

SAINT PAUL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
MIN 101: INTRODUCTION TO MINISTRY¹
Spring, 2004
T 1:10-4:00 _ KW-507

Nancy R. Howell, KW-308, 245-4826, X126, howellnr@spst.edu
C. Jarrett Gray, Jr., KW-303, 245-4859, X 159, jgray@spst.edu³

Office Hours with both Gray and Howell: Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m., KW-303

Course Description

In the *Saint Paul School of Theology Catalog, 2002-2004*, MIN 101 is described as follows:

This course explores various models and forms of ministry. Students examine their own lives in the church as persons of faith and their call to ministry. Attention is given to formation of the personal qualities, interpersonal skills, and sustaining spirituality necessary for ministry. The course helps students identify appropriate boundaries of professional conduct for clergy and lay leadership. The course addresses various contexts for ministry in light of God's mission in today's world. This includes consideration of social/historical/global location and issues of structured inequality (especially ageism, classism, racism, and sexism). The course includes a one-hour action/reflection group.

Through close reading of texts (biblical, theological, socio-cultural, etc.), lectures, critical papers, group presentations, class discussions, and work in A/R groups, including site visits, members of the class will explore basic formulations of the nature of the church and its ministry and the theological concepts in which they are grounded, as well as key problems (race, gender, and class) that shape the world to which church is called to minister.

Course Goals

- _ gain familiarity with the structure and basic concepts and vocabulary of theological education
- _ become acquainted with differing theological stances on the nature and ministry of the church, lay and ordained ministry
- _ learn about different ministry settings and worship styles
- _ become aware of structural oppression, how the church is implicated in it, and how it can be an agent of change
- _ develop a personal constructive position on the basic issues of the course
- _ enhance critical thinking and reading, verbal, aural, and writing skills
- _ cultivate awareness of one's social location and how it affects your worldview

¹ This syllabus relies heavily on Dr. Robert Martin's syllabus for this course, Spring, 2003.

² I may also be paged in two ways. You may call me at (816) 202-4859 and leave your telephone number from a Touchtone phone. You may also reach me by email and leave a **brief** text message at 8162026158@airmessage.net.

Required Textbooks _All books are on reserve in the library

- Anderson, Margaret L. and Patricia Hill Collins, eds., *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology*, pp. 125-34
- Dulles, Avery, *Models of the Church*, expanded edition
- Fortune, Marie, *Is Nothing Sacred?*
- Killen, Patricia and John de Beer, *The Art of Theological Reflection*
- Law, Eric, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*
- Messer, Donald, *Contemporary Images of Christian Ministry*
- Palmer, Parker J., *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*
- Rothenberg, Paula S., ed., *Race, Class, and Gender in the U. S.*, 5th ed., pp. 73-80, 146-49, 163-68
- Russell, Letty M., *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church*
- Shearer, Jody Miller, *Enter the River: Healing Steps from White Privilege Toward Racial Reconciliation*
- Wimberly, Edward P., *Recalling Our Own Stories: Spiritual Renewal for Religious Caregivers*

Recommended Texts

- Crain, Margaret Ann and Jack L. Seymour, *A Deacon's Heart: The New United Methodist Diaconate*
- Melton, Joy Thornburg, *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church*

Course Outline

February	10	Introduction, syllabus, course outline
	17	Call to Ministry Assignment: Palmer, chaps. 1-2; Messer, Forward, Intro.-chap. 4 PAPER 1 DUE
	24	Images of Ministry Assignment: Messer, Chaps. 5-8; Killen & De Beer, Intro.-chap. 1

Site Visit #1: Agency Exposure

March	2	“Theological Reflection as an Art of the Church” Assignment: Killen & De Beer, chaps. 2-4 PAPER 2 DUE
	9	Types of Ecclesiology Assignment: Dulles, Intro.,-chap. 7
	16	Classical and Feminist Images of the Church

Assignment: Dulles, chaps. 12-13; Russell, Preface, chaps. 1-2

23 "Kitchen Table Solidarity"
Assignment: Russell, chaps. 3-4

Site Visit #2: Congregation-Exposure

30 **READING WEEK _ NO CLASS**

April 6 A World of Structured Inequality
Video: "the Color of Fear"
Assignment: Shearer, chaps. 1-7; Rothenberg, pp.73-80, 146-49,
163-68; Anderson & Collins, pp. 125-34
PAPER 3 DUE

Site Visit #3: Community-Based Exposure

13 The Church in a World of Structured Inequality
Assignment: Fortune, chaps. 4-6 and Afterword; Russell, chaps. 5-
6; Shearer, chaps. 8-11

20 The World's Diversity Gathered as Ecclesia
Assignment: Law, Intro.-chap. 11

27 Who Am I as a Minister within and Ecclesial Community?
Assignment: Wimberly, chaps. 1-5, 10, also read one of chaps. 6-9

May 4 Spiritual Renewal
Social Location
Assignment: Wimberly, chap. 5-10

11 Leadership in Ministry
Assignment: Handout
GROUP PRESENTATIONS

18 A Vision for Ministry
Review and Evaluation
GROUP PRESENTATIONS

PAPER 4 DUE

Course Requirements

Course requirements are as follows: four papers, three site visits, a group presentation, class attendance, and informed participation in class discussions and A/R Groups, including an evaluation of the other group members.

Papers

All papers should be typed and double-spaced. Formatting and citation should follow Kate Turabian's, *A Manual for Writers*, 7th ed. The expectation is that students will produce informed, coherent, well-written papers that demonstrate significant engagement with course readings and reflect their emerging constructive stance. **Please carefully read the statement on academic integrity found in the *Saint Paul Handbook*.** Should there be any questions regarding the paper assignments or the plagiarism policy, please feel free to consult the instructors. **Papers 1, 2, and 3 are due at class time on the date indicated and at 5:00 p.m. for paper 4.**

Paper 1 (Credit/No Credit): 4 pp. Write an essay based on the ideas of Parker Palmer in which you describe your call to ministry or understanding of your Christian vocation. You may wish to consider the following questions. What issues and experiences have shaped your call to ministry? Why have you embarked on theological education at this time? Who are the people who have most influenced your faith journey? What metaphor(s) would you use to describe your current understanding of your Christian vocation? How would Palmer view your discernment process? **DUE February 17th.**

Paper 2: 5 pp. Write a paper in which you analyze your call to Christian vocation in light of class resources using the following questions: How do the readings help you name your experiences? What faith convictions and commitments characterize your call to ministry? How do they compare to categories in the readings? According to one or two of the readings, what are some of the limitations of your perspective on ministry? **DUE March 2nd.**

Paper 3: 6 pp. Select one or two insights about the church and discuss them in relation to the ideas of Dulles and/or Russell that have shaped your understanding. Compare and contrast your ideas with those of the author(s). What questions have they raised for you? What questions do you have for them? Discuss the insights you have gained for your ministry. What will you do differently, if anything, as a result of what you have learned? **DUE April 6th.**

Paper 4: 6-7 pp. This paper has four (4) parts. At the most general level, the assignment is to describe the nature of the church and how it is socially embodied. 1) Name a fundamental aspect of the nature and mission of the church and discuss how it is manifested and developed in a community of faith (1/3 of the paper). Use course material to explain why this aspect is fundamental. 2) Discuss how the aspect of the church developed in #1 is negatively affected by racism, classism, sexism, and heterosexism (1/3 of the paper). 3) Name and discuss the key characteristics of your identity and formation in ministry, including your talents, skills, and limitations (1/3 of the paper). 4) Include a list of questions/issues you want/need to explore during your theological education. **DUE May 18th.**

Group Presentation

With your A/R Group, prepare a 30-minute presentation to share with the class. Select an issue or insight in ministry as the focus of the presentation. Use class sources and site visits to illustrate and shape your issue or insight. Be attentive to what you have learned in class about ministry, culture, and the various settings for ministry, including references to race, gender, class, and age. All members of your groups should participate in leadership of the process and

help develop the content of the presentation. Feel free to be as creative as you would like, using music, video, PowerPoint, or whatever you feel will lend coherence, seriousness, and effectiveness to the presentation. The presentation will be evaluated by the instructors and by group participants. Presentations are scheduled for the class sessions of **May 11th and 18th**.

Class Participation

Although this is a large class, each period will consist of some discussion. To a large extent, the success of the course will depend on the quality of our discussions. It is therefore imperative that class members come to class have critically read the assignments and prepared to discuss them. Class participation, however, is more than attendance and class discussion. Good participation involves adequate preparation, mutual interactions, appropriate attitudes, and, sometimes, extra efforts. Attached to the syllabus is a Class Participation Self-Evaluation form. Please read the form at the beginning of the semester to learn expectations for strong class participation. At the end of the term, please complete the form and assign yourself a grade, which will be factored as part of the final grade. Class Participation Self-Evaluations are due **May 11th**.

A/R Group Participation and Site Visits

Each student will participate in weekly meetings of an Action/Reflect Group (Wednesdays, 4:15-5:15). Each group will be facilitated by an A/R Group leader, who, in consultation with the group, will plan three visits to ministry site outside class time. All students are expected to participate in the visits.

Evaluation of participation in the A/R Group is a group project. Each student, as well as the leader, will be asked to name one strength and one area for growth of each participant in the group. These evaluations are given to the instructors and highlights will be noted on the course evaluation form.

More information about the site visits and the purpose of the A/R Groups will be given in class.

Grades

Grades for the course will be calculated as follows: 60% (based on the average of the grades of the four papers) for the papers, 20% for the group project, and 20% for participation in class discussions and A/R groups.

Criteria for Evaluating Course Work

Regardless of whether you write a paper, answer an essay question, voice an oral presentation, or create any original project, the academic context requires that certain minimal requirements characterize your work. While there are subjective components in the grading process, most professors are concerned that you become well educated in four basic qualities of excellent academic work:

1. ***Demonstration of an empathetic understanding of the content of texts and resources.*** Your topic should not only be well researched in the library, through interviews and observations, and/or from assigned readings and class discussions, but you should be able to provide a fair description and a clear understanding of all texts and resources. This is apparent in the ability to describe and discuss precisely and accurately what an author has written or a speaker has said. Evaluation, response, and critique follow accurate representation of another's ideas—earn the privilege of criticizing a viewpoint by showing that you really understand it.
2. ***Clear critical thinking that provides appropriate specific evidence for conclusions.*** Use the most precise historical, empirical, or contemporary data or information to support the claims of your thesis and paragraphs. Conclusions follow from and are supported by evidence. Be sure that your evidence is relevant, accurate, and detailed. Even creative writing requires logical relationships among ideas to assist your readers in following the plot or main point. Autobiography or personal narrative may be assigned as part of the “data” or “evidence” in a written assignment, but remains ineffective unless interpreted and expressly made relevant to the main theme or point of the paper.
3. ***Creativity that moves beyond reporting someone else's ideas.*** Your creative addition to academic discourse might include questioning, evaluating, applying, criticizing (positively or negatively), developing, or responding. You might see a connection between two or more ideas. You might see information from a unique perspective. The minimal requirement of academic work is correctly reporting what is read or discussed. Excellent work moves beyond repetition of others' ideas to unique insights, organization, correlations, and theses. Work to find your own scholarly and professional voice.
4. ***Flawless grammar, spelling, and form.*** Excellent written work is conscious of proofreading and good communication. Oral presentations are equally accountable for careful expression. A brilliant thesis can be lost in a paper or project that obscures its ideas with careless communication. Your readers and listeners should not have to guess what you mean—help them by speaking and writing well.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to abide by institutional guidelines regarding class attendance, integrity of work, and student conduct. If you are unfamiliar with these guidelines, consult the current catalog and handbook. The professors reserve the option of failing students strictly for failure to attend class (including regular absences from part of class). A single instance of plagiarism may also result in failure. Students should be familiar with the Inclusive Language Covenant.

Professors' Responsibilities

Our job is to teach with integrity the scholarship representative of our fields, to see that students learn as much as possible, and to create a comfortable environment for learning. These goals cannot be accomplished without genuine attention to the unique strengths, experiences, and expectations that both the professors and students bring to the classroom. Our goal is to provide encouragement and support for your learning. Sometimes flexible procedures and learning options are necessary to facilitate the kind of teaching and learning that should occur here. We are anxious to hear what energizes you, what disappoints you, where you disagree, and what helps you to learn. PLEASE SEE US IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR SPECIFIC NEEDS.

Learning-Disabling Conditions

Saint Paul School of Theology faculty are committed to facilitating the learning of students capable of graduate-level seminary work. Any student who has a condition that may prevent full demonstration of his/her abilities (e.g., difficulty seeing or hearing, dyslexia, or other learning disabilities) should contact the instructors and the Associate Dean of Spiritual and Professional Formation immediately to discuss learning needs, alternatives that have worked for the student in the past, and mutually accountable accommodations to ensure the student's full participation and evaluation in the course. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency information to share with us, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please may an appointment with me as soon as possible. Please see the professors whether the accommodations you need are long-term or short-term.

Saint Paul School of Theology
Class Participation Self-Evaluation

MIN 101 Introduction to Ministry
Nancy R. Howell and C. Jarrett Gray, Jr.

Name _____ Semester _____

Please evaluate yourself in the following categories. Circle the number that best describes your class participation if 1 is excellent, 2 is very good, 3 is average, 4 is satisfactory, and 5 is poor.

Preparation

- I have conscientiously attempted reading assignments. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have reflected seriously on reading assignments. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have worked to bring depth to comments and questions by preparing more than superficially for class. 1 2 3 4 5
- I prepared written assignments on time and when the syllabus required them. 1 2 3 4 5
- I checked spelling, grammar, quotations, and footnotes before submitting papers. 1 2 3 4 5

Class

- I have attended class weekly. 1 2 3 4 5
- I always attended class on time. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have contributed to class discussions. 1 2 3 4 5
- When I talked in class, I remained focused on the topic of class discussion. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have listened respectfully to comments and questions raised by other students. 1 2 3 4 5
- I brought my questions to class or to the professor. 1 2 3 4 5
- I expressed disagreement constructively. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have shared my responsibilities for successful class sessions. 1 2 3 4 5
- I supported other students' efforts in class discussions or assignments. 1 2 3 4 5

Attitude

- I have remained involved and engaged in the course. 1 2 3 4 5
- I have been constructive in relationships with others. 1 2 3 4 5
- I put extra effort into the course – such as study groups/partners, library research, extra reading or writing. 1 2 3 4 5
- I contributed my share of the work in collaborative work or presentations. 1 2 3 4 5
- I made appointments with the professor(s) when I needed assistance or wanted to discuss the course. 1 2 3 4 5
- I took responsibility for my learning. 1 2 3 4 5
- My understanding of theology has grown. 1 2 3 4 5
- My understanding of my ministry identity has grown. 1 2 3 4 5

Action/Reflection Groups

- I respected the group process and the group leader. 1 2 3 4 5
- I fully participated in discussions within the group as good listener and conversation partner. 1 2 3 4 5
- I attended all ministry site visits. 1 2 3 4 5
- I shared my responsibilities for collaborative work within the group. 1 2 3 4 5
- I evaluated other students fairly. 1 2 3 4 5

I assign myself the following letter grade: _____
 (Enter A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, or F in the blank.)

(Please enter additional comments on the next page.)

Please submit any additional reflections on class participation that should affect your grade in writing on this page. This worksheet is intended to assist you in thinking about the quality of your participation in class. Any interpretations, additions, or connections of criteria should be included in your additional reflections.