



Syllabus

15800 Calvary Road
Kansas City, MO 64147-1341

Course PS633-E&EN Theology of Church Ministry
Credit: 3 Semester Hours
Semester: Fall 2025 (Session 2, Oct 20–Dec 12)
In-Class: 6:00–9:00 pm, Mondays
Instructor: Dr. Michel Dodds. (816) 322-5152 ext. 1348, mike.dodds@calvary.edu, (913) 638-3291 (cell)

**About This Course: This course is offered in two formats: in-person and online. Students registered for in-person attend the classes in person, online students attend the classes via the online classroom. For both in-person and online students, assignments and interaction outside of the class period are done in the learning management system.*

**About Disabilities: Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the DSS Director (dss@calvary.edu) of any disabling condition that may require support.*

**About Assistance for All Course Assignments: The Clark Academic Center (learning@calvary.edu), located in the library building, is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all CU students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams, and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.*

**About Changes to this Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time during the course, but any changes made will only be done after clearly communicating the need for the change and the specific change to be made via in-class announcement and Canvas announcement.*

I. DESCRIPTION

This course examines ministry from various perspectives, which do not include the pastoral ministry in general, or preaching in particular. This course will cover areas such as evangelism, discipleship, missions, Christian education, worship, music, conflict management, and administrative and management skills and responsibilities. [ILOs- #1, 2, 3, & 4]

II. OBJECTIVES

A. General competencies to be achieved. The student will be able to . . .

1. Relate the tenets of biblical ecclesiology to local church ministry. (PLO- #1)
(A- A, B, C, D, E, & F)

Our Mission: "...to prepare Christians to live and serve in the church and in the world according to the Biblical worldview."

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2. Develop a biblical philosophy of ministry. (PLO- #1 & 4) (A- A, B, C, E, & F)
3. Critically evaluate practical ministry ideas and practices in light of biblical mandates. (PLO- #1 & 4) (A- A, C, & E)

B. Specific competencies to be achieved. The student will be able to . . .

1. Articulate a Biblical theology of church ministry, leadership, strategy, and relationships in the local church. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- A)
2. Use the Biblical evidence to evaluate contemporary models and tensions in local church ministry. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- B & E)
3. Formulate a Biblical philosophy of ministry and practice for the specific kind of ministry envisioned upon graduation. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- C)
4. Articulate a biblical understanding of the spiritual gifts and their practical expression in local church ministry. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- D)
5. Develop a personal spiritual leadership plan in light of the understanding of the personal, God-ordained calling and gifting for pastoral leadership in the local church setting. (PLO- #1, 2, 3, & 4) (A- F)

III. REQUIREMENTS

***Note:** Specific instructions for each assignment are posted in Canvas.

A. Read Textbook and write a review.

1. Read the course textbook and submit a critical review of the book.
2. The review should identify the strengths, weaknesses, limitations, and usefulness of the book for a church leader and written as if it were to be published in a theological journal.

B. Study the Pastoral Epistles & other pertinent Scriptures and organize observations into an index.

1. Study each Pastoral Epistle and other pertinent passages to discover the locations of Scriptural advice about the ministry-related topics of the course.
2. Organize the findings from this study into an index for future use.

C. Write Position Papers.

1. The student will submit **5** papers (i.e., **5** pages each – 25 pages total) presenting his personal understanding and conviction in the following aspects of church ministry:
 - a. A Biblical Theology of the Local Church/Ministry – What it is to be and do.
 - b. A Biblical Theology of Local Church/Ministry Leadership – Who they are to be, what they are to do, and what qualifies them for their roles.
 - c. A Biblical Theology of Discipleship in the Local Church/Ministry – Who? What? How? When? Why? How much will it cost?
 - d. A Biblical Theology of Relationships and Conflict Resolution in the Local Church/Ministry – Levels of conflict; levels of accountability; levels of response.
 - e. A Biblical Theology of Local Church/Ministry Transformation – Why local churches/ministries get off track and what can be done to bring them back to vital ministry.

2. The purpose of these papers is to demonstrate an in-depth study of the Scriptures on these significant ministry-related topics as well as interaction with the textbooks and other related materials in order to formulate these personal positions. While the intent is not to critically analyze alternate viewpoints, it is to demonstrate informed decisions in light of the possible alternatives.
3. Include appropriate supporting scripture references and source material recognition, but keep in mind the need to be concise and the goal of presenting one's **personal** understanding of God's will on these issues.
(**Note:** These papers are foundational studies the student will come back to throughout his years of ministry to guide his thinking and ministry decisions.)

D. Study spiritual gifts and present conclusions in a research essay.

1. Study the biblical evidence concerning spiritual gifts (i.e., do personal study of the textual evidence and do research of theological conclusions of others concerning this topic).
2. Present findings and conclusions in a paper which seeks to identify the nature of spiritual gifts, the nature of each gift listed in scripture, and whether or not some, all, or none of the gifts are available for ministry today.
3. This paper will be at least **fifteen (15) pages**.

E. Interview Ministry Leaders and make summary observations.

1. Interview **three (3)** experienced ministry leaders (i.e., at least five years in one ministry position, but not necessarily their current one) concerning the maturation of their thinking about the biblical evidence concerning ministry and its practical application in the specific ministry setting.
2. After all of the interviews, submit a **three (3) page** paper interacting with the interview responses and indicating observations learned about the nature of the interplay between theological conclusions made in academia and the daily realities of ministry. (**Note:** Do NOT merely present a transcript of the interview. Instead, analyze the responses and synthesize the observations into key principles for ministry.)

F. Develop a Personal Leadership Plan.

1. Submit a **ten- (10)** page paper describing the student's Personal Leadership Plan reflecting the student's understanding of God's call upon his/her life to ministry leadership.
2. Included, at the least, should be statements concerning the following:
 - a. An understanding of God's leading / calling into ministry (when, how, what kind of ministry).
 - b. An understanding of the spiritual gifts God has bestowed and how those gifts will influence leadership in ministry.
 - c. An understanding of the God's sovereign work (e.g. life context and experiences God has allowed to shape them to become the person they are) that has equipped them for ministry.
 - d. An understanding of areas of needed personal growth (e.g., relationally, emotionally, spiritually, administratively, theologically, practically, etc.) and a brief outline of the steps to be taken to effect this needed change.

3. This paper is not a research paper. Rather, it is a very biographical reflection of the student's understandings of God's preparation for the specific ministry God would want him/her to pursue upon graduation)

IV. METHODS

A. Presentation:

1. **In-class methods:** lecture, discussion, presentation, and evaluation.

***About Class Attendance:** Research consistently demonstrates that class attendance and active participation correlate to higher performance on course assessments.

***About Classroom Use of Media:**

-**Computing devices** are permitted during the lecture and class discussion sessions for the sole purpose of taking notes. Use of these devices to access the Internet, make telephone calls or video calls, text messaging, updating social network services, etc. is not allowed, let alone very distracting to other students.

-**Cellphones / smartphones** may only be used in an emergency, and in those situations the student may take the call but must leave the room and not return until the next break out of courtesy to fellow classmates.

***About Note Taking:** Students are expected to take notes during each class. Significant peer reviewed studies continue to demonstrate that notes taken by hand are understood better and remembered longer than those taken with a computer. Computer use which is a distraction to others (i.e., noise, blocking the screen, displaying non-class related material, etc.) is not allowed.

2. **Out-of-class methods:** observation, evaluation, and sermon preparation.

***About written assignments:** Unless directed otherwise, all written assignments must follow the Turabian style according to *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition and the Calvary Style Guide, 2019 update.

B. Grading:

***About Late Assignments:** Assignments turned in late will be lowered **5% each class day** it is late.

***About Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has explicitly permitted its use to

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accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.

***About course grade:** See the grading scale in the University Catalog for specific grading scale that will be used for final course grade.

1. Possible points for each specific assignment:

***Note:** An assignment-specific rubric will be provided for each assignment.

- a. Textbook Critical Reviews (1 @ 100). . . = 100 points
- b. Pastoral Epistle Observations (1 @ 50). . = 50 "
- c. Position Papers (5 @ 100 each). . . = 500 "
- d. Spiritual Gifts Paper (1 @ 150) . . . = 150 "
- e. Pastor Interviews & Paper (3 @ 20; 1 @ 40). = 100 "
- f. Personal Leadership Plan (1 @ 100) . = 100 "

Total = 1000 points

V. MATERIALS

A. Textbooks:

1. English Bible (NAS, NASB-U, NKJV, NET, ESV, or other by approval).

-The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB, English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases, and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

2. Saucy, Robert L. *The Church in God's Program*. Chicago, IL: Moody, 1972. ISBN: 9780802415448. \$16.99. 230 pages.

VI. ABBREVIATED COURSE SCHEDULE

[Note: A detailed "Class Schedule" is a separate file posted in Canvas along with the file of this syllabus.]

<u>Week</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT DUE</u>
1	Syllabus; Mission and Goals for Ministry	--
2	Leadership for Ministry; Interview #1; Study 1 Tim	Position Paper: Local Church

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3	Discipleship in Ministry; Interview #2; Study Titus	Position Paper: Leadership
4	Relationships in Ministry: Interview #3; Study 2 Tim	Position Paper: Discipleship; Textbook Review
5	Gifts, Calling, & Abilities for Ministry	Position Paper: Relationships
6	Vision, Strategy, & Goals for Ministry	Spiritual Gifts Paper
7	Need for Change in Ministry	Pastoral Ep. Observations; Pastor Interviews
8	Contemporary Ministry	Position Paper: Transformation; Personal Leadership Plan