go to a local business and strike up a conversation with the person behind the counter. What do you learn about the neighborhood/community?
 - b. Are there public community resources? (i.e. a library, social service agency, Habitat for Humanity chapter, etc) What might this suggest about the area?
 - c. Find the schools in the area. What might they suggest about this community?
 - d. What do people in area *do* for work and leisure? What community celebrations are there? Any area sports people play or watch? Talk with a concierge about the community. What do you learn?
3. What is the *make-up of the people* in this community?
 - a. Where do most people *live*? Drive through some local housing areas.
 - b. Is there diverse forms of housing? (apts, houses, multi-unit homes, etc) Is there Senior Adult housing? Other special forms of housing?
 - c. Is there a primary language? Are there many? What does your observation of language suggest about the fabric of the community?
 - d. Talk with people in different age brackets. What do you learn about the community?
4. What is the state of *religion* in this community?
 - a. What, if any, religious organizations are present?
 - b. What other "signs" of religious involvement in the community is there?
 - c. When and where do people worship?
5. What else do you notice?
 - a. Do you feel safe? why or why not?
 - b. Where does the power reside in the community?
 - c. Who are the biggest influencers in this community? (business, persons, organizations)
 - d. How do people get around? What do traffic patterns suggest about the community?
 - e. Sit in a park or public gathering space. What do you see? What stands out? What are people doing? What is the make-up of their social groups?