

North Park Theological Seminary
MNST 7361: Leadership and Empowering Laity for Church Growth
(3 Semester Hours)

Professor: Jo Ann Deasy (jdeasy@northpark.edu)

Online Fall Semester 2012

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an examination of the nature and issues of leading a healthy congregation. Such elements as systems thinking, leadership style, boundaries and ethics, change management, and working with lay volunteers will be considered as they relate to clergy and laity leading for church growth and health.

II. COURSE METHODOLOGY

Leadership is a complex phenomenon, one that grows even more complex when situated in the life of a local congregation. In this course, we will wrestle with the various layers of leadership including the context of leadership, the person of the leader, various practices of leadership, and the theological foundations of our leadership. We will do so from a systems perspective recognizing that the body of Christ is a dynamic, interconnected system with Christ as the center and that such systems thinking is essential to developing a healthy, growing ministry. We will also consider an adaptive approach, one that seeks to teach wisdom and the ability to lead through problems rather than attempting to provide easy answers recognizing that the context of ministry is changing faster than we can keep up with. True leadership does not provide the answers to today's questions, but rather helps you better prepare to respond to the questions of tomorrow.

This particular course emphasizes shared models of leadership which will be reflected in a teaching methodology that emphasizes active participation and engagement on the part of the students. The course will draw on readings, online lectures, and other resources. However, the heart of the course will be the group projects and discussions. Student assignments will be used to develop certain aspects of the course and student experiences will form the context of our discussions.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define leadership, management and authority
- Students will understand and recognize how systems thinking impacts leadership and ministry
- Students will clarify their own sense of calling and vocation in relation to ministry
- Students will continue to develop clear boundaries in their roles as leaders and ministers
- Students will be able to critically analyze books on church growth and other aspects of leadership and ministry
- Students will be able to articulate a theology of the laity and its impact on their approach to

leadership

- Students will be introduced to various resources to equip them for leadership in ministry

IV. TEXTS

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Heifetz, Ronald A., Alexander Grashow, and Marty Linsky. *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- Shawchuck, Norman and Roger Heuser. *Managing the Congregation: Building Effective Systems to Serve People*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.
- Stevens, R. Paul. *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspectives*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999.

READ ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ON CHURCH GROWTH:

- Conn, Harvie, ed. *Planting And Growing Urban Churches: From Dream to Reality*. Baker Academic, 1997.
- Ford, Kevin G. *Transforming Church: Bringing Out the Good to Get to Great*. Colorado Spring, CO: David C. Cook, 2008.
- Hirsch, Alan. *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church*. Brazos Press, 2009.
- Stewart, Carlyle Fielding, ed. *Growing the African American Church*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006.

READ ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOOKS ON CONTEXTUAL LEADERSHIP:

- Bordas, Juana. *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for A Multicultural Age*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002.
- Tokunaga, Paul. *Invitation to Lead: Guidance for Emerging Asian American Leaders*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.
- Tribble, Jefery L., Sr. *Transformative Pastoral Leadership in the Black Church*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.
- Willhauck, Susan and Jacquelyn Thorpe. *The Web of Women's Leadership: Recasting Congregational Ministry*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2001.

V. COURSE PARTICIPATION

Students competent in all the relevant skills should expect to spend about 125 hours on course work including class participation, reading, and assignments.

Participation (10%): Graded Weekly

Given the online format of the course, class time will involve weekly reading of lectures, articles and other online resources, as well as participation in class discussion through various online activities and forums. Students will be given points each week for class participation. Please see course schedule for details regarding weekly participation. Students who miss two weeks or more of weekly participation will be required to complete make-up assignments.

Reading of Required Texts (5%):

Students are expected to keep up with the reading for the course and complete all required texts by the end of the semester.

Inclusive Language

Following the statement on inclusive language in the North Park Theological Seminary Catalog, all students are required to be inclusive in language and imagery in all written work and online discussions in this course. This includes gender inclusive language for human beings as well as primarily gender neutral language for God.

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Below is an introduction to the major assignments due for the course. Please see Moodle for further details and grading rubrics for each of the assignments.

All written assignments should be sent as Word documents, double-spaced, 12 point font with 1" margins.

Unexcused late written assignments receive a 5% grade deduction per full day. Please contact the professor before an assignment is due if you will not be able to complete it on time.

While it is expected that a number of resources will be used in preparation for course assignments, it is also expected that research findings will be authentic, submitted work will be original, and all sources used will be acknowledged (see the Seminary Academic Handbook).

A. Interviews of Lay Leaders (15%): Due Monday, September 17

Interview two lay leaders you respect concerning various issues raised in this course using a prepared list of questions. Write a 3-5 page paper on what you learned from them about perceptions of lay persons with regard to lay leadership development, professional church leaders they have served with/under, and church health and growth. Students will post their essays for class discussion and be asked to reflect critically on the experience and the content of the interviews. Approx. time on interview and essay: 15 hrs

B. Contextual Leadership Book Review (15%): Due Monday, October 8

Read one of the books on contextual leadership presented above or an alternative book that has been approved by the instructor. Write a 3-5 page book review that addresses the following:

- Give a brief overview of the main points of the book.
- Give a brief explanation of the specific context reflected in the book. Reflect on how the specific context addressed in the book shaped the author's approach to leadership.
- Reflect on how your own context is similar to or different from the context of the book. What insights from the book might you be able to apply in your ministry setting? What insights might not translate well into your own setting and why?

C. Interview of Minister (15%): Due Monday, October 22

Interview a credentialed, full-time church minister whom you respect concerning various issues raised in this course using a prepared list of questions. Write a 3-5 page "Profile of a Leader" paper. Students will post their essays for class discussion and be asked to reflect critically on the experience and the content of the interviews. Approx. time on interview and essay: 15 hrs

D. Church Growth Assignment (15%): Due Monday, November 19

The purpose of this assignment is to help students critically evaluate popular books on church growth and health. For the assignment, review the McIntosh article from Moodle and read one of the Church Growth Books listed above. Write a 3-5 page paper discussing the philosophy, theology and sociology of church growth presented in the book as it relates to historical aspects of the church growth movement. Based upon your readings and reflection, discuss positive and redemptive elements of church growth that can be applied in the local church setting. Approx. time on task: 15 hrs

E. Final Summative Essay (25%): Due Monday, December 17

The purpose of this course is for you to reflection theologically and practically on your own approach to leadership in a congregational or other ministry setting. For your final assignment, write a 5-7 page paper articulating your own approach to leadership. The paper should address the following:

- How do you understand theologically the role of the leader in a congregational or ministry setting?
- What practices will define how you exert leadership in a ministry context?
- What particular gifts you bring to leadership? What areas do you need to work on in order to live into your theological commitments about leadership?

The paper should demonstrate a clear understanding of the course material as well as your own ministry setting.

VII. GRADING

Grades for the course will be weighted as follows:

- Course Participation (10%)
- Required Reading (5%)
- Church Growth Assignment (15%)

- Lay Leader Interviews (15%)
- Minister Interviews (15%)
- Contextual Leadership Book Review (15%)
- Final Summative Essay (25%)

VIII. FACULTY

Dr. Jo Ann Deasy (773) 590-0220, jdeasy@northpark.edu

Please direct most of your questions to the discussion forums on Moodle. There will be a forum for general course questions including questions about various assignments.

I will be responding to most e-mails and discussion forum posts on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you need a faster response, please indicate so in the subject heading of your e-mail and I will do my best to accommodate you. You may also e-mail to set up an appointment for a phone conversation or meeting (for those in the Chicago area) during the week.

IX. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Computer/Online Support: In addition to faculty support, additional support for this course is supplied by the following offices:

- Computer Services: for most technological problems including login/password issues
- Office of Distributed Learning: for most problems utilizing the tools within Moodle

Library: Please also note that Brandel Library has many resources available for online students. Go to the North Park website (www.northpark.edu) and follow the links to the library website for online databases, online articles, and the e-mail of a reference librarian who can help you find additional resources.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the program's office (773-244-5619). Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/ada>