COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course serves as an introduction to the field of Ministry and Leadership Studies. Attention is given to the larger cultural context in which the church finds itself at the beginning of the 21st century; pastoral skills; current issues in the church such as language for God and human beings; gender, race, and class; vocation and calling; thinking, reflecting, and writing theologically; and personal spiritual discernment. Students develop a statement on calling and vocation, and set learning goals for their theological education based on their degree program goals. The course also includes instruction in developing a portfolio in preparation for the Mid-Program Review and information on Mentored Practice.

GOALS
1) Students will articulate and give reasons for their understanding of vocation and calling and their personal goals for theological education in light of their degree program goals and their denominational requirements for ministry.
2) Students in the M.S. in Pastoral Counseling will articulate and give reasons for their understanding of the purpose and nature of Pastoral Counseling.

Outcomes
1) Students will demonstrate their understanding of the church in its larger social context.
2) Students will demonstrate skills in thinking, reflecting, and writing theologically.
3) Students will examine the intricate relationship between their individual vocations and a call to ministry.
4) Students will begin to comprehend the principles of conflict resolution.
5) Students will begin to develop their academic portfolios.
6) M.S. Students will articulate and give reasons for their understanding of the purpose and nature of Pastoral Counseling.

M.Div. Degree Goals addressed by this course
Knowledge of:
* The cultural, social, and ethical realities in which the church lives and responds both globally and locally

Ability to:
* Develop and express mature personal faith, and with sensitivity and skill, teach the traditions of the church, lead worship and preach, and engage in pastoral care
* Integrate the elements of Christian tradition in a theology and practice of ministry, act with moral sensitivity and in accord with professional ethics, and advocate for compassion and justice in personal, congregational, and community settings.

Opportunities for:
- Growth in the spiritual traditions and practices in the life of the Church
- Developing a prophetic voice within a variety of social and cultural contexts

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
1) This course is offered Pass/D/Fail. If you prefer a letter grade, indicate that desire in writing to the instructor before the second class meeting.
2) Faithful class attendance and effective participation in class discussion. If you are unable to attend class, please notify the instructor by e-mail or telephone.
3) Timely completion of written assignments (see syllabus)
   - MBTI
   - Profiles in Ministry Casebook
   - Reflection papers
   - Vocation and Calling: Goals for Theological Education – two drafts. For M.S. Students, two drafts of their understanding of the nature and purpose of Pastoral Counseling.

   The paper should have this form:
   1) Begin with a general definition of vocation and calling, and continue to your current understanding of your own vocation and calling.
   2) Describe the connections between your vocation and your intended occupation after completing your degree, with particular attention to your denominational requirements, if you intend to seek authorized ministry in a church. For M.S. in Pastoral Counseling students, particular attention should be paid to the requirement for licensure.
   3) Address the goals of your degree program – how do you intend to meet those goals: by taking courses and/or independent studies? If so, which ones? Senior Integrative Experience? And for M. Div. students, your mentored practice placement and/or clinical experience?

   First draft due April 28
   Final draft due May 20
   - Other assigned work

4) Readings as assigned

Written work: Most papers for this course are short reflection pieces, usually no more than 3 – 5 pages. They will not normally require citation to other sources. However, several assignments expect reference to the reading materials assigned for the class. In those cases, you should use the latest edition of Turabian (available in the BTS bookstore) as the source for proper citation. You may e-mail me drafts of your papers prior to the due date for comment and suggestions.
COURSE GROUND RULES
(Adapted from Dr. M. Shawn Copeland)
1) We will listen to one another – patiently, carefully – assuming that each one of us is always doing the best that she or he can. We will speak thoughtfully. We will speak in the first person.
2) Although our disagreements may be vigorous, they will not be conducted in a win-lose manner. We will take care that all participants are given the opportunity to engage in the conversation.
3) We will own our assumptions, our conclusions, and their implications. We will be open to another’s intellectual and personal growth and change.
4) We cannot be blamed for the misinformation we have been taught and have absorbed from our society, our culture and our religious backgrounds, but we will be held responsible for repeating misinformation after we have learned otherwise.

TEXT READ IN THEIR ENTIRETY (prices given below are from www.amazon.com)
Leas, Speed B. Discover Your Conflict Management Style. Alban Institute, 1995. $7.00 ISBN-10:1566991846
Robinson, Anthony B. What’s Theology Got to Do With It? Alban Institute, 2005. $18 ISBN-10:1566993202

OTHER READINGS


ON LINE
Subscribe to Faith in Public Life and read each day: [www.faithinpubliclife.org](http://www.faithinpubliclife.org)

**GRADING OF WRITTEN MATERIALS**
This is a Pass/D/Fail class. See the Student Guide for a description of the Seminary’s grading policy. At the suggestion of the instructor, and with the agreement of the student, a student may submit rewrites for materials which have been deemed unsatisfactory.

**PLAGIARISM**
You are reminded that using others’ words or ideas without attribution and citation constitutes plagiarism, an act of intellectual dishonesty which may result in failing the course. See the Student Guide for a complete description of plagiarism.

**BTS Incomplete Policy for M. Div., M.A., Bangor Plan, and Special Students**
Students who have not completed a course’s requirements by the time that work is due have one of two options. The first is to petition for an Incomplete Contract; the second is to petition for Withdrawal from the course. To initiate one or the other option, students must obtain either an Incomplete Contract or a Withdrawal Form from the Registrar and submit it to the instructor who will indicate on the form his/her approval. The instructor will then submit it to the Academic Dean for his/her approval. In either case, students must submit their petitions to the instructor no later than the day the course work is originally due. See the Student Guide for complete description of the policy.
SYLLABUS - MLS1501, Spring 2011, Bangor Campus

February 3  
**Introduction to the Course**
Opening prayer
Introduction to course purposes and structures
Triad groups
Introduction of participants; exploration of participants’ interests and concerns for course
Development of course ground rules
E-mail addresses and use
Signups for opening and closing prayers
Discussion of current issues facing the church and Faith in Public Life webpage and subscription

February 10  
**Knowing Self, Knowing God: MBTI and Spirituality; “Profiles of Ministry” Program**

**Preparation**
Read: Malcolm Goldsmith, *Knowing Me, Knowing God: Exploring Your Spirituality with Myers-Briggs*
Research: Complete the type indicator survey included in the book. Bring the book and your four letter Myers-Briggs Spirituality Type to class

**Class Meeting**
Opening prayer ___________________________________
Discussion of Goldsmith reading
Presentation on MBTI and spiritual style preferences
Discussion of self-care methods
Introduction of Profiles of Ministry program and Casebook assignment
Closing prayer ___________________________________

February 17  
**Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction in the Contemporary Church**

**Preparation**
Complete the Profiles in Ministry Casebook; turn in at the beginning of class.
*Remember to respond as though you are in the role of pastor.*
Read: Margaret Guenther, *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*  
Richard Lischer, *Open Secrets*
Write: Notes on Guenther and Lischer for use in class discussion. Bring to class.

**Class Meeting**
Opening prayer ___________________________________
Presentation on Pastoral Care and Spiritual Direction in the Contemporary Church
Discussion of *Holy Listening* and *Open Secrets* – triad groups
Schedule for ‘Profiles’ taped interviews
Closing prayer ___________________________________
February 24

Pastoral Care: Bereavement

Preparation
Read: C.S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*
Killen and Debeer, *The Art of Theological Reflection*, chs. 1 & 2
Research: Complete the exercise on pp. 26-27 of Killen and DeBeer. Bring to class for discussion.
Write: After participating in the class discussion, write a three page reflection paper, which integrates the assigned reading and your own experience, describing your current pastoral convictions and approach regarding ministry in situations of grief and bereavement. You may draw on the Guenther and Lischer texts also.
Due: March 3

Class Meeting
Opening prayer ____________________________________
Responses to *A Grief Observed*
Watch “A Gift of Time”
Discussion of pastoral issues in grief and bereavement
Theological reflection
Closing prayer ____________________________________

March 3

Gender, Race, and Class in the Church

Due: Reflection paper on ministry in situations of grief and bereavement

Preparation
Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love*
Leticia A. Guardiola-Saenz and Curtiss Paul DeYoung, “Jesus and Cultures,” in *The Peoples’ Bible*, pp. 65-76

Research: Interview a minister who is within the first five years of his or her ministry. And interview a minister who has been in ministry more than ten years. Ask each of them how they respond to and reflect upon issues of gender, race, and class in their church; what they each feel is their primary responsibility as pastor, teacher, prophet in their particular setting; and how they deal with inclusive language. Bring your notes to class.

Class Meeting
Opening prayer ____________________________________
Presentation on the social construction of reality in the media; implications for the life of faith – drawing on the Walrath reading assignment
March 10

*The Church’s Current Contexts*

**Preparation**


*Research:* Attend to one week’s news feeds from Faith in Public Life, paying attention to the topics, questions and concerns raised by the news articles and editorials in each day’s feeds. Look for patterns and assumptions being made about racial/ethnic identity, sexual identity, social class, and theological convictions which underlie the articles.

*Write:* 3 – 5 pages on the issues facing the church in the U.S. and globally in the 21st century as you have encountered them in the assigned readings and your research from the Faith in Public Life web page. You are expected to make reference to your reading and research in this paper. Bring the draft to class.

Due March 24: Final draft of “issues facing the church” paper

**Class Meeting**

Opening prayer _______________________________________

Presentation and discussion on current issues facing the church

Triad groups: discuss readings and research and drafts of papers about the topic

Theological reflection _______________________________________

Closing prayer _______________________________________

March 14 – 18 – Research Week


Attend worship at two churches other than your own on March 12 and March 20.

* Attend carefully to the visual, oral, and printed languages used in hymns, prayers, announcements, printed materials, choral offerings, and sermon.

* Look for creative new usages and beautiful traditional usages. Note which, if any, gave you a new or deeper experience and/or understanding of your relationship with God.

* Note also the presence of “current issues” of inclusiveness facing the church today: language for God and human beings, gender, race, class, sexual orientation, differently-abled persons, assumptions about the nature of families present (age, sexuality, economic resources, children, general health), etc.

* Look at the architectural language of the worship space, the arrangement of chairs/pews, the location of the pulpit, communion table, Bible. Who or what is the center of attention for the congregation? Where is God located in the space?

*Write:* three page reflection paper on your findings about the languages of worship; be prepared to discuss them in class on March 24 and turn them in
March 24

*Languages of Worship and in the Church*

**Due:** Issues facing the church paper and reflection paper about the languages of worship

**Preparation**

**Read:** M. Craig Barnes, *The Pastor As Minor Poet*

**Write:** Finish final draft of “issues facing the church” paper and reflection paper about the languages of worship

**Class Meeting**

Opening prayer ________________________________

Presentation and discussion of language issues in the contemporary church

Discussion of research and writing assignments in triad groups/report back

Theological reflection

Closing prayer ________________________________

March 31

*Vocation and Calling*

**Preparation**

**Read:** Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*

**Write:** After participating in the class discussion, and in light of the reading, and movie, write 3 – 5 pages on your present understanding of your vocation.

**Due April 7**

**Questions for attention:**

1) How does vocation differ from occupation?

2) How does my social location affect my understanding of vocation?

3) To what fundamental purpose is God calling me?

**Class meeting**

Opening prayer ________________________________

Film and discussion on vocation and calling: “Whale Rider” or “Buechner”

Closing Prayer ________________________________

April 7

*Writing What We Believe*

**Due:** Current understanding of vocation paper

**Preparation**

Begin thinking about your draft of the final paper; draft due April 28

**Read:** Lucretia B. Yaghjian, *Writing Theology Well*, ch. 2

Anthony B. Robinson, *What’s Theology Got to Do With It?*, chs. 1-3

**Write:** After participating in the class discussion, in 3 pages, respond to the following questions (one page per question)

1) Robinson gives his definition of “theology” on p. 22. How has your theology shaped your life?

2) Robinson says that for Christians, Jesus Christ is the definitive, but not exhaustive, revelation of the nature and purposes of God. What does this mean to you?
3) Robinson says scripture is God’s story and God is the central character. Where have you found God’s story in scripture?
Due: April 14

Class Meeting
Opening prayer ____________________________
Presentation and discussion on the fundamentals of Christian theology and “Writing Theological Reflection Well”
Triad groups discuss answers to 3 Robinson questions
Closing prayer ____________________________

April 14
Writing What We Believe
Due: First Robinson reflection paper
Preparation
Read: Yaghjian, Writing Theology Well, ch. 1
Robinson, What’s Theology Got to Do With It?, chs. 4-7
Write: (one page per question)
1) Robinson speaks of three kinds of “unitarianism” found in congregations. Which of the three is the greatest temptation for you? Why?
2) Robinson describes several current, and ancient, dualisms which constantly tempt the church. How have they been reflected in your experience?
3) Grapple with one form of social, religious, or individual sin that you see in the church or culture, describing how that form of sin distorts either human freedom or human finitude.
Due: April 28

Class Meeting
Opening prayer ____________________________
Presentation and discussion of Yaghjian material
Presentation and discussion of Robinson chapters
Triad groups discuss responses to 3 Robinson questions
Closing prayer ____________________________

April 18 – 22 – Easter Recess

April 28 Skills for Ministry: Cross Cultural Communication and Intercultural Competency in Pastoral Work
Due: Second Robinson reflection paper and draft of final paper: “Vocation and Calling: Goals for Theological Education”
Preparation
George “Tink” Tink, “The Bible as a Text in Cultures: Native Americans,” in The Peoples’ Bible, pp. 45-58

Write: After participating in the class discussion, write a 3 – 5 page reflection paper responding to the readings.
Due: May 5

Class Meeting
Opening prayer ________________________________
Presentation and discussion on cross-cultural communication and intercultural competency in pastoral work
Role play on intercultural competency
Theological reflection
Closing prayer ________________________________

May 5

Profiles of Ministry – Interpretation and Growth Plan; Mid-Program Review and Portfolio; Course Evaluation and Group Closure

Due: Cross cultural/intercultural reflection paper

Preparation
Profiles of Ministry: Each student has previously completed a ministry situation ‘casebook’ and a structured and taped ‘interview’ under the guidelines of the Profiles of Ministry program of the Association of Theological Schools. In class today each student will receive their two page individualized ministry profile from ATS and have an opportunity to discuss and learn from it in triad groups. For preparation, please bring an open mind and heart, a willingness to learn about yourself in new ways, along with a desire to gain the most that is possible from this experience.

Class Meeting
Opening prayer ________________________________
Presentation on the history, philosophy, and value of the Profiles program
Individual profiles distributed and interpreted
Work in triads on forming your personalized ‘growth plan’ from the results of your profile.
Discussion of the Mid-Program Review and the creation of a portfolio
Course evaluation and group closure
Closing prayer/ritual ________________________________

FINAL PAPER – “Vocation and Calling: Goals for Theological Education” due May 20