

Theological Reflection in the Practice of Ministry PT326 and PT327

The following process for achieving three units (1.5 each semester) of academic credit for field education is open to third-year students who have completed the course Practical Theology in Congregations.

The process is designed:

1. to challenge third-year students to continue engaging in intensive theological reflection on their practice of ministry in a supervised field education setting;
2. to draw on the theological depth of the faculty, but to do so in a way, as much as possible, that honors the reality of their heavy teaching load and other responsibilities.

To receive this credit the student must:

1. be involved in an approved congregational or agency position;
2. recruit a faculty member to work with them. The faculty person can be one with whom the student is taking a course and the theological reflection is in addition to class requirements, or with a faculty member who has agreed to supervise independent study relating theological reflection to the field education experience;
3. register for PT326 (fall semester) and PT327 (spring semester);
4. develop a theological reflection paper or project as described below.

Theological Reflection Paper

The student will design with a faculty member a theological reflection paper of approximately 10 – 12 pages related to their practice of ministry in the field education setting. The faculty member may suggest bibliographic material for the student to read.

OR

Theological Reflection Project * indicates faculty participation needed

1. Identify a puzzlement/concern/challenge in the ministry setting, a situation, person etc. that is of concern to the student.
2. * Reflect theologically with a member of the faculty on the situation. The faculty member may provide a short bibliography that would be helpful or refer the student to other persons in the larger Louisville community who would be helpful with the situation.
3. Design a response to the ministry situation that is critically informed by theological reflection. If working with a member of the Area C faculty, an action reflection model can be used that draws on the behavioral and social sciences as well as theology.
4. * In a 10 – 12 page Reflection Paper or Project Report, reflect theologically on the action and share the paper with the faculty mentor.

The key to both the Theological Reflection Paper and Project is a good imagination of new ways to think and act and creative dialogue with the faculty advisor and the field education supervisor.

Faculty Commitment: The following provides some guidelines for faculty involvement in the work:

- 1 Four hours of theological reflection with the student on their puzzlement/concern/challenge and their action growing out of reflection.
- 2 Reading and critiquing the Reflection Paper or Project Report
- 3 Faculty could work with several students at the one time as a guided study, or the project could be an extension of the course in which the student is enrolled.

PT326 and PT327 will be taken on a pass/fail basis.