

## DM 9370-THE PERSON AND ROLE OF THE MINISTER

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This seminar invites the participants to explore their understanding of the pastoral vocation in relationship to congregations as understood by theologically and as social institutions. At the end of the seminar the student will be able to articulate his or her understanding of vocation in the context of a specific congregational and larger denominational setting.

### **PRINCIPAL READINGS USED IN THE COURSE:**

- Steinke, Peter. *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems.*
- Friedman, Edwin *Friedman's Fables.* (Photocopied Chapters as PDF from lecturer)
- Hansen, David *The Art of Pastoring: Ministry Without all the Answers*
- Willimon, William H. *Pastor: A Reader for Ordained Ministry.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002.

### **PRELIMINARY ASSIGNMENTS:**

These assignments should be completed **prior** to the start of class.

1. Write an autobiographical paper of 1000-1200 words. It should begin with your grandparents, mention formative persons in your life and turning points in your life, and focus on you call to ministry. Provide as well for submission a photograph of your church or ministry setting, your family and yourself. Be prepared to make a ten minute autobiographical presentation on the first day of class. **Two copies of the autobiography will be submitted on the first day of class.** It will not be graded. (This assignment is common to both 9370 and 9380)
2. Read *The Art of Pastoring* by David Hansen. When you have completed the reading write a 3000 – 3500 word critical review of the book. The review should note and comment on both his theological assertions (such as his assertion that marriage is of the order of creation and baptism is of the order of the church) and his understanding of what it means to be a pastor (such as his discussion of being “bait.”) Note both any disagreement you have with Hansen’s writing, and any ways in which it has helped you gain a better understanding of your own ministry. **This assignment is due the first day of class.**
3. Beginning when you receive this syllabus keep a REFLECTIVE JOURNAL of your daily ministry activities. This will serve to highlight and clarify ministry priorities. In the journal you should make note of how you spend your time, what brings the most joy or the most headaches, what you plan to do versus what is programmed into your daily schedule by others (conference, laity, family, community, etc.). **This assignment is due the first day of class.**
4. Write a 1500 to 2000 word paper giving an objective description of a conflict that has occurred in your ministry that involved you personally. This description does not need to

use real names or identify the specific congregation. But it should otherwise be accurate and tell about the beginning of the conflict, what took place, and how and whether it was resolved. **This paper is due the first day of class. However, it will not be graded.** It will serve as the basis for class discussions and your final paper.

### **First Week**

The first week of the course will focus on discussing the vocation of pastoral ministry in relation to the role and ministry of the congregation. We will use student journals as the basis for this discussion, bringing them into conversation with the work of *Will Willimon* and *David Hansen*. At the end of the week you should write a paper of 2500 – 3000 words discussing how your own practice of ministry is similar to and differs from the understanding of pastoral ministry described in these two books. **DUE: First Monday of Second week**

### **Second Week**

The second week of the course will focus on Family Systems Theory, and how this may help integrate your understanding of the practice of ministry in relation to the congregation. You will apply this theoretical construct to yourself and the congregation described in the 4<sup>th</sup> assignment above.

During the week you will be required to write a paper, based on class discussion, describing the conflict discussed in the 4<sup>th</sup> assignment in terms of Family Systems Theory, highlighting both the role you played, AND how you might approach the conflict differently in light of what you have learned. **DUE: The last day of class.**

### **CLASS Schedule - TBA**

## **Minority Concerns and Ministry Courses in the Perkins Curriculum**

In 1975 the Perkins Senate passed resolutions which bear on the relation of the Perkins curriculum to this school's common concern for the status of ethnic minority groups and of women both in education for ministry and in the ministry itself. The following statement summarizes these resolutions with respect to courses in the area of Ministry.

1. Instructors and students alike are urged to use inclusive language, images and metaphors which will give full and positive value to both the past contributions and the future prospects of ethnic minorities and women in the church and in society at large.
2. Instructors and students alike are urged to give sensitive consideration to the role of images from a predominantly white and male culture in shaping both the language and concepts of Christian theology and the models and methods of Christian ministry that are widely current today.
3. Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide—in the syllabi, assignments and formats of their courses—opportunities for women students and students from ethnic minority groups (1) to study the functions of ministry with particular reference to their own status or tradition in the life of the church, (2) to practice the functions of ministry (when practice is an element in a course) in settings which reflect or, if possible, arise from their own status or tradition in the life of the church, (3) to receive evaluation of their practice of the functions of ministry from persons who are not only knowledgeable about and skilled in those functions, but also share their special status or tradition in the life of the church, and (4) to observe the practice of persons who, as women or as members of ethnic minority groups, provide models of effective ministry which are immediately relevant to the special status or tradition of women or members of ethnic minority groups in the church.
4. Instructors are urged to make every effort to provide—in the syllabi, assignments and formats of their courses—opportunities for all students to become acquainted with the special problems and conditions that affect women and ethnic minority groups in human society and in the life of the church, with special attention to the ways in which these problems and conditions may affect the practice of ministry.

### **Policy Statements**

The *Student Handbook* for Perkins School of Theology includes three appendices with statements on Sexual Harassment, Academic Responsibility, and Grade Appeals. All students should be familiar with these statements and should expect that they will be honored in this course.

*Revised 6/1/2015*