

Fall 2023 Polity Exam

Section I: Constitutional Heritage

F-3.0209 *General Authority of Councils* states:

Councils possess whatever administrative authority is necessary to give effect to duties and powers assigned by the Constitution of the church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries.

G-3.0106 *Administration of Mission* states, in part:

Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions. Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God's new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church's witness to the mission of the triune God.

REQUIRED RESPONSES: (*Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.*)

1. Provide three (3) citations (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* **demonstrating how the administrative authority of sessions** gives effect to their duties and powers. Quote the most relevant portions of the citations. The same citation may be used more than once if a different relevant portion is quoted. At least one (1) citation must come from the Form of Government and at least one (1) citation must come from the Directory for Worship. G-3.0106 and F-3.0209 may not be used.
2. Provide three (3) citations (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* **demonstrating how the administrative authority of presbyteries** gives effect to their duties and powers. Quote the most relevant portions of the citations. The same citation may be used more than once if a different relevant portion is quoted. At least one (1) citation must come from the Form of Government and at least one (1) citation must come from the Directory for Worship. G-3.0106 and F-3.0209 may not be used.
3. Building on the work in Required Responses 1 and 2, write an essay on the administrative authority of councils. The essay must **demonstrate how administration** "enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God's new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church's witness to the mission of the triune God."

Section II: Constitutional Order for the Particular Church

As pastor of Christ Presbyterian Church, you are meeting with a couple as part of the preparation for their marriage. They have some questions and suggestions about the wedding ceremony.

Lynn: My parents have belonged to Christ Pres since before they were married! Pastor Johnson baptized me and taught my confirmation class before retiring. Can Pastor Johnson participate in the ceremony too?

Terry: Can communion be part of the ceremony? I like the idea that celebrating the Lord's Supper would be the first thing we do as a married couple.

Lynn: But we're expecting a lot of friends to be here, so it might add a lot of time to the wedding. Maybe communion could be just for the two of us?

Terry: That's a good idea - most of our friends aren't Presbyterians anyway.

REQUIRED RESPONSES: (*Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.*)

1. Identify at least four (4) points of polity raised in the conversation, citing one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each point of polity identified. The citations must come from at least two (2) different parts of the *Book of Order* (F, G, W, D). Discuss briefly how each citation applies to its point of polity. A citation may be used more than once if a different relevant portion of the citation is discussed.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, describe how you would respond to them as a couple. This **must not** be a direct (word-for-word) response.

Section III: Application to Ministry

As a member of the presbytery's Committee on Ministry, you are meeting with four (4) members of the session of Westminster Presbyterian Church. During the conversation the following comments are made:

Tomás: I wish Pastor would quit preaching politics and just stick to the Bible.

Sam: Yeah, and now Pastor has signed us up for a booth at the local PRIDE event. That's really gonna make some of our members mad.

Tkyia: I've heard lots of complaints. We should call a special session meeting and vote to fire the pastor.

Nam-sun: I think we should take disciplinary action.

REQUIRED RESPONSES: *(Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.)*

1. Identify a total of four (4) points of polity in the scenario, one (1) from the comment of each speaker. For each point, identify at least one (1) citation (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* quoting the most relevant portion(s) of the citation used. Discuss briefly the citations and link them to their respective points of polity.
2. Focusing on polity, describe at least three (3) actions the presbytery could take to address this situation.