

403.615 Spirituality for Ministry Course Assessment and Delivery Outline

Campus: Distance Learning

Semester 2, 2015
NQF Level: 6, 15 credits

CONTENT OVERVIEW

The focus of this course is on developing approaches to life and ministry which will help to maintain balance, sustainability and growth in ourselves and others. (The term 'ministry' is used here in the broad sense of using our gifts and our time for God's service, whatever our context). The content is delivered through a combination of required readings (provided) and input from the Learning Guide and other course materials. Each student will interview someone with ministry experience about their own strategies for spiritual health in ministry and offer a critique of a contemporary book relevant to the course.

The topics covered in the course work are as follows:

1. Understanding ourselves and others in relation to God (Weeks 1-4):
 - a. Storied selves: reflecting on *whakapapa* and the stories we live by
 - b. Diverse selves: using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
 - c. Embodied selves: acknowledging gender and sexuality in relation to spirituality
 - d. Developing selves: locating ourselves in stages of life and faith

2. Embracing the spiritual challenges of life and ministry (Weeks 5-9):
 - a. Christ's call to servant leadership
 - *The foundation of belovedness*
 - *The freedom of faithfulness*
 - *Authority that breathes life*
 - b. The Pauline spirituality of paradox: dying and rising with Christ, which holds together:
 - *Woundedness and healing*
 - *Suffering and hope*
 - *Failure and grace*
 - *Hurt and forgiveness*
 - *Doubt and faith*
 - *Absence and presence*

3. Committing to strategies for balance, sustainability and growth (Weeks 10-12):
 - a. Understanding stress and burnout
 - b. Strengthening relational support networks
 - c. Maintaining appropriate boundaries
 - d. Beyond survival: commitment to growth in self and others
 - e. Forming and applying a personal "Rule of Life"

ASSESSMENT TASKS AND DUE DATES

The requirements of the course are as follows:

1. Online forum contributions

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	1, 2
<i>Due Dates</i>	Sunday midnight, at the end of weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12
<i>Percentage Weighting</i>	20%
<i>Length</i>	200 words

Every second week you are asked to post a 200 word reflection in response to specified readings from the course readings supplied. Reflection questions for each of these forums are supplied in the Moodle course area.

Please also respond to at least one other person's posting, with at least one post of at least 50 words, indicating what you appreciate, and why, and offering any alternative viewpoint with respect.

2. Research essay proposal

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	4
<i>Due Date</i>	Sunday midnight, at the end of week 6
<i>Percentage Weighting</i>	15%
<i>Length</i>	1000 words (approximately)

This assignment is intended to be a major step towards writing your research essay (see below), and will provide your tutor with an opportunity to comment on your planned approach to the essay before you start writing the full version.

Writing the proposal involves selecting a topic area from the second main section of the course ("Embracing the spiritual challenges of life and ministry"), designing a question that explores an aspect of the topic that interests you, searching out relevant reading material, and coming up with a draft outline for the essay. The topic areas to select from are:

- a. Christ's call to servant leadership
 - *The foundation of belovedness – finding a healthy basis for self-esteem in ministry*
 - *The freedom of faithfulness – dealing with testing and temptation in ministry*
 - *Authority that breathes life – managing power relations in ministry*

- b. The Pauline spirituality of paradox: dying and rising with Christ, which holds together in ministry:
 - *Woundedness and healing*
 - *Suffering and hope*
 - *Failure and grace*
 - *Hurt and forgiveness*
 - *Doubt and faith*
 - *Absence (the perceived absence of God) and presence*

Guidelines:

- i. Choose an area that is relevant to your particular interests or future focus in ministry, and come up with a specific essay topic or question to research for your essay. For example, if you chose the area of "failure and grace," then "*Discuss failure and grace in relation to ministry*" would be far too general. A better essay topic in this area might be something like: "*Explore factors which make it difficult for people to talk openly about failure in ministry, and outline a range of theological perspectives and practical strategies which would help to create a healthier approach to this issue.*"

Please check your proposed essay topic with your tutor *before* proceeding with the rest of this assignment.

- ii. Put together an annotated bibliography of books and articles which have relevance to your topic. This means providing a list of references, and for each one including a brief statement (50 – 80 words) explaining what contribution you think this item will make to your treatment of the essay topic. In selecting these items you should:
 - include at least 8 items on which you will draw in writing your essay;
 - try to find a range of viewpoints, rather than authors who all say similar things;
 - make sure that most of the items are at an appropriate academic level;
 - find books and articles written in the last 10 – 20 years where possible, although there may be older works that are still useful;
 - locate up to date journal articles by searching the electronic databases - if you are not sure how to do this, ask the librarians;
 - include some authors that address your topic from a biblical and theological point of view – this might include Bible commentaries on key biblical passages relevant to the issue.
- iii. Write a brief summary of your approach to the essay (around 150 words) and provide an outline of main points showing how you will structure your discussion.

3. Research essay

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	4
<i>Due Date</i>	Sunday midnight, at the end of week 10
<i>Percentage Weighting</i>	35%
<i>Length</i>	2500 words

When your essay topic has been approved, and your proposal marked and returned by your tutor, you should go ahead and write your essay in full. Carefully take into account the grading criteria listed below: .even though it is your topic, your tutor will be evaluating your essay based on these grading criteria.

Note:

You may wish to add a brief personal application as an appendix to your essay, of no more than 300 words. This will not be counted as part of the word limit, and is not compulsory. Your essay grade will not be affected either way.

4. Interviews and Report

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	3
<i>Due Date</i>	Sunday midnight, at the end of study week 1
<i>Percentage Weighting</i>	30%
<i>Length</i>	2500 words

Guidelines:

- i. Find two people who have had at least five full years of experience in some form of Christian ministry (any kind, anywhere, need not be currently in ministry), and request their permission to interview them for this assignment in relation to their experience of spirituality for ministry.

It would be good to have some diversity in your choice of interviewees – whether in terms of ministry focus, gender, culture or stage of life. If you wish, one of your two interviewees may be a person who has consciously tried to bring their Christian faith to bear on their so-called “secular” vocation. Check with your tutor if you are not sure the person you have in mind would qualify.

- ii. In your conversations with your interviewees, ask them about the development of their own spirituality in relation to their ministries. This should include:
 - their understanding of what ‘ministry’ is, and what place their personal spiritual journeys featured in their understanding of ministry;
 - core beliefs, values and practices which they have adopted in order to stay healthy in ministry (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually);
 - key resources which they have relied on for spiritual health and ongoing growth (people, programmes, support structures, professional development, etc);
 - important experiences, crises, discoveries which have impacted on and shaped their spirituality.

- iii. Write up your interview in four parts (2500 words in total):
 - *Your questions:* Briefly indicate the questions you asked in the interviews (100-150 words; note form is fine).
 - *Summarise the spiritual challenges:* Summarise what you perceive to have been the greatest challenges to each person's personal and spiritual health in ministry – are there common points between the two interviewees, or contrasts? (about 700 words in total).
 - *Summarise the strategies:* Summarise the most significant features of what you learned about each person's strategies for maintaining healthy personal spirituality in ministry – again noting common points and differences (about 700 words in total).
 - *Learnings:* Reflect on what you have learned from these interviews (about 1000 words), commenting on:
 - points of connection with the content of the course materials and readings;
 - what you would adopt, or *not* adopt, from your interviewees’ strategies, and why;
 - other insights that have emerged for you in developing your own spirituality for ministry.

Notes:

- You are not asked to present a transcript or detailed summary of the content of the interviews.
- Please do not give the names of the people you have interviewed, or any other identifying details, and please respect whatever level of privacy and confidentiality is requested by your interviewees.
- In making connection with course materials and readings please use footnotes and bibliography following the usual guidelines for writing assignments.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

1. Online forum contributions

Before beginning your first online discussion, please see the grading grid (rubric) on the “online discussion grading guide and mid-semester feedback” for further details on how these criteria will be applied.

- Engagement with material
- Constructive engagement with others
- Structure and presentation
- Timeliness

2. Research essay proposal

Essay topic design:

- specific, relevant and answerable

Annotated bibliography:

- includes sufficient items of appropriate academic level

- reflects a range of viewpoints
- draws on relevant up to date scholarship

Draft outline shows:

- thorough grasp of key issues
- a logical progression of points

3. Research essay

- Breadth of reading as evidenced in essay
- Critical analysis of reading material
- Creative synthesis of ideas
- Depth of treatment of topic
- Correct use of footnotes and bibliography
- Presentation and development of essay

4. Interviews and report

- Questions asked demonstrate awareness of key issues in spirituality for ministry.
- Clarity and perceptiveness in summarising interviewees' responses.
- Appropriate connections made with content of the course materials and readings
- Insightful personal reflections and application drawn from the interview experiences.
- Correct use of footnotes and bibliography.

LEARNING HOURS

Engagement with course materials	24 hours
Completion of required readings	24 hours
Online forum contributions	12 hours
Research essay proposal	15 hours
Research essay writing	20 hours
Interviews and report	30 hours
Self-directed reading and reflection	<u>25 hours</u>
	150 hours

TEXTBOOKS

There is no set textbook for this course

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is no set text book for this course. Specific required readings and reading suggestions are supplied for each topic in the course learning guide.

Texts with relevance to more than one section of the course include:

Allender, Dan. *Leading with a Limp*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2006.

Barton, Ruth Haley. *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*. Downer's Grove, ILL: IVP Books, 2008.

Calhoun, Adele A. *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 2005.

- Dawn, Marva and Eugene Peterson. *The Unnecessary Pastor: Rediscovering the Call*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Edmondson, Chris. *Fit to Lead: Sustaining Effective Ministry in a Changing World*. London: DLT, 2002.
- Foyle, Marjorie. *Honourably Wounded: Stress among Christian Workers*. Crowborough: Monarch, 2001.
- Fryling, Robert A. *The Leadership Ellipse: Shaping How We Lead By Who We Are*. Downer's Grove: IVP, 2010.
- Gula, Richard M. *Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers*. New York: Paulist Press, 2010.
- Harbaugh, Gary L., Rebecca Lee Brenneis and Rodney R. Hutton. *Covenants and Care: Boundaries in Life, Faith, and Ministry*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.
- Jamieson, Alan. *A Churchless Faith: Faith Journeys beyond Evangelical, Pentecostal & Charismatic Churches*. Wellington: Philip Garside Publishing, 2000.
- Jamieson, Alan. *Called Again: In and Beyond the Deserts of Faith*. Wellington: Philip Garside Publishing, 2004.
- Nouwen, Henri. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. London: DLT, 1989.
- Nouwen, Henri. *The Wounded Healer*. Garden City, NY: Image Doubleday, 1979.
- Peterson, Eugene. *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Peterson, Eugene. *The Contemplative Pastor*. Waco, Texas: Word, 1989.
- Peterson, Eugene. *Under the Unpredictable Plant*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.