

Conrad Grebel University College
University of Waterloo
TS 783: Theology and Practice of Leadership
Spring 2022

Class Time & Location:

Synchronous on Zoom, 6 pm – 7:30 pm

May 16, 17, 19

June 6, 7, 9

June 13, 14, 16

June 20, 21, 24

The Zoom link is provided on LEARN.

Instructor: Assistant Professor Carol Penner

Office Hours: On zoom before or after class, or by appointment

Office Location: Room 2201

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Course Description:

What does Christian leadership look like? Students will compare and contrast leadership models, and integrate their experiences working in churches and Christian organizations. The course may explore topics such as missional purpose, visioning, conflict transformation, interculturality, the importance of boundaries and self-care. Students will discern vocation and callings to salaried and volunteer ministry through personal reflection and dialogue.

Learning Goals:

1. Students will situate themselves within a theology of vocation and call from their religious tradition, and develop listening skills as they listen to the theologies of their classmates.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to develop a plan of action in response to a concrete ministry leadership challenge and communicate it, taking into account contextual factors such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation and ability.
3. Students will understand power dynamics and the importance of emotional, sexual and spiritual boundaries as they relate to ministry.
4. Students will recognize strategies for self-care and lifelong learning in ministry.

5. Students will articulate their own spirituality and where they find God in their work.

Required Reading Materials:

Books:

Boers, Arthur. *Servants and Fools: A Biblical Theology of Leadership*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2015.

Palmer, Parker. *Let Your Life Speak*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Articles:

Bolsinger, Tod. "How a Nursing Mother Saved America." In *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*, 189-203. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2015.

Conner, Benjamin T. "'How Do You Think You are Going to Be a Pastor?': Vocation and Disability." *Theology Today* 77, 2 (2020): 138-153.

Epperly, Bruce. "The Healthy Pastor." In *Starting with Spirit: Nurturing Your Call to Pastoral Leadership*, 151-169. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2011.

Epperly, Bruce. "The Spiritual Lives of Spiritual Leaders." In *Starting with Spirit: Nurturing Your Call to Pastoral Leadership*, 139-150. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2011.

Harder, Gary. "Conflict: A Complicated Unkindness." In *Dancing Through Thistles in Bare Feet: A Pastoral Journey*, 109-139. Waterloo: Herald Press, 2008.

Hotchkiss, Dan. "How Congregations Organize." In *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*, 29-46. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Hotchkiss, Dan. "The Job of the Board." In *Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership*, 67-82. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Johnson, Janeen Bertsche. "Holding Together Inner and Outer Dimensions of Call." *Vision* 12, 2 (2011): 52-58.

Jones, Gregory and Kevin R. Armstrong, "Resurrecting Excellence in the Pastoral Vocation." In *Resurrecting Excellence: Shaping Faithful Christian Ministry*, 79-110. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006.

Jones, Jeffrey D. "Attending to Self." In *Heart, Mind and Strength: Theory and Practice for Congregational Leadership*, 35-57. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2008.

Lawson, Kevin E. and Mick Boersma, "Time Together, Part 1." In *Supervising and Supporting Ministry Staff: A Guide to Thriving Together*, 33-47. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

Lawson, Kevin E. and Mick Boersma, "Time Together, Part 2." In *Supervising and Supporting Ministry Staff: A Guide to Thriving Together*, 49-66. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

Long, Kimberly Bracken. "The Hearts: The Spirituality of the Presider." In *The Worshiping Body*, 111-119. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009.

Long, Thomas. "The Essential Untidiness of Ministry." In *From Midterms to Ministry: Practical Theologians on Pastoral Beginnings*, edited by Allan Hugh Cole Jr., 1-12. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

McCamis, Kathy. "Holding Together Individual Experience and Communal Wisdom." *Vision* 17, 1 (Spring 2016): 72-77.

McClintock, Karen A. "Dangers in Pastoral Counselling." In *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*, 115-130. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2004.

McClintock, Karen A. "Professional Roles and Romantic Relationships." In *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*, 69-82. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2004.

Rendle, Gil. "Telling the Story That Will Get Us Through the Wilderness." In *Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World*, 215-238. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2019.

Rendle, Gil. "A Word about Structure and Process." In *Quietly Courageous: Leading the Church in a Changing World*, 93-123. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2019.

Russell, Letty M. "Outsiders Within," *Church and Society* 93:6 (Jan-Feb 2006): 64-72.

Section IV, Ethics in Ministry, *A Shared Understanding of Church Leadership*, Polity Manual for Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. Harrisonburg, Kitchener: MennoMedia, 2014), 55-72.

Sisk, Ronald D. "I Saw the Holy City: Competent Leadership." In *The Competent Pastor: Skills and Self-Knowledge for Serving Well*, 125-146. Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005.

Standish, N. Graham. "Prayerful Leadership." In *Humble Leadership: Being Radically Open to God's Guidance and Grace*, 55-88. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2007.

West, Traci. "Learning to Build Christian Community: Males, Whites, Heterosexuals Wanted for Leadership." In *From Midterms to Ministry: Practical Theologians on Pastoral Beginnings*, edited by Allan Hugh Cole Jr., 237-249. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008.

Evaluations:

Assignment	Weighting	Due Date
Vocation and Call Journal	20%	May 27
Integration Project: a) Integration Project Proposal	5%	June 3
b) Video Presentation	15%	June 17
c) Major Paper	40%	July 15
Critical Book Review	20%	July 26

Assignments:

#1. Vocation and Call Journal: 20%

Read: Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), pp. 1-55.

This assignment is not a book review, but a self-reflection based on your reading of Palmer's book. The purpose is to encourage you to think about vocation and calling in your own life. Use the questions that Palmer asks as prompts for your own self-reflection. Questions you might consider are:

How are you challenged to live your life "from the inside out"?

What do you know about yourself from the work that you have done?

How have doors opening or closing influenced your vocational path?

What has motivated your vocational choices so far?

What direction do you feel drawn towards for the future?

This assignment will be graded on the student's capacity for self-reflection, and the ability to clearly articulate their ideas.

Due Date: May 27, Length: 1750-2000 words

#2. Integration Project (60%)

This project demonstrates theological depth through a case study involving a concrete problem, situation or opportunity in ministry from a specific community with which you are familiar. The Integration Project is summative for those in the MTS Applied stream. The project includes four components.

A. Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography: A summary of the case study you are proposing, and an initial bibliography of at least four books and four articles. It would be helpful to discuss your proposal with the professor, to make sure you are on a track that will work for this assignment.

Due: June 3, Length: 250 words plus bibliography (5%)

Please submit to LEARN.

B. Presenting the Case Study – Video (15%)

You will prepare a 10-15 minute video where you describe your case study.

- What is the challenge, problem or opportunity, and who is currently involved?
- What is the history of this situation, its practical social and cultural aspects?
- What theological issues do you think are at the forefront of this case study?
- Who has power in this situation and how are they using it?
- Why is this a concern to your community or church, and more specifically, to you?
- Some preliminary ideas about how leaders could respond to this situation.

The video will be viewed by your fellow students ahead of time, and 20 minutes of class time will be spent where your colleagues can brainstorm with you about the approach you could take in your research into this case study.

Due: June 17, email the professor the video, or a link to the video, and it will be uploaded to LEARN for other students to view. We will be discussing the videos in class on June 20, 21, 24.

C. Major Paper – (40%)

This paper should have four sections:

i) Description and Analysis. What is going on? (750 – 1000 words)

This section will describe in detail the case you have chosen:

- What is the problem, challenge or opportunity, and who is currently involved?
- What is the history of this situation, including its practical social and cultural aspects?
- What theological issues are at the forefront of this case study?
- Who has the power in this situation, and why?
- Why is this a concern to your community or church, and more specifically, to you?

ii) Theological Interpretation. What does it mean? (1500 – 1750 words)

This section will interpret and reflect on your case using insights from scripture, theology, and your specific denomination's tradition.

- What are the central theological, spiritual or ethical issues here, and how will your theological commitments impact your plan of action?
- Draw on your theological research; what have you learned from theologians about this?
- Are there church doctrines, teachings or practices that are relevant to this case?
- How have other Christian communities/traditions addressed this, either currently or in the past?

iii) Plan of Action: How would you address this situation or challenge as a leader? (1250-1500 words)

Write this section as if you had power to initiate a multi-level faith community response to this case.

- What is the current response to the situation?
- How would you mobilize your community to address this case? Which groups could be involved? What tools such as re-structuring, fundraising, preaching, teaching, pastoral care, worship or outreach programs would you use to change individuals and your community? Be specific, and include timelines.

--Your plan of action could include restructuring the organization, new programs, educational seminars, sermon series outlines, bible studies, prayers, or workshop activities.

Major Paper Due: July 15, Length: 3500 - 4250 words (35%)

Please double space and submit as a Word document to LEARN.

#4. Critical Book Review: (20%)

Write a critical book review of one of these two books:

- a) McKnight, Scot and Laura Barringer. *A Church Called Tov: Forming a Goodness Culture That Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.
- b) Pries, Betty. *The Space Between Us: Conversations about Transforming Conflict* Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2021.

Write this review to describe the book as if to someone who has not read it. Provide a synopsis of the book (250 – 500 words that describe its main ideas, its organization, and the author’s context), and a critique (250 words where you comment on the clarity or helpfulness of the book). Finally reflect on how relevant this book is to your life in ministry, or perhaps even to the case study that you chose for your major paper (250 words).

Due Date: July 26, Length: 750-1000 words

Please double space and submit as a word document. You do not need a bibliography, but include the title of the book you are reviewing on the title page.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Reading
1. May 16	What does it mean to be a leader?	Boers, Intro & pp. 1-54 Johnson, “Holding Together”
2. May 17	How do we discern vocation? Guest speaker: Darren Pries-Klassen, CEO Abundance Canada	Jones & Armstrong, “Resurrecting Excellence” McCamis, “Holding Together”
3. May 19	How do we reflect biblically on leadership? Guest speaker: Daniel Gebreselassie Tela, Pastor of Shalom Worship and Healing Centre	Boers, pp. 55-124
4. June 6	How do we connect leadership and spirituality? Guest speaker: Dr. Betty Pries, Credence & Co.	Epperly, “The Spiritual Lives of Spiritual Leaders” Long, “The Heart” Standish, “Prayerful Leadership”
5. June 7	How can leadership be structured?	These readings will be assigned among class members:

Week	Topic	Reading
	Guest speaker: Marilyn Rudy-Froese, Church Leadership Minister, Mennonite Church Eastern Canada	Hotchkiss, "How Congregations Organize" Hotchkiss, "The Job of the Board" Lawson & Boersma, "Time Together" Parts 1 & 2 Rendle, "A Word About Structure"
6. June 9	How do we lead in times of change and conflict? Guest speaker: Gary Harder, retired MCEC pastor & author of this week's reading	Boers, 124-156 Harder, "Conflict"
7. June 13	How do we lead in the diversity of our contexts? Guest speaker: Doug Klassen, Executive Minister Mennonite Church Canada	Group A: Bolsinger, "How a Nursing Mother" Russell, "Outsiders Within" Group B: Conner, "How Do You Think" West, "Learning to Build"
8. June 14	Why must leaders think carefully about power? Guest speaker: Dr. Kim Penner	Ethics in Ministry, Mennonite Church Group A: McClintock, Karen A. "Dangers in Pastoral Counselling" Group B: McClintock, "Professional Roles and Romantic Relationships"
9. June 16	How do leaders care for themselves?	Epperly, "The Healthy Pastor" Jones, "Attending to Self"
10. June 20	Why do leaders connect mission and storytelling? & Case Study Discussions	Group A: Rendle, "Telling the Story" Group B: Sisk, "I Saw the Holy City"
11. June 21	How do we construct our own theology of leadership? & Case Study Discussions	Boers, pp. 157 – 202
12. June 24	Reflecting on learnings & Case Study Discussions	Long, "Essential Untidiness of Ministry"

UWaterloo Policies

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Arts: [Academic Integrity website](#) University of Waterloo: [Academic Integrity Office](#)

Notes

The Land on Which We Meet:

We acknowledge that we are located on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe, and the Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo and Conrad Grebel University are situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers (six miles) on each side of the Grand River. In our words and in our actions we will strive to live in right relationship with our Indigenous neighbours. Specifically, in this theological course we will keep the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #60 in mind: *TRC Call to Action #60: We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence*

Class Attendance

Virtual synchronous class attendance is expected; we will meet for 90 minutes with one short break. There will be mini lectures or video links posted each week that you are expected to watch ahead of the class, as these are considered essential. If you know you will be away for an unavoidable reason (sickness or family emergency), please email the instructor. Missing three or more classes even for unavoidable reasons will result in an additional assignment to be determined by the instructor. Please mute phones and refrain from doing email or texting during class.

Citations and Plagiarism and Format

Your sources must be fully documented, according to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. A brief guide with examples is available [here](#). Please use the notes and bibliography system rather than the parenthetical author/date system. Using undocumented quotations from published sources, or submitting work that is not your own will have serious ramifications for your academic career. Please submit all work double-spaced, in a Word document.

Tardy Assignments

Punctual submission of assignments is expected. Late assignments will be accepted only if you have talked to the instructor ahead of time for an extension. Marks may be deducted for assignments that are over one week overdue.

Confidentiality

In the course of our discussions as we explore the topics, the students or instructor may wish to share stories of a personal nature. It is expected that personal stories you hear in class will not be repeated outside the classroom without the express permission of the person who told the story.

Other sources of information for students:

Mental Health Services aim is to provide holistic programming and services to help you lead a healthy and balanced life. We strive to provide a secure, supportive environment for students of all orientations and backgrounds. Students suffering from problems with anxiety, depression, problems with sleep, attention, obsession or compulsions, relationship difficulties, severe winter blues, etc., may make an appointment by phone or in person. Appointments are usually available within two days of initial contact with one of our medical doctors. All contacts are completely confidential. Phone 519-888-4567 ext. 32655.

For students with learning differences: The [AccessAbility Services \(AAS\)](#) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the ASS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Counselling Services: Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies for studies and exams: www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocs, ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

The Writing Centre: Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre.