



Grace Communion Seminary

TM01: Theology of Ministry

Instructor: To be arranged

Course Description

This course integrates learning from biblical, theological, and ministry studies into a research thesis that expresses one's theology of ministry. This three-unit course covers two semesters, and it is conducted as an independent study under the guidance of a professor as the capstone course for the Master of Pastoral Studies degree. Prerequisite: Student must be within six units of completing the Master's program.

Required Texts

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. 6th ed. 2010. ISBN 978-0312664763.

About \$30. Much of the book's advice about formatting papers can also be seen at several Online Writing Labs, such as the one at Purdue University: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

Stone, Howard W. and James O. Duke. *How to Think Theologically*, 2nd ed.

Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0800638184. About \$10.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

GCS Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain the revelation of the Bible in its historical and cultural setting as it relates to God, Jesus Christ and salvation, and its application for faithful living today.

Course Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Establish biblical foundation for personal ministry (pastoral or support

ministry) that addresses the core of your ministry goals (or the societal issue you address).

Course Objectives:

1. Exegete a biblical passage that is core to your ministry or issue you address.
2. Cite biblical references for claims made regarding biblical meaning.
2. Reason from a sound theological basis as new covenant Christians centered in Trinitarian Incarnational faith.
 2. Explain your theological foundation for ministry by grounding it in God's interaction with humanity through Christ in the Incarnation.
 3. Provide theological development on your topic as it relates to the Church and its role in culture and conduct.
 4. Integrate research on Church fathers and leaders who address issues relevant to your topic.
5. Integrate biblical exegesis with sound theological exposition that informs personal spiritual growth and that directs effective ministry in Jesus Christ.
 3. Integrate the first two GCS SLO's into your ministry topic, explaining the relevance to the specifics of your ministry.
 5. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the type of ministry you have chosen to study (or theological issue as it applies to ministry).
 6. Project the opportunities and threats to your ministry topic (or theological issue as it applies to your ministry).

Course Requirements:

1. This course includes a summative exam, covering topics that were included in your previous studies. This exam must be proctored – for details, see the *Academic Catalog*, section XII.
2. Establish the topic for your paper; develop a one- to two-page synopsis and brief outline of the ideas you plan to research and develop in your paper.
3. Draft a list of at least 15 books that will be part of your research. Several of these texts probably will be part of your previous coursework. A list of texts that are predominantly in the realm of Trinitarian theology accompanies this syllabus; most of them have been used in the curriculum of GCS, so feel free to draw from this list, but you are not limited to the list and should expand your research beyond them.

Send the topic, brief outline, and research text list to the professor for review and suggestions.

4. Provide an annotated bibliography, with brief analyses of each text, to the professor before sending any drafts of the paper.
5. Write your theology of ministry paper, including all the points mentioned below. The final paper should be no less than 70 pages, no more than 120, double spaced, with one-inch margins, 12 point font. It must have a bibliography and appropriate citations throughout.
6. There will be an oral defense of the paper, in which you explain the results of your research and answer questions from three GCS faculty members. This may be done in person, or by a video conference connection.

Assignments, estimated hours, and grade weighting¹

Assignment	Hours *	Percentage of grade
Reading the syllabus and instructions	2	
Studying for the summative exam	10	
Taking the summative exam	3	0 ²
Reading books	100	
Writing the annotated bibliography	30	
Writing the final paper	200	100
Preparing for the oral defense	4	
The oral defense	2	0 ³
Total	351	100

Theology of Ministry Papers should include:

1. A carefully stated thesis (position statement) that concretely expresses where you see your ministry or theological perspective fitting within your culture.
2. A brief introduction that succinctly places you as author in the context of ministry and/or theological perspective; the thesis is formed within this contextualization.
3. Development of your theological rationale for ministry. Although each biblical conclusion should be supported with biblical reference(s), a central passage should be exegeted as foundational to your theological presentation. You should integrate the biblical text with theology.

¹ This is a *rough* estimate. A student who reads quickly may be slow in writing papers, and vice versa. Some students will complete the course requirements in less total time, and some will take more time. Note that this course is designed to be completed over two semesters.

² The summative exam does not constitute part of this course's grade, but the student must pass rather than fail the exam.

³ The grade for the course is based on the written paper, but the student must pass the oral defense.

4. Development of your theological perspective, relative to Trinitarian Incarnational theology, while set in broader Christian perspectives.
5. Supportive research and critical response to your positions needs to be integrated into your paper. Research of prominent authors in church history should be included with the development of your topic.
6. Appropriately bridge the gap from the Bible to ministry today, so that contrasts and parallels are apparent. Show how the Bible and theology inform your ministry.
7. If approaching a specific ministry, state the strengths and weaknesses of your ministry; relate how theology and ethics speak to the challenges and opportunities of ministry.

If approaching a topical subject, such as a societal problem, state the problem, objectively state the varying responses to it (both Christian and otherwise), and clearly develop your position with support.

8. Conclude with an encapsulated summary of your paper.