

YM02656 - COURSE SYLLABUS
MEMPHIS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY & CENTER FOR YOUTH MINISTRY TRAINING
YOUTH MINISTER AS PASTOR AND LEADER
SPRING 2011

INSTRUCTOR:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to various roles played by the youth leader in ministering to the spiritual, personal and social needs of adolescents in congregational and parachurch settings. First, we will explore the role of youth minister as pastor and caregiver as we gain a broader understanding of the specific needs and hurts of contemporary American youth. Second, we will explore the role of youth minister as leader in the Christian community by examining the theological foundations of Christian leadership, personal leadership styles, group communication dynamics, and the nature of “second chair” leadership. Finally, we will consider the role of the youth leader in “equipping the saints” through conversation with missional ecclesiology.

Class interactions will occur through three intensive retreats, six preceptorial discussions, online discussions, and immersive experiences.

OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will:

- Gain insight into their own unique leadership style and strengths
- Improve their understanding of group communication and relationship dynamics
- Explore issues relevant to the physical, emotional, and spiritual hurts and needs of contemporary youth in urban, suburban and rural America.
- Develop skills and knowledge for pastoral care of adolescents
- Gain skills in developing youth and adults for leadership in missional Christian communities

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Clark, Chap. *Hurt: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Diede, Brian. *Group's Emergency Response Handbook for Youth Ministry*. Loveland, Colo: Group, 2007.
- Myers, Scott A, and Carolyn M. Anderson. *The Fundamentals of Small Group Communication*. Los Angeles, [Calif.], [etc.: Sage, 2008.
- Nouwen, Henri J. M. *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership*. New York: Crossroad, 1989.
- Van, Eck D. *Leadership 101: An Interactive Leadership Development Guide for Students*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.

- Winseman, Albert L, Donald O. Clifton, and Curt Liesveld. *Living Your Strengths: Discover Your God-Given Talents, and Inspire Your Community*. New York, N.Y: Gallup Press, 2004.
- Wright, H N. *The New Guide to Crisis & Trauma Counseling: A Practical Guide for Ministers*. Ventura, Calif: Regal Books, 2003.

REQUIRED EXCERPTS & CHAPTERS (AVAILABLE ONLINE THROUGH THE COURSE WEBSITE)

- Selections from Arzola, Fernando. *Toward a Prophetic Youth Ministry: Theory and Praxis in Urban Context*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008.
- Selections from Bonner, Steven. *Rural Youth Ministry: Systemic Abandonment And the Response of the Church*. VDM Verlag, 2009.
- Selections from Larson, Scott, and Karen Free. *City Lights: Ministry Essentials for Reaching Urban Youth*. Loveland, Colo: Group, 2002.
- Selections from Guder, Darrell L, and Lois Barrett. *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Grand Rapids, Mich: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 1998.
- Selections from Parks, Sharon D. *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World*. Boston, Mass: Harvard Business School Press, 2005.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) VoiceThread Responses (15%)

The instructor will make bi-weekly VoiceThread (and/or blog posts) concerning course readings or topics being covered during the semester. Students will critically reflect on the reading and the instructor's comments and will post their responses (per directions from the instructor) to the VoiceThread using audio, video or textual response at <http://cymt.ed.voicethread.com>. [Postings will be made on Tuesdays at 12 p.m. and students must respond by Friday, 12 p.m. **The VoiceThread dates are: Jan. 25, Feb. 1, Feb. 15, March 1, March 15, April 5**].

2) Write and Respond to a Crisis Case Study (15%)

Write a case study (1-2 pages) concerning a crisis that a youth in your ministry has actually faced during the past two years. Briefly discuss how you responded. Be sure to change any identifying data (including name and basic details). Submit this case study to the course website **no later than Friday, January 21 by 10:01 p.m.**

Respond to a crisis case study written by another student and give guidance for revising and expanding the response to the situation based upon reading, lectures, or additional research. No more than (3) pages in length. **Due Friday, February 4, by 10:01 p.m.**

3) Work through *Leadership 101* with Youth (15%)

Work through at least four chapters of *Leadership 101* with a minimum of two youth in whom you see leadership potential. Craft a 1-page plan for how you'll be working through the book with your youth, how you plan to recruit/select these youth, what sections of *Leadership 101* you'll be covering (and why), and when/where you plan to do this. After discussing and revising your plan with your coach, submit it to the instructor **no later than Friday, January 28 at 10:01 p.m.**

[Note: The youth with whom you do leadership training (no more than 4 per church) will be invited to join us on retreat, Friday afternoon through Saturday, April 1 & 2, for related activities and discussions. More details about this optional special event will be forthcoming.]

5) Write (4) Critical Observation Reports (20%)

Over the course of the semester students will craft **4** critical observation/interaction reports that reflect upon the student's role as a pastor and leader in various situations or locations. Each report should be between 500 and 750 words in length and must be based upon a minimum 30-minute interaction or observation. Two of the five reports must come from the mandatory list below. The other two entries can be of your own choosing, but must take place outside of your regular ministry programming. **[Two reports are due Friday, February 25 by 10:01 p.m. The remaining entries are due Friday, April 8, by 10:01 p.m.]**

You must choose a minimum of (2) from the following four options:

- **Hospital** – visit a youth or parent at the hospital. Reflect on your feelings and what you believe your role to be.
- **Funeral** – attend a funeral of a teenager, parent, or grandparent of youth – what should your pastoral role be in that situation? How are youth responding? Who is paying attention to them?
- **Juvenile Court** – attend a juvenile court session and reflect of your response to the system and what your role might be if present with a youth in one of those situations. How are youth responding?
- **Student Leadership** – observe student leaders at school or at church and reflect on the effectiveness of student leaders and your role in developing them.

The remaining (2) reports can be from the topics above, or others of your own choosing. Possible suggestions for remaining Critical Observation Reports: Visit a Family in your ministry / Attend a school lunch / Observe youth at a movie theater / Observe youth at a mall / Observe youth at a school sporting event / Observe youth at a local youth hangout / “Cruise the strip” in your local community on a Friday night. What are teens doing? How are they interacting? What is your role in ministering to these youth? / Denominational YM – spend some time researching either your denomination or the one your servings national and regional youth ministry. What events, resources, and training does the denomination provide? / Community Building – do a community building event with your youth ministry and reflect on the level of trust in that community and your role in developing stronger community.

6) Small Group Leadership Report (15%)

Write a one-page case study describing a small group to which you belong, and detailing a difficulty the group faces. Such groups could include church staff, youth ministry staff (professional or volunteer), youth council, parent advisory board, or other committees. Then, for each chapter assigned in *Fundamentals of Small Group Communication*, write a 1-2 paragraph explanation of how the chapter provides insight into the functioning of your group and gives ideas for possible solutions to the problem(s) the groups faces. **[Due Friday, March 18 at 10:01 p.m.]**

7) Write a final paper on “leadership” (20%)

Write a 4-5 page paper answering the following questions: What is leadership? What theological and biblical understandings guide your notion of “good” leadership in youth ministry? What is a youth minister's role in leading a congregation? What is your leadership style? What insights did this give to you about yourself? How will the answers to these questions affect your approach to youth ministry? **[Due Friday, April 22 by 10:01 p.m.]**

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

1. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade. No assignment will be accepted more than one week beyond the due date without prior approval from the instructor.
2. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. See “Academic Misconduct” in the *MTS Catalog and Student Handbook* for guidelines explaining how incidents of academic dishonesty will be handled.
3. Gender inclusive language is expected on all assignments in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the *MTS Catalog and Student Handbook*.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 1-4: Read *Clark*, pgs. 7-70

January 2: Complete the inventory in *Living Your Strengths* (send results to lesleigh@cymt.org)

Retreat 1 (January 5 – January 8):

- *Finding Personal Strengths for Youth Ministry Leadership*
- *American Teenagers and the World Beneath: Chap Clark's view of Adolescents as "Hurt"*
- *From Addictions to Cutting: Understanding contemporary adolescent issues*
- *Pastor as Caregiver, Counselor and Guide*

Reading for the Week of January 10: *Clark*, pgs. 71-121 / *Wright*, pgs. 17-27 / Familiarize yourself with the 12 topics included in *Group's Emergency Response Handbook*, and read (1) topic of your choice.

Reading for the Week of January 17: *Clark*, pgs. 121 – 183 / *Wright*, pgs. 28-59 **[Preceptorial]**

Reading for the Week of January 24: *Wright*, pgs. 129-191/ Read (2) additional topics from *Emergency Response Handbook*.

Reading for the Week of January 31: *Wright*, pgs. 237-328 **[Preceptorial]**

Reading for the Week of February 7: Choose to read either *Wright* pgs. 329-383 (on children), or *Wright* 384-416 (on adolescents) / Read (2) additional topics of your choice from *Group's Emergency Response Handbook*.

Retreat 2 (February 10 – February 12):

- *In the Name of Jesus: Towards a Theology of Christian Leadership*
- *Youth Ministry Leadership and the Dynamics of Small Group Communication*
- *Authority Isn't Leadership: Parks, Heifetz and Why Leadership Can Be Taught*

Reading for the Week of February 14: *Myers*, pgs. 1-66 and pgs. 119-123.

Reading for the Week of February 21: *Myers*, pgs. 127-177 **[Preceptorial]**

Reading for the Week of February 28: *Myers*, pgs. 181- 242

Reading for the Week of March 7: *Nouwen*, pgs. 9-47 / *VanEck*, pgs. 1-54 (*Read VanEck only if you have not previously worked through this section of VanEck's Leadership 101 with teenagers this semester.*) **[Preceptorial]**

Reading for the Week of March 14: *Nouwen*, pgs 51-70 / *VanEck*, pgs. 55-108 (*Read VanEck only if you have not previously worked through this section of VanEck's Leadership 101 with teenagers this semester.*)

Reading for the Week of March 21: *Nouwen*, pgs. 71-101 / *Van Eck*, pgs. 109- 167 (*Read VanEck only if you have not previously worked through this section of VanEck's Leadership 101 with teenagers this semester.*) **[Preceptorial]**

Reading for the Week of March 28: Read the selection from *Guder* (available on the class website). Choose one of the following readings available on the class website: *Arzola*, *Bonner*, or *Larsen*.

Retreat 3 (March 31 – April 2):

- *Developing Youth as Missional Leaders*

- *The Buck Stops Over There: Leading from the Second Chair*
- *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins: Balancing the Roles Youth Pastors Play*

Week of April 11 — Final Preceptorial Session