

SYLLABUS

Spring, 2012

CHMN 392 Shared Praxis II: Introduction to Educational Ministry, Theology

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Appointments may be made through Religion Department administrative assistant.

Course Description: 4 hours credit. CHMN 392 is the second of four sequential courses designed to:

1. lead the student through an exploration of his/her personal journey and call to ministry,
 2. assist the student in building a theological understanding as a foundation for ministry,
 3. develop specific skills for ministry, and
 4. apply all of the above in practical ministry through an internship.
- All of this is done in the context of a study of present praxis in Christian educational ministry.

Perspective: Shared Praxis is built on the conviction that community is a significant factor in facilitating learning, growing and ministry. As a result, all that occurs in the course will be related to the class as a community and to the broader community, even the Christian community at large. Commitment and accountability to the community will be major aspects of cooperative learning and evaluation. Learning will involve both classroom and out of classroom study with class time given to processing together that which is learned.

Course Objectives:

1. To engage in shared praxis.
2. To explore and define one's call to ministry in light of one's faith journey.
3. To develop one's understanding of community by experiencing a community-based approach to Christian education modeled in the classroom.
4. To develop personal and community spirituality.
5. To develop skills for facilitating community, understanding group dynamics, and managing conflict within the community.
6. To acquire knowledge and develop understanding of lifespan development and to apply this knowledge and understanding to ministry across the lifespan.
7. To become aware of present praxis in Christian education.
8. To develop an understanding of the role of Christian education as context for ministry.
9. To integrate class concepts into a self identity as minister.

Specific Focus of CHMN 392

The primary focus of the second semester of Shared Praxis is the exploration of theology and its relationship to ministry. The course will begin with students describing and defining their present theological positions (core beliefs and belief systems). Against that backdrop orthodox theological positions will be explored and established as the foundation for contemporary and situational theological positions and perspectives to be investigated. Finally, students will have opportunity to build this experiential learning into their own theological framework and apply it to their own particular callings.

The establishment of a trusting community, built during the first semester, will allow students to explore and interact with a variety of theological positions in a safe environment, thus facilitating their theological growth and understanding toward a more mature, applicational (orthopraxis) and integrated system of belief, reason and practice.

Course Requirements:

1. Participation; Because the course is based on active learning, a high level of participation is expected. Participation includes attendance, reading of all assignments on time, and active involvement in class experiences. Throughout the course, students will be asked to participate in oral, written, and physical ways in response to course content. Because the course will shift from a traditional educational paradigm, success

in participation will depend on students' responsibility for acquiring content through active learning experiences.

2. Journal; Each student is expected to keep a personal response journal. The purpose of the journal is twofold, to chart the student's journey throughout the course (and have a record of the journey) and to allow for a sense of accountability both for the student her/himself and for the instructor. Overall, the journal should reflect and respond to what is happening in the life and spirit of the student. It could therefore, reflect insights and feelings about oneself related to what is occurring in the course. Specifically, it should respond to what occurs in class sessions, the development of the community, the results of the "gift to yourself" and the biweekly individual devotional readings (#4 below). Journals will be submitted by 4 pm of Tuesday of each week. Entries may be rewritten before they are submitted if the student desires to keep particular portions private.

3. Notebook; Whereas the journal records the student's inner response to the process of the course, a notebook will be kept as a resource containing the content acquired in the course. This will function as the "academic record" of the Praxis journey. It should contain materials utilized in class, student notes, articles and duplicated resources. It should be organized by topic and should follow the thematic development of the course as outlined above in "Specific Focus of CHMN 392". It will be evaluated for thoroughness, organization and usability. The desired outcome of this requirement is that it will become a valuable resource for the student regarding ongoing theological exploration and development.

4. Bi-weekly readings for spiritual nurture; In order to integrate the academic theological endeavor with the nurturing of the spiritual life, students are encouraged (required...) to spend fifteen minutes twice a week (prior to each class meeting) in reading material for the *sole* purpose of spiritual enrichment. For the sake of continuity, the source chosen should be used throughout the semester. Selections will be made during the first week of class from among: one of the *Praying With...* series, a systematic plan of Bible reading, *Thirty Days to a New You*, Bruce Larson; *The Way of the Heart*, Henri Nouwen; *Spiritual Life*, John Westerhoff; *You Gotta Keep Dancin'*, Tim Hansel; *Contemplative Prayer*, Thomas Merton; *The Wisdom of the Desert*, Thomas Merton; *Being Human, Being Holy*, Jay Kesler; or the ongoing reading/interacting with the "friend" selected in the first semester, or newly selected.

5. A "gift" to yourself; Continuing the physical "care of self" begun in the first semester, students will continue the gift of aerobic exercise three times per week (30 minutes per "gift").

6. Family Outings; Each student will be part of a family group. Once a month family groups will meet for a purely social experience. A brief paragraph describing the outing will be given to the professor at the first class meeting following the event.

7. Community Retreats & mini-retreats; Students will participate in a three day retreat at the Trappist Abbey near Lafayette, Oregon. The group will leave campus from the classroom during class on Tuesday, February 7 and return to campus by 1:00 pm on Thursday, 9th. Because of the nature of this experience, it is imperative that students plan ahead and block out their schedules to make room for this retreat.

Two other mini-retreats will occur this semester: an outdoor day of cross country skiing, Friday-Saturday, 24-25 February, and a film night (major theological topic) at Brendlingers, Friday, 6th April.

8. Ongoing interaction with a "friend" from the past; Continue to interact with the friend chosen in the first semester. This will be done by continued reading to enhance the "relationship" and consciously applying the principles of that life to the student's life. If desired, students may choose a new "friend."

9. Ministry Experiences; Each student will participate in a minimum of three different ministry experiences throughout the semester. Experiences may include social services, evangelism, teaching, leading a retreat, preaching or any other appropriate service. It is expected that Praxis students will increasingly seek to explore the relationship between the theology explored in class and the practical ministries they do. Students will provide a one page written reflection and evaluation paper for each experience. This reflection is an opportunity to articulate the relationship between theology and praxis, i.e., "orthodoxy" and "orthopraxis" ☺. (remember D.P.S.?!)

10. Research and presentation of one contemporary theological issue; During the early part of the course students will select an area for extensive research. This research will be used as the foundation for teaching the rest of the class. As a major requirement of the course, each student will give consistent and thorough preparation to this exploration expecting to become the “resident expert” for the benefit of the class. In the actual presentation students should plan to use teaching/learning aids to facilitate the learning process and to also give materials for notebooks of class members.

11. Bonhoeffer Response Paper; Students will read either Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *Cost of Discipleship* or *Letters and Papers from Prison* and write a 2-3 page response. The paper should respond both the content of the book and its relevance/application to the theological process discussed in class.

12. Response Papers; Occasional additional response papers will be assigned related to other readings or experiences of the class. (particularly, Merton)

Evaluation:

Final evaluation for the course will be arrived at cooperatively by the student, community evaluation of the student and the instructor’s evaluation. The following listing will give proportionate values:

Participation	15 points	(including attendance, family activities, class activities, involvement)
Journal	15 points	
Notebook	20 points	
Presentation	20 points	
Bonhoeffer	10 points	
Resp. papers	10 points	
“gift” to self	10 points	

Course grade:	90 - 100 %	A
	80 - 89%	B
	70 - 79%	C
	60 - 69%	D

Texts: Primary and secondary source readings will be assigned and made available (on reserve or by handouts) related to the theological issues being explored throughout the course.

Required books and selections will include (in order of reading):

- Daniel Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding*
- Paul J. Achtemeier, *Inspiration and Authority*
- Thomas Merton, *Contemplative Prayer*
- Daniel Taylor, *The Myth of Certainty*
- Donald G. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology*, vol. 1
- Justo L. Gonzalez, *A History of Christian Thought*, vol. 2
- Irv Brendlinger, *The Call to Authenticity, A Handbook of Hope for the Church*
- Parker Palmer, *The Active Life*, ch. 7
- Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* OR *Letters & Papers from Prison*

CHMN 392 **Shared Praxis II** working **Calendar** & due dates, spring, 2012 Brendlinger

Jan 10 Course Intro, "rewelding..." the community; begin "present personal theology"
Jan 12 Confirm course calendar; theology and language, Migliore, "The Task of Theology," pp 1 – 9

? **Praxis mini-retreat: Cross Country Ski trip!** Sunday-Monday, 15-16 Jan (MLK Day) ☺

Jan 17 discussion of "present theology"
Jan 19 Language experiment; discussion, Migliore, pp 9 - 18, theological terms assigned

Jan 24 Theological Positions, liberal to fundamentalist;
Debate: conservative & liberal approach to scripture, Achtemeier, ch. 2
Jan 26 *Myth of Certainty*, Daniel Taylor (first third)

Jan 31, *Myth of Certainty*, (second third); selection of research topics
Feb 2 Discussion of Thomas Merton, Trappist Monk (*Contemplative Prayer*, complete)

Feb 7 – 9 **Praxis retreat to Monastery:** depart during class Tuesday, return Thursday by 1:00pm

Feb 14 reflections on monastery retreat;
Feb 16 *Myth of Certainty*, (final third)

Feb 21 The nature and types of theology; Theological terms definition lists due
Feb 23 **"GOD"** Bloesch, ch 3, Migliore, ch 6

? **Praxis mini-retreat: Cross Country Ski trip!** Friday-Saturday, 24-25 February! ☺

Feb 28 discuss Bloesch, ch. III, Sovereignty of God
Mar 1 continue to discuss Bloesch III, discuss Migliore, 5 (Good Creation)

Mar 6 No class: individual work on contemporary theological topics (presentations)
Mar 8 begin *Imago Dei*, Migliore, 7 (Humanity in the Image of God)

Mar 13 *Imago Dei* and the human condition, Migliore, pp 130- 135; Bloesch, ch 5, Gonzalez, vol 2, ch 1; (hist. theol)
Mar 15 **Christology and Soteriology**, Migliore, ch 8, Bloesch, pp 148 - 172, 181 – 212

Mar 20 **Ecclesiology**, Ephesians 1
Mar 22 **Ecclesiology**, continued

Mar 27 & 29 SPRING BREAK! (take your choice: you can have *either* day, or *both* days!)

April 3 **Ecclesiology**, continued
April 5 **Ecclesiology**, concluded; reading, Parker Palmer, *The Active Life*, ch. 7 "Loaves & Fishes"
Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline* overview

Friday, April 6, Praxis mini-retreat to Brendlingers: film (overnight), leave campus at 6 pm

April 10 Transitions to modern theology; Bonhoeffer Response paper due
Student Presentation 1, Process Theology and the Process View of God _____
April 12 Student Presentation 2, Black Theology _____

April 17 Student Presentation 3, Feminist Theology _____
Conclusions & applications of contemporary theological perspectives
April 19 Student Presentation 4, Post Modern Thought and Theology _____
Another look at "theology" and "ministry."

Tuesday, 24 April, closing celebration! 10 AM – noon.