

The Christian Public Leader in Context
MA Leadership Concentrations – Section 2
Spring 2015

Course Title: FE0522 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
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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 two's focus is: *the act of leading – finding one's voice in Christian public leadership*.

Learning Outcomes (for all four sections, with this section focusing primarily on 4 and 5)

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:

- Herrington, Creech, Taylor, *The Leader's Journey* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003)

Suggested Readings:

Steinke, Peter, *Healthy Congregations: a Systems Approach* (Alban Institute, 1996) chapters 2 and 7.

Course Format:

This course is foundational for all MA Leadership students (and MDiv students concentrating in Children, Youth and Family Ministry) and lives at the intersection of contextual leadership, theology and theory of ministry, and action-reflection praxis. This course accompanies student's

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

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 in 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 (and commuter students who arrange for this option).

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 with responsibilities in 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 in in three sections – March 13th, April 10th, and May 1st, 2015.
 - 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. Full participation will given if students attend all precepts are prepared to discuss the material. Points will be deducted for lack of preparation and/or unexcused absence from precepts. (One excused absence is acceptable as long as the student notifies the precept leader ahead of time.)
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 depth and breadth of *competencies Christian public leaders in your concentration area need and how your experiences and gifts connect with these competencies.* Articulate, based on interviews and research,

the competencies currently needed in this area of ministry and what competencies are ongoing and which are more fluid and changing. Then reflect on your own experiences and competencies as you imagine your future Christian public leadership. What impact has your past experiences had, what current experiences are contributing to competency in this area and what are some areas to be aware of and learn about as you move forward.

- b. *Part two* centers on the student's *ministry context*. It includes: reflect on the ministry context from a systems point of view. Highlight the healthy aspects and the places of unhealthy or illness. Note the aspects of the ministry that are interdependent and the way the system receives feedback. Reflect on the role leadership has in the system, and particularly our leadership within this system (places to learn from, areas to be aware of, and potential pitfalls).

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 Friday, May 8th, 2015.

Each section of the project is worth 25 points. The points are allocated according to the following system: 5 for grammar, writing style and length, 10 for addressing the questions/areas listed, 5 for drawing in readings and assignments, and 5 for depth of reflection and creativity.

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:

February 13th, 2015	Theme: <i>The Call to Spiritual Transformation</i>	Reading: <i>The Leader's Journey</i>, Part 1.
	Class time: Call as response and an ongoing journey.	Assignment: Interview <i>three</i> Christian public leaders in your concentration area around their call to ministry, transformation they have experienced over time, and competencies needed in leading in this area today. (See Appendix A for an idea of some questions.)
	Precept time: Share how your call to Christian public ministry has changed you in good ways and hard ways.	Skill/Competency: <i>Interviews:</i> the art of listening to another's call story.

<i>February Precept Group</i>	<p><i>Exploring the transformational nature of call:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are your personal beliefs about how transformation takes place in a person's life? What impact does your Christian faith have in those beliefs? - As you think about your call to Christian public ministry, how would you describe the kind of changes you would like to see take place in your life? In what way would you like things to be different? Why? - In your conversations with other Christian public leaders, what were some of your learnings about the transformational nature of our call to ministry?
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<i>February Journal</i>	<p><i>Exploring your call more fully</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you are the Christian public leader you believe you are called to be, what would you be doing differently? - How impacted are you by the systems around you? To what degree does the anxiety of another upset you? How well are you able to see your own part in unhealthy patterns within your family, church, or workplace? - How well you doing at growing a belief system that is truly your own? Do you have clear life goals? - How open are you to being changed? By God? By friends and family members? By others in ministry? By those you do not know?
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March 13th, 2015	Theme: <i>Leading Living Systems – understanding and watching, while being connected and autonomous</i>	Reading: <i>The Leader's Journey, Part 2.</i> Suggested Reading: Steinke, <i>Healthy Congregations, chapters 2 and 7.</i>
Turn in February Journal	Class time: Christian public leaders are living systems leading living systems. Insights for the journey ahead.	Assignment: Explore your ministry context as a system. (See Appendix B for some ideas.)
	Precept time: Describe your participation in healthy and unhealthy systems and the impact these systems had on you.	Skill/Competency: <i>Contextual exploration:</i> the art of discovering how systems interact

<i>March Precept Group</i>	<p><i>Understanding our Contextual Ministry as a System:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you describe the contextual ministry system you are engaged in? What is its level of anxiety? What are signs of health? - In what ways does leading within this setting energize you and in what ways does it take energy away from you? What does this tell you about this ministry as a system?
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<i>March Journal</i>	<p><i>Who are you in this ministry setting?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are failure, crisis and anxiety handled in your ministry site? Do leaders in the system see the world about them as threatening? Are there frequent emergencies and crises? - Think of an issue currently working in your contextual ministry site. Reflect on these two questions: “What is my role in keeping this problem in place?” and “How can I change my role?” - What does increasing your self-awareness entail? Under the influence of anxiety, we all find our best thinking distorted. Of the 12 distortions (Burns on pg 75-76), which are your favorites? Do you tend to some of them more than others? - What one goal would you set for yourself to stay connected, yet separate from the ministry system in which you are leading? Why?
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April 10th, 2015	Theme: <i>Shaped and Formed in Community – influence of family patterns and past experiences</i>	Reading: <i>The Leader’s Journey</i>, Part 3.
Turn in March Journal	Class time: Becoming begins with recognizing the influences of our past.	Assignment: Explore the impact your past systems have had on you as a Christian public leader by 1) creating a family diagram (see pp 89-93 and 102). 2) interviewing a family member about the role/s you had in the family growing up, or 3) Journal about a time when you experienced conflict in a community and what that was like.
	Precept time: Reflect on positive and negative ways the following systems have impacted you as a Christian public leader: family, faith communities, and society.	Skill/Competency: <i>Discernment:</i> the art of appreciative critique in self-awareness

<i>April Precept Group</i>	<p><i>Leadership and discernment – a personal journey:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you relate your sense of call to ministry with your nuclear or extended family? In what ways are they supportive of this call? In what ways do they challenge this call? - In what ways have you had to differentiate yourself from the communities that are part of your past (community in which you grew up, school communities, athletic communities, other)? What were some helpful practices? How did you also stay connected to these communities at the same time?
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<i>April Journal</i>	<p><i>What insights can you get about yourself from reflecting on the communities that shaped you?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect on your role within your primary community growing up. What roles did you choose? What roles were given to you? What was expected of you? How much freedom did you have to grow and change? - How were boundaries determined in the communities you were part of? Others defined them? How much input did you have to defining them? On a continuum from rigid to fluid, where did the boundaries fall? Was that helpful or hindering to you? - What role did conflict play in the communities you were a part of? What did you learn about conflict from your family system? What did you learn about conflict from your faith community, if you had one? How was conflict handled with you and your friends? - How free were you to feel however you wanted? Did the systems you were a part of try to influence how you felt and expressed your feelings? If so, how? What impact has your past had on how you express your feelings today?
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May 1st, 2015	Theme: <i>The Spirit and the Journey – Spiritual disciplines and ongoing learning</i>	Reading: <i>The Leader’s Journey, Part 4.</i>
Turn in April Journal	Class time: The journey continues – the role of personal and spiritual disciplines	Assignment: Choose one spiritual discipline or area of personal growth to work on in the months ahead.
	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 when it comes to the art of finding one’s voice in leadership?	

Final Paper Due: Friday, May 8th, 2015.

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 of Christian Public Leaders in your Concentration area

1. Tell me about your call to ministry.
 - a. How did it originate? How has it changed over time?
 - b. How did you “know” you were called to ministry?
 - c. Did others surround you in discernment or support you once you made this call public? What shape or form did this discernment/support take?
 - d. In what ways have you helped others discern their call or vocation?
2. Have you experienced transformational moments in your Christian public leadership? If so, tell me about what happened and the impact these moments had on you and your leadership?
 - a. What was the trigger, or was there a trigger?
 - b. What changes did other notice in you?
 - c. Personally, what was exciting about these times and what was scary? What did you do with those emotions?
 - d. What impact has past transformational moments had on the transformational moments that followed?
3. What are the challenges and opportunities of leading in CYF, CCC, or CML today? How are these challenges similar and different than when you first started leading in ministry?
 - a. What areas of CYF, CCC, or CML ministry are natural for you? What strengths or gifts do you draw on in those areas?
 - b. What areas of CYF, CCC, or CML ministry are not natural for you? What do you do to make those areas still happen, and happen as well as they can?
 - c. If you were in seminary today, what courses would you take as electives? Why?
 - d. If you were to take a class in any field, and it was paid for and you were given the time off to take it, what would it be? Why?
4. Based on the challenges and opportunities you have named, what competencies do you see Christian public leaders serving in CYF, CCC, or CML need today?
 - a. Do you have all of those competencies? Where or how did you gain competency in some of those areas? If you don't how do you compensate for them?
 - b. When you see others with competencies that would enhance this ministry area, how do you draw them into leadership? What do you do to accompany them?
 - c. As you look to the future, what areas will Christian public leaders need? Why?

Appendix B

Ideas for Your Contextual Ministry Site as a System

1. Choose an aspect of ministry and describe the system.
 - a. What are the elements of the systems?
 - b. What parts are interdependent? What parts are independent?
 - c. How does this area receive feedback?
 - d. Are there constructive ways to offer feedback? If so, what are they? What is done with that feedback?
 - e. If you could change one thing in this system what would it be and why? What impact would it have on the whole?
2. Using the 10 principles of health from Peter Steinke's *Healthy Congregations*, describe the ministry as whole. (1. Wholeness is not attainable, but it can be approximated. 2. Illness is the necessary complement to health. 3. The body has innate healing abilities. 4. Agents of disease are not causes of disease. 5. All illness is biopsychosocial. 6. The subtle precedes the gross. 7. Every body is different. 8. A healthy circulatory system is the keystone to health and healing. 9. Breathing properly is nourishing to the whole body. 10. The brain is the largest secreting organ of the body, the health maintenance organization of the body. P. 15-16)
3. How clear is this ministry on their identity and purpose? Do they have a center?
 - a. How does an outsider know what they are about?
 - b. Would "insiders" and "outsiders" agree on their sense of purpose and identity? If it differs, how does it differ?
 - c. How open or closed is this system to new people? New ideas? New ways of doing things? What makes them more open or more closed?
 - d. How is their purpose or identity reflected throughout the organization and in the ministry's work?
4. Are there signs of disease or illness? What are they?
 - a. Are they "short" lived or have they been there for a long time?
 - b. How much of the system is aware or effected by the disease or illness?
 - c. Are leaders aware of this? What, if anything, are they doing to care for this illness or disease?
5. How is conflict handled? How is failure perceived? What happens when things don't go as planned? How does the system respond? What are their responses?
6. Do leaders over or under function? Why might that be? What aspects of the system allow that? What aspects of the system try to change that?
 - a. How are people held accountable? To each other? To their purpose? To an outside partner? To the context?
 - b. What processes or mechanisms guide accountability?
 - c. What are the formal channels of decision-making? What are the informal channels of decision-making?
7. Are there signs of health or healing? What are they?
 - a. Are they far and few between or are they a normal part of their life?
 - b. How much of the system is impacted by these signs?
 - c. What role does leadership play in promoting health and healing?