PT 501 Personal Foundations for PPL: Self as Leader

Allison Rennie  allisonrennie.ca  allison.rennie21@gmail.com  Tel: 250 809 6429

Course Description

A leader is someone with the power to project either shadow or light upon some part of the world, and upon the lives of the people who dwell there. A leader shapes the ethos in which others must live, an ethos as light-filled as heaven or as shadowy as hell. A good leader has high awareness of the interplay of inner shadow and light, lest the act of leadership do more harm than good.

- Parker Palmer, Let Your Life Speak

What we offer one another emerges from within. To be accountable to one another, we must be accountable for our inner life, and how it is shared, for better or for worse, with others in all we do. When we do not know ourselves, we cannot be accountable for what we offer one another. The faithful person is a self-aware person. The effective leader has profound knowledge of the relationship between the inner life and the collective life. To develop such knowledge takes skill and practice. PT501 continues that deliberate work of becoming self-aware as an individual and in community.

This course is required for all MA-PPL and MDiv students and is a pre-requisite for the Leadership Studio (PT651/652) and TFE2.

Competence Objectives

PT 501 students will have an opportunity to:
- Deepen self-awareness, especially in relation to leadership
- Develop tools to support the ongoing practice of awareness
- Apply theoretical models to understanding of self
- Name areas of strength and areas of growth in the field of self as leader
- Develop appropriate vocabulary for reflecting on experience – including owning language, expanding feeling vocabulary, framing questions
- Develop a learning plan for increasing self-knowledge
- Test accuracy of self-perception
- Deepen effective and empathetic communication skills: listening, inquiry, vocabulary for feelings and thoughts, clarity of verbal communication
- Develop assertive behaviours
• Use disciplines of giving and receiving feedback
• Practice tracking own experience as distinct from group experience and content agenda and assess appropriate levels of sharing
• Learn and use self-reflexive habits
• Investigate links between vulnerability, risk, integrity, power and authority in the field of Self as Leader

Outcomes for students:
• extend capacity for assessing accuracy of self perception
• develop cohort group for mutual learning
• practice self-reflexive habits
• deepen ability to communicate assertively and effectively
• set personal learning goals and strategies for action on these
• experience non-judgemental and mutual support for others in their cohort
• connect growing self awareness with leadership and faith
• understand the difference between assertive, passive, socially compliant and aggressive behaviour including communication

Course Format
4 classroom sessions of 5 hours each, plus ongoing intra-class communication via digital media. Learning Style: highly participative, disciplined reflection on experience, discussion, reading, variety of journal and other right brain process, spiritual practices, and lecture.

This course is designed for education through reflective practice and experience. The course plan is based on a generative curriculum model, where content will arise from the experience of the group as a cohort as well as from the pre-determined course outline.

The foundational skills developed and practiced in the course will continue to be used and applied in learning in other courses and areas of learning. The Cohort will be established in the course, and maintain continuity as a reflexive learning cohort in future terms at VST. This will be a foundational learning experience to support the ongoing Studio as well as in achieving other competencies in the PPL stream.

Class Dates: September 21, October 19, November 9, and November 23 - 9:30 – 2:30

Most students will take PT 501 to fulfill requirements of a Basic Degree such as MDIV, MATS, MA-PPL, or MA-IIS. Others may consult the Registrar.
Pre-requisites: none

Required Readings – Selections from:
Self as Leader, Authentic leadership:

Armstrong, Karen *The Spiral Staircase*, Vintage Canada 2005

Baldwin, Christina, *Storycatcher: Making Sense of our Lives through the Power and Practice of Story* New World Library 2007

Bell, Rob *Velvet Elvis* HarperCollins CA 2005

Bolz-Webber, Nadia *Pastrix*, Jericho Books 2013

Nouwen, Henri *The Genesee Diary*, Doubleday 1976


Scott, Susan *Fierce Conversations*. Berkeley 2004

Vanier, Jean *Becoming Human*, House of Anansi Press 1998


Additional selected readings from a variety of sources available on moodle as required

Additional shorter readings will be assigned.

**Recommended Readings**

Block, Peter. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, 2009

Daloz-Parks, Sharon *Leadership Can be Taught*, Harvard Business Review Press 2005


**Assignments and Evaluation**

Pre-course assignments (due Sept 21)

1. Read *Becoming Human* by Jean Vanier
2. Select one passage that challenges you personally, and a second passage that comforts you. Be prepared to participate in group reflection on this book and your choices.

3. Complete the following preparatory reflection
   Using the sentence stem, “I used to…but now I...” and /or any variations on that stem (“I used to...and now I....”), create a one page biography you will use to introduce yourself in the first class. This needs to be in a form that you can share with others. Make choices that help us to truly meet you.

Assignments between classes

1. Between the class sessions students will be required to keep a journal. Specific requirements of the journal will be introduced at the first class.
2. Between the class sessions additional reading and other assignments will be outlined.
3. A project will be due at the final class.

**Final Course Project (due Nov 23)**

The final project will require each person to a learning plan for Self as Leader. The plan will include specific personal learning goals, strategies for action, and structured opportunities for using the cohort as a learning community for ongoing personal development.

**Students will be evaluated on:**
- Their engagement during class sessions especially demonstrating their readiness to participate fully, to be fully present to others in the cohort as well as to their own learning and process.
- Their competence in using skills introduced in the course, and timely completion of assignments.
- Each student will be required to complete a thorough self-assessment prior to final grading.

The course itself will be graded on an “Approved/Not Approved” basis. Assessment will be based in large part on class participation, active practice and application of tools, skills, and theories provided.