

**Practical Theology in Congregations (PTC) PX 2003/2013
Spring 2017**

Wednesday afternoons - 1:30-3:20 p.m.

Class meets in Schlegel 122 (Small Groups meet in other rooms as assigned)

Faculty Teaching Team: Marcus Hong, Christine Hong, Debra Mumford
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Credit: (See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

Course Description: (See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

Prerequisites: (See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

Goals: (See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

Teaching Methodology:

For the classroom portion of the course, we will utilize lecture and large group discussion, as well as small group work, reflective writing, presentations from the field settings, and case studies. Field education supervisors will be invited periodically (at least two times each semester) to join in the class sessions; we gain from the shared wisdom of our supervisors. **This semester, we will also be taking two "field trips." More information on those will be provided in class, on CAMS and through e-mail.**

Course Requirements and Grading:

Students will be graded by their PTC Team Small Group Leader for the classroom portion of the course (the six hours of academic credit). Field education supervisors will be responsible for evaluation on a pass/fail basis of the field-based portion (the two units of field education credit).

Each semester a grade will be given based on the following. Detailed rubrics for journals and case studies can be found at the end of the syllabus, further guidance will be given in class.

Assignment Breakdown		Grade Scale			
Journal	40%	A	93-100	C	73-76
Case Studies	15%	A-	90-92	C-	70-72
Small Group Participation	15%	B+	87-89	D+	67-69
End of the Semester Project	<u>30%</u>	B	83-86	D	63-66
	100%	B-	80-82	D-	60-62
		C+	77-79	F	59 and below

NOTE:

- A **passing grade** from the field education setting is **mandatory** to pass PTC.
- **Attendance and active participation** are assumed. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the teacher / small group leader of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Three or more absences for each semester will result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Journals

At least weekly students will critically and theologically reflect on **spiritual disciplines, course readings, class discussions, assignments, field education experiences**. In writing your journal we are looking for evidence of theological reflection on ministry, ministerial practice, and pastoral vocation. Look for items in the syllabus that specifically ask for you to “*reflect in your journal.*”

The student will submit **by email** their journal to their small group leader on the 6th and 12th class sessions of the semester (**March 22, 2017** and **May 3, 2017** in the spring semester). Two plus typed pages of reflection each week are usually needed to fulfill this requirement. The grading rubric for the class journal is provided at the end of this syllabus.

Case Studies (See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

Small Groups (See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

Final Projects

Each semester will culminate with a final project. Each project will be a major integrative project, based on course readings, discussion, and possible field educational experiences. This semester, you will be able to choose from a selection of different final projects. **More detailed instructions, guidelines and rubrics** will be given in class.

The Spring Final Project is due to small group leader NO LATER THAN Friday, May 12, 2017, by 11:59 p.m.

Textbook List

Ammerman, Nancy et al. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.

Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Additional readings for particular classes will be distributed in class or on the CAMS course site.

School and Class Policies

(See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

From the Dean's Office

(See Fall 2016 Syllabus)

PTC SESSION TOPICS AND CALENDAR: 2017 SPRING SEMESTER

The focus for the fall semester is on the development of a framework for practical theological interpretation in congregations, an understanding of the context and culture of congregational life, and the work and life of pastoral leaders.

	TOPIC	Date	Discipline
Week 1	Sagely Wisdom: The Interpretive Task	Feb 8	VISIO DIVINA
Week 2	***IN THE FIELD: Public Leadership and Advocacy***	Feb 15	
Week 3	Prophetic Discernment: The Normative Task	Feb 22	
Week 4	***Case Study Presentations 3	Mar 1	
Week 5	***IN THE FIELD: The Pragmatic Task: Funeral Home***	Mar 8	
	RESEARCH AND STUDY WEEK		
Week 6	<i>Weddings and the Public Face of the Church (Panel)</i>	Mar 22	ORA ET LABORA
Week 7	Grant Writing and Non-Profit Work	Mar 29	
Week 8	Asset-Based Community Development	Apr 5	
	Easter Week (no class)	Apr 12	
Week 9	***Case Study Presentations 4***	Apr 19	
Week 10	<i>Practicum Discussion and Life Frameworks</i>	Apr 26	
Week 11	<i>Saying Good-bye and Reflecting Together</i>	May 3	

Week 1 – FEBRUARY 8 – SAGELY WISDOM: THE INTERPRETIVE TASK

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Visio Divina**
2. **READ** Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction*, Chapter 2, “The Interpretive Task: Sagely Wisdom,” pp. 79-128. Ammerman et al, *Studying Congregations*, Chapter 7, “Methods for Congregational Study,” pp. 196-203

Reflect on these readings in your journal with the following questions:

- a) Write down a story from your own life or ministry about a time when having a theory or method to frame the situation might have helped you to discern a course of action. What did you end up doing? About what do you wish you had known more?
- b) Think of a pastor, leader or mentor that you consider wise or as having good judgment. Describe this person. What characteristics did they exhibit? What did they do or say? How did they carry themselves?
- c) In your own words, write down the three aspects of a “communicative theory of rationality” (Osmer, p. 102-103).
- d) What parts of the Osmer reading did you find most helpful? What parts were the most confusing? [PLEASE BRING YOUR ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTION TO CLASS]

IN CLASS:

Plenary gathering - Review of Syllabus and Field Education Paperwork, Introduction to Visio Divina, and lecture and plenary discussion led by Marcus Hong (1:30 – 3:20)

Week 2 – FEBRUARY 15 – IN THE FIELD: PUBLIC LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Visio Divina**
2. **READ ***EVERYONE:** The materials about the Kentucky Legislature Trip as found on CAMS and e-mailed to you. Also, the text and video about Kentucky ACLU History: <http://www.aclu-ky.org/article/our-history/> and the description of the event: <http://www.aclu-ky.org/events/event/kentucky-fairness-rally/>

Then, choose the resources *closest* to your theological and denominational background:

For PCUSA Students: <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington/> and https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/holy_discontentment_advocacy_resource_final.pdf and <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/bound-together-sin-hope-and-social-change/>

For UMC and Wesleyan Students: <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/social-principles-social-creed> and <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/political-community> and <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/our-social-creed>

For Baptist students: Read through the links on this portion of the Alliance of Baptists Website: <http://allianceofbaptists.org/OurAlliance> and some of the portions of the AWAB website: <http://www.awab.org/>

NOTE: If your denomination or congregation has a statement about social principles that I have not covered here, please link me to it or let me know about it, then read it in place of one of those listed above.

Reflect on this reading in your journal.

- a) Have you ever participated in public advocacy or petitioning of a governmental office? If you have, what happened? Why did you participate? If not, why not?
 - b) What biblical and theological reasons does the denomination most closely aligned with your background give for participating in and engaging the public or political realm? Do you agree with these reasons? Why or why not?
 - c) About what public or political issue are you most passionate? Why? What biblical and theological reasons would you give for supporting your stance on this issue?
3. Reflect in your journal on the experience of going to Frankfurt using the categories below, based on the “Observation Protocol” in Ammerman et al, *Studying Congregations*, p. 200-201). Make sure to use lively descriptors wherever possible in order to capture the event. So, for instance, under “Demographics,” do not just write “men and women, young and old,” but “more than thirty people, the majority of whom were men, with a few women, and a few who identified with no particular gender; some wore overalls, some wore suits, some wore custom-made t-shirts with messages on them,” or for “Setting,” do not just write “a building,” but “a large, run-down warehouse with cracked windows, rust and mold.”

- a. Demographics – Who was involved and what were they like?
- b. Setting – Where was the event? What was this place like?
- c. Event – What happened? Who participated in what part? Who led?
- d. Relationships – Who interacted with whom? How did people respond to each other? What words would you use to describe the quality of the relationships (friendly, familiar, business-like, strained, contentious, etc.)? Did there seem to be any rituals or patterns to the way people interacted?
- e. Verbal and Written Content – What was said? Was anything given out? Were there any particular themes? How were these things said or written (with anger, with joy, in bold letters, were directions clear or confusing, etc.)?
- f. Meanings – What were the *explicit* messages of the event – those specifically said? What were the *implicit* messages of the event – things that weren't said, but were felt or expressed through symbols, rituals, interactions? What were the *null* messages of the event – what topics were avoided, what wasn't said?

IN CLASS: No plenary or small groups

IN THE FIELD: The Frankfort Fairness Advocacy Event

NOTE: Showing of “13th” This Friday, FEBRUARY 17 at 7PM

Week 3 – FEBRUARY 22 – PROPHETIC DISCERNMENT: THE NORMATIVE TASK

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Visio Divina**
2. **READ** Osmer, *Practical Theology*, Chapter 3, “The Normative Task,” pp. 129-174.
Reflect on this reading in your journal.
 - a) On p. 135, Osmer summarizes what he means by “prophetic discernment,” then describes it in detail over the next few pages. In your own words, write down what you understand Osmer to mean by “prophetic discernment.”
 - b) For Osmer, the theological dimension of the Normative Task hinges on interpretation of context as well as theories of divine and human interaction. How do you see the relationship between God’s actions and our actions? If you could use an image or a metaphor for the relationship between what God does and what we do, what would that image or metaphor be? How does your understanding relate to your theological or denominational tradition?
 - c) Osmer also includes ethical interpretation and insight from good practice in the Normative Task. Where have you seen positive examples of ethical interpretation or good practice in your ministry or in someone who inspires you?
 - d) Osmer ends the chapter by talking about models of cross-disciplinary dialogue. Which of the models makes most sense to you? Why?

IN CLASS:

Plenary gathering (1:30-2:30) – Introduction to Ora et Labora led by Marcus Hong;
Lecture and plenary discussion led by Christine Hong; **Small Groups (2:40-3:20)**

Week 4 – March 1 – CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS 3

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Visio Divina**
2. **CASE STUDY 3**

All students are expected to prepare a written case study dealing with their current field education placement. The case should deal with either “a first experience” or an incident (episode) that raises issues pertaining to pastoral identity or pastoral authority.

- a) Two students will present their case in their small group on November 9, and are asked to make copies in advance for members of the group.
- b) All students will submit their written case studies to the small group leader.
- c) *In your journal*: Further reflection on your case study can be part of your journal entry this week, as well as other class material and/or related field ed experiences.

IN CLASS (No Plenary This Week):

Small Groups - Two students will present a case study. Please bring enough hard copies to class for distribution. Collect the copies back after the presentation. Remember these case studies are confidential.

Week 5 – MARCH 8 – IN THE FIELD: THE PRAGMATIC TASK

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Visio Divina**
2. **READ** Osmer, *Practical Theology*, Chapter 4, “The Pragmatic Task,” pp. 175-218.
Reflect on this reading in your journal.
 - a) Osmer understands the Pragmatic Task as a form of servant leadership. Write about a time that you experienced positive servant leadership, either through your own actions or the actions of others.
 - b) In this chapter, Osmer primarily discusses leadership through the lens of transformation. Is this how you see leadership? Write about a time when you or someone you know led a ministry through a time of deep change. Was this a positive or a negative experience? What lessons did you learn from this?
 - c) In your own words, describe the “open systems model” of organizational change.
 - d) Spend a few moments writing about our class Field Trip.

IN CLASS: No Plenary or Small Groups

IN THE FIELD Field Trip – More information soon.

*****No Class on MARCH 15 – Research and Study Week*****

Week 6 – MARCH 22 – WEDDINGS AND THE PUBLIC FACE OF THE CHURCH

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR JOURNALS ARE DUE TO YOUR SMALL GROUP LEADER.**
2. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Ora et Labora**
3. **READ** “Preaching Gospel at Weddings,” In Jacobsen and Kelly, *Kairos Preaching: Speaking Gospel to the Situation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), pp. 64-80. In your journal, reflect on the following question:
What was most and least convincing, for you, in Jacobsen and Kelly’s argument that wedding sermons are about God’s goodness in creation through human structures, that the distinction between sacred and secular in wedding celebrations is unhelpful, and that, in presiding over weddings, clergy are “functioning in the realm of the institutions that God has blessed to preserve creation?”
READ “Examples of Wedding Sermons” in Hedahl, Susan K. *Preaching the Wedding Sermon*. (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999). pp. 86-89, 97-102.
4. Review your denominational and other liturgical resources around weddings and same gender commitment services. Reflect on these resources in your journal.
 - a) Identify the essential elements of the wedding/commitment service in your tradition. If your field education setting has published policies and guidelines for weddings and same gender services, bring a copy of these resources to class.
 - b) Reflect in your journal on your theology of marriage, in conversation with your theological tradition and the reading from Jacobsen and Kelly.

IN CLASS:

Plenary gathering (1:30-2:30) – Panel Discussion; **Small Groups (2:40-3:20)**.

Week 7 – MARCH 29 – GRANT WRITING AND NON-PROFIT WORK

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Lectio Divina**
2. **READ** All of the links under the “Full Proposal” tab at this website:
<http://www.npguides.org/guide/index.html> (see the menu to the left-hand side).
Reflect on this reading in your journal.
 - a) Have you ever helped to prepare a grant proposal before? What happened?
 - b) What questions do you have about grant-writing?
 - c) Has your Field Education placement ever received a grant before? What was it for? Talk with your supervisor about this question.**READ** Ammerman et al, *Studying Congregations*, Chapter 5, “Resources,” pp. 132-166
Reflect on this reading your journal.
 - a) Consult with your supervisor and/or lay committee and make a brief list of the resources at your Field Education Placement (including Membership/Commitment; Financial; Capital; Physical and Space). This can be done in bullet point format.

IN CLASS:

Plenary gathering (1:30-2:30) –Lecture and discussion led by Debra Mumford; **Small Groups (2:40-3:20)**.

Week 8 – APRIL 5 – ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ASSIGNMENT

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Ora et Labora**
2. **READ** Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself*, "Introduction," pp. 21-27 and "PART 2: GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR HELPING WITHOUT HURTING," pp. 99-149
Reflect on these readings in your journal.
 - a) What feelings or emotions did the introductory story (pp. 21-27) evoke in you? Have you ever had a similar experience?
 - b) Respond to the "Initial Thoughts" questions for chapters 4, 5, and 6.

IN CLASS:

Plenary gathering (1:30-3:20) – Lecture and discussion led by Felicia Laboy

*****No Class on APR 12 – Easter Recess**

Week 9 – APRIL 19 – CASE STUDY PRESENTATIONS 4

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Ora et Labora**
2. *****SEND to Marcus (mhong@lpts.edu) any questions you have about ministry that you feel would be helpful to bring before the teaching team, your supervisors, and the class. We will try to ponder together as many of these questions as possible NEXT WEEK (April 26). We want these questions in advance so we can have time to think about them prayerfully and sort them into potential topic clusters.**
3. **CASE STUDY 4**

All students are expected to prepare a written case study dealing with their current field education placement. The case should deal with either "a first experience" or an incident (episode) that raises issues pertaining to pastoral identity or pastoral authority.

 - a) Two students will present their case in their small group on November 9, and are asked to make copies in advance for members of the group.
 - b) All students will submit their written case studies to the small group leader.
 - c) *In your journal:* Further reflection on your case study can be part of your journal entry this week, as well as other class material and/or related field ed experiences.

IN CLASS (No Plenary This Week):

Small Groups - Two students will present a case study. Please bring enough hard copies to class for distribution. Collect the copies back after the presentation. Remember these case studies are confidential.

Week 10 – APRIL 26 – PRACTICUM DISCUSSION AND LIFE FRAMEWORKS

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE** – In your journal, reflect upon all of the Spiritual Disciplines we have engaged in over the course of this academic year.
 - a) Which practice was most life-giving for you? Why?
 - b) Which practice was most difficult for you? Why?
 - c) Is there a spiritual practice that you engage in that we did not practice together this year? What is it? Why do you find it helpful?
2. **READ** Davis, “Engaging in Sustaining Spiritual Practices,” and James Marshall, “Engaging in Personal Self Care,” in Matthew Floding, ed. *Engage: A Theological Field Education Toolkit*, pp. 41-45 and 47-52; Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation*, Appendix: “Nouwen's Place in Spiritual Development Theory,” pp. 127-135; Stairs, “Credible Caregivers,” in *Listening for the Soul*, Chapter 4, pp. 107-134; and Marjorie Thompson, *Soul Feast*, Chapter 9, pp. 145-54.
Reflect on these readings in your journal.
 - a) Have you ever experienced “compassion fatigue,” (Davis, pp. 41). What happened? What did you do to address this?
 - b) Write a healthy emotional creed for yourself (Marshall, pp. 48).
 - c) What do you make of Nouwen’s explication of the two journeys and the cycles of spiritual development? How would you describe your spiritual life over time?
 - d) Do you agree with Stairs argument about credibility and spiritual practices? Who has been an example for you in spiritual practices?

IN CLASS (Supervisors Invited):

Plenary gathering (1:30-3:20) – Introduction to Life Frameworks led by Marcus Hong; Discussion about ministry questions with teaching team and supervisors.

Week 11 – MAY 3 – SAYING GOODBYE AND REFLECTING TOGETHER

ASSIGNMENT:

1. **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOUR JOURNALS ARE DUE TO YOUR SMALL GROUP LEADER**
2. **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE – Revise and Reflect upon your Life Framework**
3. For your journals this week, consider how you will be saying good-bye in your current church placement. We also invite you to offer a two page reflection on the following: In light of the course readings, class presentations and small group/plenary group discussions, and your work in a congregation, where do you see your strengths and weaknesses as a congregational leader? What are your hopes and fears as you examine your vocational identity? How have you learned to receive feedback on your ministry from your supervisor and members of the congregation?

IN CLASS (Supervisors Invited):

Lecture, plenary discussion and small group work, led by the PTC teaching team.

May 12: The Spring Final Project is due to small group leader NO LATER THAN Friday, May 12, 2017, by 11:59 p.m.

JOURNAL RUBRIC

Components	Total Points Possible	Points Earned	Strength	Competence	Weakness	Missing
Theological Reflection	12		Strong and consistent theological reflection on ministry and pastoral vocation.	Some evidence of theological reflection on ministry and pastoral vocation.	Little evidence of theological reflection on ministry and pastoral vocation	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Research	12		Thorough use of investigative techniques in assessing and interpreting the context of ministry.	General use of investigative techniques in assessing and interpreting the context of ministry.	Cursory use of investigative techniques in assessing and interpreting the context of ministry.	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Engagement With Course Materials	12		Consistent, deep engagement with spiritual disciplines, class sessions, course readings, and assignments in ways that are integrative, inform practice, and contribute to student's self-understanding and perspective of congregational life.	Tentative and surface engagement with course materials.	Superficial engagement with course materials in ways that leave out aspects of the course that have obvious bearing on matters the student encounters.	No engagement with course materials.
Writing style & mechanics	4		Good use of written English, correct punctuation, and exemplary documentation. Communicates clearly.	A few grammatical or spelling errors. Proper documentation provided. Some parts unclear or disorganized.	Writing is acceptable, but often unclear and disorganized. Proper documentation is missing.	Abundant grammatical, spelling, and documentation errors. Writing is indecipherable.
TOTAL	40 pts.		Comments:			

CASE STUDY RUBRIC

Components	Total Points Possible	Points Earned	Strength	Competence	Weakness	Missing
Background	4		Provides helpful context.	Provides some context.	Provides little meaningful context.	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Description	6		Brief, but thorough description of events with details that are important to the analysis, evaluation and reflection.	Brief and fair description with enough details to make sense of analysis, evaluation and reflection	Cursory description or overly long description with either insufficient or extraneous details.	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Analysis	4		Meaningful analysis with themes that make connections between the description, the evaluation and the theological reflection.	Clear analysis with themes that make some connections between the description, the evaluation, and the theological reflection.	Superficial analysis with themes that do not seem to draw from the case or provide material for the evaluation and reflection.	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Evaluation	6		Thoughtful, thorough evaluation of the case, with evidence of good self-reflection and good questions that open up group discussion.	Good evaluation of the case, with evidence of self-reflection and some insightful questions for group discussion.	Cursory evaluation of the case, with little evidence of self-reflection and generalized questions.	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Theological Reflection	6		Clear and creative reflection that pulls together biblical and/or theological themes in ways that emerge organically from the case.	Good reflection that pulls out themes that make some sense in the context of the case.	Reflection does not address biblical or theological themes, themes are disconnected from the case.	This area is not addressed in any fashion.
Writing style & mechanics	4		Good use of written English. Clear communication.	A few spelling or grammatical errors. Some parts unclear or disorganized.	Writing is acceptable, but often unclear and disorganized.	Abundant grammatical and spelling errors. Writing indecipherable.
TOTAL	30 pts.		Comments:			