

DM 6464 Seminar IV: Research Methods and Prospectus Writing
Laws Lodge, June 8-19, 2015
Instructor: Dr. Dianne Reistroffer

Syllabus

Course Description:

This six-credit seminar is intended to provide an opportunity to further refine a student's understanding of practical theology and the role of ministers as practical theologians. Students will learn qualitative research methods appropriate to their field of concentration. To this end, students will complete a set of common readings, provide brief reflections on them, and provide leadership for discussion of them in the seminar. The primary work of the seminar is integrating what has been learned and experienced in the previous three seminars by working collaboratively on each student's project prospectus. Time will be divided between in-class reflection on assigned readings, independent research and writing in the library, and collaborative discussion and refinement of each student's prospectus. By the end of the two weeks in residence, it is expected that a student will have a well-developed, near final draft of her or his prospectus.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the seminar, students:

1. Will be able to define and describe "practical theology" in the context of ministry praxis;
2. Will have learned at least one model for interpreting situations in light of Scripture and theology;
3. Will be able to articulate clearly and distinctly the concern her or his project addresses, the biblical and theological perspectives and other analytical insights that inform their response to the issue;
4. Will demonstrate understanding of common research methods for ministry and counseling;
5. Will examine and critique the results of counseling outcome research and research at the intersection of counseling, religion and mental health (PCC track students);
6. Will demonstrate an ability to carry out qualitative research in support of the DMin Project; and,
7. Will have completed a near final draft of the prospectus.

Course Requirements:

There is much preparation work before the start of the seminar.

1. Students will *complete assigned course readings, providing a 2-3 page critical report on each book (Ariarajah, Craigo-Snell/Monroe, Farley, Tull)*. PCC students are asked to *substitute Ariarajah and Tull readings with Koenig and Lebow readings*. The asterisked readings are guides and except for two chapters in Osmer, students are not expected to read the other guides in advance of the seminar unless they are helpful in your prospectus drafting. *Your critical reports for each assigned reading should identify the author's central purpose for it, the argument (or case, if you prefer) that is presented, show how the argument (case) develops through the book, and offer your considered judgment on how well the author achieves her or his purpose and why that purpose matters to faith and the practice of faith. **The critical reports are due to the instructor no later than the first day of the seminar, Monday, June 8, 2015.***
2. Students are expected to provide full and informed participation in the seminar discussions, with responsibility for (1) presenting and leading discussions on one of the common readings, and (2) presenting and leading discussion of your project and prospectus.
3. Students will *write a paper (4-6 pages) describing your theology of ministry: how you understand your vocation (Christology), how it relates to your understanding of the church (ecclesiology), your understanding of what it means to be human (theological anthropology), and God's relationship and will for our lives as followers of Jesus Christ and citizens of a diverse and pluralistic world. **Due electronically to the instructor by June 1, 2015.***
4. Students will *prepare prior to the seminar a substantial draft of their prospectus, stating clearly the situation in ministry which the project addresses. Please follow the outline provided in "Guide to Writing the DMin Prospectus" as you prepare the draft. The Guide is found on the Doctor of Ministry webpage at www.lpts.edu. Be sure to following formatting requirements as well. The draft prospectus should be a comprehensive and analytical presentation of the concern you will address, why you think it is important to focus on this particular situation, your preliminary reading of it in light of Scripture and theology, and a clear and specific description of research you will need to conduct to determine an appropriate response to the situation that is theologically and biblically informed and contextually appropriate. Provide a preliminary statement of outcomes you expect from the project you will do and your means of evaluating the effectiveness of the project. Include a working bibliography of resources you will use or consult.*

Your first draft is due to the instructor no later than June 5, 2015. Please note that these prospectus documents should be submitted electronically to the instructor so that they may be posted on the course CAMS site.

Required Reading:

Ariarajah, S. Wesley. *Your God, My God, Our God: Rethinking Christian Theology for Religious Plurality*. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2012.

Craig-Snell, Shannon and Shawnthea Monroe. *Living Christianity: A Pastoral Theology for Today*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009.

Farley, Edward. *Practicing Gospel: Unconventional Thoughts on the Church's Ministry*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003. **Read chapters 1 and 2.**

+Koenig, R. *Faith and Mental Health: Resources for Healing*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation, 2005.

+Lebow, J. *Research for the psychotherapist: From science to practice*. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2006.

*Osmer, Richard. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. **Read the first two chapters. The instructor will lecture on this material.**

*Richards, L. *Handling qualitative data: A practical guide. Second edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009.

*Sensing, Tim. *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor Of Ministry Theses*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011.

Tull, Patricia K. *Inhabiting Eden: Christians, the Bible, and the Ecological Crisis*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013.

+PCC students only *Research guides that will be referenced in the seminar.

General Notes:

A detailed schedule will be posted on CAMS two weeks before the seminar begins, but for your travel planning, the seminar will begin Monday, June 8, at 10 a.m. in Laws Lodge and conclude by 12:30 p.m. Friday, June 19. The daily schedule is tentatively 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Seminary Policies:

All works quoted or closely paraphrased in your writing must be cited to avoid **academic dishonesty (plagiarism)**. LPTS follows the Chicago Manual of Style for formatting citations, which is conveniently presented and described in Kate Turabian's *Manual For Writers, 7th edition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. Part I, Chapters 1-14 are useful for identifying, developing, and writing your project report. Part II contains the required models for source citation for your paper. This Manual will be an indispensable resource for writing your project.

It is our policy to **follow ADA guidelines and provide reasonable accommodations for students with learning or other disability**. However, in order to provide accommodations, it is the student's responsibility to disclose the information to the instructor.

The Seminary also has an inclusive language policy for classroom discussions and for written work. This policy affirms that, because the use of language can be hurtful and exclude people based on gender, sexual orientation, race or ethnic identity, it is essential that in our use of language to refer to human beings, we use wherever possible inclusive rather than exclusive language (for example: "humankind" instead of "man" to refer to people collectively, or "chair" rather than "chairman"). With respect to God, using inclusive language means avoiding limiting God by gender ("he") or by a dominant, gender-defined metaphor ("Father"), and instead use the full and rich range of metaphors for God provided in Scripture, such as "Rock," "Shepherd," "Mother," "Father," and others.

Every effort will be made to begin and end the seminar day on time as stipulated in the schedule. To do so requires that all participants be present in time to begin and plan to remain until the seminar concludes. If exceptions must be made, please notify the instructor.

We will begin each day with Morning Prayer, with leadership shared by members of the seminar. These important times should be no longer than ten minutes.

Contact information for Dianne Reistroffer:

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