

PT 611: Leadership Skills for Community Ministry
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PT 611 Course Description

What we need is here.

-Wendell Berry

God is active everywhere—creating, sustaining and liberating the world God loves. How do we join this action? What new ways of seeing and working do we need in order to step out into the community as effective, faith-rooted partners—with each other and with our secular colleagues?

Building on the skills of spiritual practice, self-awareness, and theological reflection developed in previous MA-PPL courses, PT 611 will enable students to build a bridge between their theological education and the practice of ministry out in the community. Through instruction and support for their Capstone Projects and engagement with practices of community development, students will learn of the breadth and depth of possibilities for innovative and effective community ministry.

Whether in religious, secular, or border-crossing contexts, practitioners need skills that will enable them to put caring and conviction into effective practice. Leaders inspired by faith to work in community development and social entrepreneurship need experience in foundational skills such as writing proposals, implementing projects, supporting innovation, and building community partnerships.

With their Capstone Projects as their primary vehicle, PT 611 students will learn concepts and methods of practical social research, project design and implementation, team-building, and adaptive monitoring. Skills, concepts, and case studies will be drawn from the fields of practical theology, community ministry, systems and design thinking, participatory leadership, community engagement, social enterprise, and community development.

By the end of the course, students will have created a “toolbox” of skills and resources that they can then use, develop further, and share with their communities. In addition, they will have submitted their Capstone proposal and identified the members of their panel.

Competence Objectives

PT 611 students will be asked to:

- Engage in regular spiritual practice and discuss its effect on their leadership
- Demonstrate familiarity with the work of several practical theologians, and discuss the relationship between practical theology and community ministry
- Demonstrate facility with concepts, terminology, and methods of:
 - Conducting ethical social research
 - Assessing community resources, needs, problems, and goals
 - Creating and maintaining core teams, community partnerships, and coalitions
 - Developing models of change, strategies, and action plans

- Developing participation and shared leadership through meaningful community engagement, including methods like World Café, Appreciative Inquiry, and Circle processes
- Assessing and developing cultural competence
- Designing, implementing, and evaluating projects, programs, and interventions
- Writing proposals and grants, and raising funds
- Assess the ways in which the integration of spiritual practices, theological reflection, and practical skills in community development can support their work as practical theologians and community ministers

Course Format and Levels

5 classroom sessions of 3 hours each, to provide regular support for development of Capstone Projects, plus ongoing intra-class communication via digital media.

Teaching Style: Lectures, group processes, and coaching, based on students' readings, spiritual practices, and community experience

Class Dates: Sept. 12, Sept. 26, Oct. 17, Nov. 7, and Nov. 21 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Most students will take PT 611 to fulfill requirements of a Basic Degree such as MDIV, MATS, MA-PPL, or MA-IIS. Others may consult the Registrar.

Pre-requisites: PT 500, 501, and 502.

Required Readings—Selections from:

Block, Peter. "Civic Engagement and the Restoration of Community: Changing the Nature of the Conversation," 2005.

Corrigan, Chris; Art of Hosting. "The Chaordic Stepping Stones;" "Cynefin: A Framework for Complexity."

Holman, Peggy, Tom Devane, Steven Cady. *The Change Handbook: The Definitive Resource on Today's Best Methods for Engaging Whole Systems*, 2nd ed., 2007.

Salvaterra, Alixia and Peter Heltzel. *Faith-Rooted Organizing: Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World*, 2014.

Working Group for Community Health and Development, University of Kansas. *Community Tool Box*. <ctb.ku.edu>.

Plus one of :

Bosch, David J. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 1991.

Graham, Elaine. *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Public Theology in a Post-Secular Age*, 2013.

Guder, Darrell L. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, 2000.

Moe-Lobeda, Cynthia D. *Healing a Broken World: Globalization and God*, 2002.

Morissey, Ann. *Bothered and Bewildered: Enacting Hope in Troubled Times*, 2009.

Morissey, Ann. *Journeying Out: A New Approach to Christian Mission*, 2006.

Additional shorter readings will be assigned.

Recommended Readings

- Block, Peter. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, 2009.
- Cooperrider, David and Diana Whitney. *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change*, 2005.
- Dudley, Carl S. *Community Ministry: New Challenges, Proven Steps to Faith-Based Initiatives*, 2002.
- Jacobsen, Dennis A. *Doing Justice: Congregations and Community Organizing*, 2001.
- Kretzmann, John P and John McKnight, The Institute for Asset-Based Community Development. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*, 1993.
- Scharmer, C. Otto. *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges*, 2007.
- Sensing, Tim. *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses*, 2011.
- Wheatley, Margaret. *Finding Our Way: Leadership for an Uncertain Time*, 2007.

Assignments and Evaluation

Students will be invited to engage deeply with the readings, presentations, class work, tools, and their chosen spiritual practice. They will be required to show evidence of their engagement in short reflective essays, blogposts, journal entries, the preparation of a Social Research Information and Consent Packet, and their formal MA-PPL Capstone Project proposal—12-13 pages of writing in all.

Students will be asked to read approximately 100-125 pages for each class, for a total of 400-500 pages. In addition, they will engage in and log a regular spiritual practice.

Students will be evaluated on:

- Their willingness to engage, take appropriate risks, engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation, and learn from both successes and “failures”
- Their competence in using the concrete skills for community development, as demonstrated in their journals, class discussions, and their Capstone Project proposal

To encourage adaptive learning, the course itself—as well as the Capstone Project proposal—will be graded on an “Approved/Not Approved” basis. The PT 611 instructor and the Professor of Public and Pastoral Leadership will evaluate students’ Capstone Project proposals as a team.