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Field Studies & Experiential Education Program Manual

Reverend Dr. Joanne Lindstrom
Jean and Frank Mohr Director of Field Studies and Experiential Education and Associate Professor of Ministry
773-947-6335

Reverend Nannette Banks
Coordinator, Field Studies and Experiential Education
773-947-6322

fieldstudies@mccormick.edu

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Welcome to McCormick's Field Studies Program. As the seminary prepares women and men for ministry in an ever-changing world, we recognize the importance of an integrated educational experience offered in partnership with churches and ministry related agencies. The Field Studies program provides students the opportunity to be involved in the practice of ministry under supervision as a part of their academic study and formal training while enrolled in the Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development degree programs.

Today's students are an amazingly diverse group. In recent years McCormick students have brought a wide range of experiences and expectations to theological education. Ranging from 21 to 60+ years in age; they are female and male from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, representing many faith traditions, cultures and nationalities; single and married with and without children. They come from careers in business, education, science, technology, the public and private sectors. Some are homemakers and community volunteers.

Whether called to serve Jesus Christ in ministries of ordained or lay leadership in the local church, denominational agencies or to ministries of justice and public service in the world, McCormick students come to seminary as adult learners seeking to be equipped for a future as leaders in the transformational ministry of Jesus Christ's church in the world.

We welcome student colleagues and ministry partners to this exciting venture in shared education between the seminary and the communities where practice and theory come together for the building up of God's people.

Thanks be to God for your contributions, service and witness!
THE FIELD STUDIES PROGRAM OVERVIEW

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Field Studies is one of the requirements for graduation in the Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development programs here at McCormick Theological Seminary. It is one type of experiential education which offers students an integrative program of experience, study, reflection, praxis and assessment. It combines classroom-based educational opportunities and field-based learning experiences in the practice of ministry under supervision in churches and agencies. The settings for teaching and learning are varied, as are the methods by which the students are challenged to reflect on the interaction of academic studies, theological traditions, personal, professional and spiritual formation, discipleship and spirituality in the community of faith. It is often during the field studies year that the testing of one’s call and one’s calling to professional vocations in ministry occurs. Seminary faculty and advisors, field site supervisors and lay ministry support teams, students and their respective denominational committees of oversight in the preparation process are all included in the educational process.

The five major components to the field studies program are described below:

The Experience of Ministry
Ministry experiences are planned by the student and supervisor keeping in mind the learning goals of the student, the needs of the congregation/agency, the expectations of the supervisor, and the requirements of the seminary.

A Learning/Serving Covenant
The learning/serving covenant is prepared and used as a guide for the year. It can be modified or renegotiated as necessary to maintain its relevance for the student, congregation/agency, supervisor and seminary.

Supervision
Supervisors are expected to hold a graduate level degree in her/his discipline or area of responsibility; have a minimum of three years experience in current leadership or supervisory capacity; and be supportive of the educational mission of McCormick Theological Seminary. In addition to the day-to-day administrative oversight of the student’s work, the supervisor is expected to meet regularly with the student to reflect together about the student’s ministry experiences. The congregation/agency is expected to provide a lay ministry support team to meet monthly with the student for support, reflection, and feedback.

Evaluation Process
The supervisor prepares a midyear evaluation of the student’s work with input from the lay ministry support team. The evaluation is discussed with the student and signed by both the supervisor and student prior to submission to the Office of Experiential Education and Field Studies.

The supervisor, lay ministry support team and student each prepare a year-end evaluation to be discussed and signed by all parties prior to submission to the Office of Experiential Education and Field Studies.
**Academic Requirements**

The student is required to enroll in MIN404/405 Reflection on the Practice of Ministry, and to complete all requirements of that indivisible two (2) semester course as part of the total requirements of field studies. The class, which meets sixteen times over the course of the academic year, and the 12-15 hours weekly on site learning/serving, earns two units of credit.

**PARTNERSHIP IN LEARNING AND SERVING**

We recognize that the task of learning is never complete in the practice of ministry. We are all life-long learners for whom the stewardship of self is a critical dimension of our ability to faithfully respond to our calling. One of the ways McCormick supports its partners in the field studies year is to make educational opportunities available to field faculty and lay ministry support team members.

One educational event takes place early in the fall semester when field site supervisors and lay ministry support team members are invited for an orientation meeting at which topics related to theological education and supervised practice of ministry are explored as well as a review of requirements and responsibilities for all parties. At the end of spring semester a final event is held that combines helpful processes for transition and closure as well as opportunities for celebration of learning and serving experiences of the year. This meeting provides an opportunity for field site representatives and members of the seminary faculty to share their experiences and learnings.

**IN RETURN FOR YOUR SERVICE**

As a way of saying thank you for the investment being made in students and in the seminary, site supervisors and lay ministry support team members are invited and encouraged to take part in one Master of Divinity or Doctor of Ministry level course taught by McCormick faculty during the current academic year. A tuition waiver form must be completed and submitted to the Field Studies Office to register for a course. Anyone wishing to receive transcript credit for the course taken will have to be officially admitted to one of the Seminary's special or degree granting programs.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE FIELD STUDIES PROGRAM

The Field Studies Program is a preparation process that provides students with the opportunity to explore the relationships between theology and experience, private convictions and public actions while engaging in the practice of ministry under supervision. Students will develop general skills of ministry: preaching, teaching, pastoral care, public witness and administration; as they reflect upon those skills formally with their supervisor and in a peer reflection group. It is through this process of theological reflection that ministry activities become educative. Students will be challenged to integrate their ministry practice and academic knowledge in such a way as to deepen and broaden both aspects of ministry.

The Field Studies Program addresses various dimensions of the preparation for ministry-theological reflection, personal/spiritual formation, professional formation and ministerial skills development. These dimensions of preparation work in concert as students continue their transformation into thoughtful practitioners who are skilled in reflection that integrates theological, experiential and contextual information.

Theological Reflection engages students in disciplined integration of classroom learning with field experiences. The study and reflection in community helps to discern what constitutes ministry and how gifts of God's spirit are evidenced in one's life in the ongoing discernment of one's call.

Personal/Spiritual Formation engages students in understanding and exegeting their own experience as they continue to explore the meaning of their own personal faith journey and ministry experiences in light of their faith tradition and theological disciplines.

Professional Formation leads students in the development of one's own personal integrity, a healthy sense of self and healthy relationships with others that are ethically appropriate, respectful of boundaries and built upon a well-nurtured relationship with God.

Ministerial Skills Development understands the importance of holistic and comprehensive leadership, coupled with the exercise of various gifts for the building up of the body of Christ (e.g. preaching, teaching, pastoral care, administration, public witness, etc.).

In short, goals of the field education experience include:
• development of practical skills that will serve a professional ministry vocation;
• integration of classroom-based learning and field-based learning;
• integration of thought and action to inform one's theology;
• ability to reflect critically and theologically about ministry;
• continuation of spiritual practices that form and support personal integrity, ones' own faith journey, and ministry practice;
• spiritual, intellectual and personal growth;
• discernment and testing of vocational commitments;
• cultivation of skills and gifts necessary for various ministry situations; and
• development of on-going assessment processes which utilize self-evaluation and feedback from others.
SUPERVISION AND SUPERVISORY CONFERENCES
Supervision is an indispensable part of the field studies program and it is crucial to distinguishing a supervised ministry experience from a student's classroom experience. The purpose of the supervisory conference is to focus upon current ministerial experience and to grow from that place of reflection, analysis and further planning. The conference is an opportunity for critical reflection on the student's pastoral experiences, and for establishing and nurturing communication between the student and the supervisor. More simply, it is informed dialogue between pastors and students about the practice of ministry. Supervision is a teaching and learning ministry.

In order for supervision to be effective and for teaching and learning about ministry to take place efficiently and purposefully, it needs to have shape. It must have clear goals and defined procedures. Otherwise, supervision becomes rambling chit-chat at one extreme or authoritarian surveillance at the other. Supervision is neither.

**Supervision is teaching**

There are skills, attitudes, values and perspectives which are important to learn in becoming a minister. Although people come to ministry with personal qualities and aptitudes, and have a broad range of practical experiences which influence the way in which they minister, ministers are not born-they must learn. And who better to teach the practice of ministry than those who are actively engaged in ministry. Teaching does not occur by chance. It requires consciousness and articulation of the dimensions of the practice of ministry. It requires attention to what the learner says, thinks, believes, feels and does. It requires critical reflection on experience. This means that supervision is much more than simply saying “That was good,” or “That was poor.” It requires dialogue about what is going on, what should be going on, how to get from here to there, and why. Furthermore, teaching is a mutual endeavor. Teaching without learning is not teaching. The supervisor must, therefore, take the particular student completely into consideration when teaching.

**Supervision is teaching ministers**

The students who are involved in Field Studies are ministering. They are not preparing to minister, but are already engaged in ministry while they grow more deeply into it. They are being a minister as they become a minister.

**Supervision works with ministers as people**

Although supervision is centrally concerned with the exercise of ministry, ministers are obviously people with needs, goals, emotions, self-images, anxieties and expectation of others. These are of crucial concern in supervision, even though supervision is not therapy. People, as they learn to minister, are changing as persons. New roles and tasks require adjustments in the personality. This can be anxiety producing or exhilarating, it is usually a combination of both. Whatever the case, attention to the person is critical.
Supervision is professional leadership in reforming ministerial practice
It is not just passing on the old ways of doing things. Rather, it involves rethinking of one's own practice of ministry, a thorough analysis of what one believes, values and does. It involves experimentation and growth, dialogue with others and the communication of new insights.

More specifically, supervision is leadership in the development of ministerial self-understanding. What do we understand ministry to be? What theological principles undergird and inform it? It is also leadership in the development of the shape of ministry. What are our tasks? What are our priorities? Where does ministry take place and how does it happen well? Finally, it is leadership in the quality of its exercise. What skills must one have? How are they developed? The supervisor is one who leads in knowing what must be done, and one who can and does do it well. The supervisor has the necessary skills and can teach them to others.

Supervision, then, is teaching ministers to minister. In the process, developing ministers learn: (1) various skills involved in ministry; (2) to understand themselves as people; (3) to give shape to their ministry; and (4) to develop ministerial self-understanding which is based on sound and articulate theological grounds. Throughout the supervisory process, all four of these factors need to receive significant attention in conversations supervisors and students have with one another.

Adapted from an article by Dr. Craig Dykstra
ROLES OF THE SUPERVISOR
Adapted from Union-PSCE Field Studies Manual

Whether supervising a student in a parish or non-parish setting, the supervisor functions in several key roles.

The Supervisor is a Teacher
Teaching requires that the supervisor be aware of and able to articulate the many dimensions of the practice of ministry. To articulate the content of ministry requires excellent communication skills which are dialogical in nature. Jane Vella illustrates clearly the dialogical nature of teaching—and potential for breakdown in communication—with this example:

As Paulo Freire put it in conversation with us one evening: Only the student can name the moment of death of the professor. That is, a teacher can be intent upon a dialogue with an adult learner, but if the learner sees the teacher as the professor with whom there is no disagreement, no questioning, no challenge, the dialogue is dead in the water. Adult students need reinforcement of the human equity between teacher and student. It takes time for adults to see themselves in a new role.

In a dialogical approach to teaching, the teacher learns and the learner teaches. As a learner, the supervisor should be open to new ideas, willing to rethink familiar patterns of theology and ministry. Effective teachers possess self-understanding, self-awareness, and self-acceptance. From that vantage point, they are able to reveal their own humanity. A good teacher is willing to share (as appropriate) his or her faults and uncertainties, and to demonstrate vulnerability.

On a more practical note, the supervisor as teacher is responsible for fulfilling Seminary requirements for supervised ministry settings. Primary responsibilities include consulting with the student regarding the Learning/Serving Covenant, performing midyear and final evaluations with the student, conducting regularly scheduled supervisory conferences, and providing feedback to the student.

The Supervisor Is an Administrator
As an administrator, the supervisor is expected to possess an understanding of the church, agency, or institution and of the people within the organization. As manager of the field setting, the supervisor has the necessary authority to make decisions about resources, tasks, and time, and to set the tone for collegial staff relationships to thrive. It is in this context that the supervisor fulfills important supervisory tasks.

The supervisor:

• ensures opportunities for the student to practice ministry and to perform tasks related to the student's goals and objectives as listed in the Learning/Serving Covenant;
• identifies resources human and otherwise that can contribute to the student's overall experience of ministry and supervision;
• makes decisions about tasks and roles, communicates them clearly to those involved and follows up to see that what is communicated is accomplished.
The Supervisor is a Model
The supervisor models much more than the physical tasks of ministry, such as how to write a sermon every week, or to conduct hospital visitation. She or he embodies the integration of faith and action, being and doing. Students will observe how the supervisor lives out the role of minister in the personal, professional and relational dimensions of the supervisor's life. How does the supervisor handle conflict? Issues of time management? Personal spiritual disciplines? Self-care? Personality differences?

The student may choose to emulate the supervisor's manner of handling these various dimensions of life and ministry, if that particular style feels authentic to the student. Or, the supervisor's particular style might become the fodder for constructive dialogue between the student and supervisor.

The Supervisor is an Empowerer
As an empowerer, the supervisor understands the concept of call and its implications, and is able to help the student to identify her or his gifts for ministry. The supervisor may also need to affirm that the student's gifts are not suitable for pastoral ministry. The supervisor provides ongoing support, nurture, and encouragement both as positive reinforcement and in times of stress, tension, or crisis. Unless a supervisor is available for supervision, empowerment cannot happen. Available in this context refers not only to physical availability, but emotional and spiritual as well.

The Supervisor is an Experiential Theologian
The supervisor as experiential theologian recognizes that all actions in ministry have a theological basis. He or she is able to help the student reflect theologically about incidents and issues in urban ministry.

An important function for the supervisor as theologian is to build bridges between the Christian story and theology as it relates to culture, experiences, personhood, and context. The theologian is able to bridge the gap between scripture, theology, and tradition and current events, and their expressions of ethics, norms, justice and politics that take place in the church, community, nation, and the world. She or he then explores the relationships that are discovered, asking, why is it necessary to move in a particular direction from a Christian standpoint?
QUALITIES OF FIELD EDUCATION SUPERVISORS

Good field education supervisors are persons who:

• know the expectations of the theological school and the role of the field studies in its curriculum and see themselves in partnership with the school;

• engage students in pastoral and theological reflections about experiences in ministry, and provide honest, constructive and timely feedback;

• assist students in discerning their own gifts and limitations in ministry and model this process in their own lives;

• are sensitive to ways the student's theological education process may differ from that of the supervisor;

• have a working knowledge of ways adults learn through action-reflection processes;

• understand and exercise leadership in both ecclesial and public settings, and share leadership in appropriate ways with the student;

• are clear about what constitutes harassment and sexual misconduct, and observe ethical behavior and appropriate boundaries;

• understand the purpose and process used in developing a learning covenant with the student, and can tailor pastoral activities appropriate for the learning goals;

• understand the purpose and process used in assessing the student's learnings;

• can articulate, in their own terms, a clear definition of supervision that is appropriate to their context, circumstances and style;

• are familiar with a variety of useful resources for pastoral supervision and leadership development;

• can effectively prepare and support a lay committee for supervised ministry;
are aware of their own styles of learning, spirituality, and dealing with people, and are able to relate these to the styles of the student;

are secure enough with their own identity that they are not threatened by students and are able to work collegially;

are mature, nurturing persons committed to their own growth and development, and are able to lead in the midst of changing contexts for ministry;

can manage a student effectively, including the student's entry and exit, establishing appropriate boundaries, interpreting the Field Studies Program to the congregation/agency, and accessing resources of the congregation/agency;

can maintain enthusiasm for their work and model responsible care for self and others;

know well the ministry site and its social context;

provide opportunities for the student to engage in ministry beyond simply shadowing the supervisor;

are willing to submit assessments and other written materials in a timely manner.
SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Welcome the student into the congregation/agency; help them get acquainted; share the history and vision of the congregation/agency
- Make sure that the Lay Ministry Support Team is in place
- Commit to weekly supervisory meetings with the student; schedule on a semester basis
- Observe the student and how the congregation/agency responds to their leadership
- Help the student reflect on their ministry
- Offer feedback in a descriptive and timely manner (mid-year and final evaluations)
- Help the student develop a mutually agreed upon Learning Serving Covenant

- Provide
  
  **Spiritual Support:** undergird them with prayer
  **Emotional Support:** accept them as a whole person and a partner in ministry
  **Collegial Support:** affirm work well done and offer encouragement when mistakes are made; monitor the learning/serving covenant

- Listen deeply to both the student and congregation/agency in order to serve as a bridge between the two

- Be a partner in discernment; observing, listening, reflecting, feedback and evaluation are all part of the discernment process

- Share your own spiritual journey

- Complete a written mid-year evaluation, including observations and insights from the Lay Ministry Support Team, and review with the student prior to submission to the Field Studies Office

- Complete a written year-end evaluation and review with the student prior to submission to the Field Studies Office.
THE SUPERVISORY CONFERENCE

The supervisory conference is a regularly scheduled, intentional time when the student and supervisor meet to reflect critically upon the ministry experiences of the student and the life of the congregation/agency. It is an indispensable element of the field studies program which distinguishes supervised ministry from other life experiences of the student.

The supervisory conference is not
• primarily an administrative meeting for planning activities and coordinating calendars;
• primarily a therapy session, although the emotional dimensions of the student's ministry experiences are often appropriate aspects of the educational process;
• primarily a monologue in which the student listens to the supervisor tell about former experiences; however, the conference dialogue may appropriately include references to such experiences.

The weekly supervisory conference is most effective when the one-hour session is held at a place without constant interruptions. A supervisor who relies on spontaneous, informal supervisory meetings, especially in regard to theological reflection, is doing the student a disservice. Students crave structure especially in the initial stage of a placement when performance anxiety is high. Having mutually agreed upon a model for theological reflection, the supervisor should require the student to adhere to the model. The conferences are educational in nature.

The supervisor offers feedback - specific commentary - on what one observes about the student and the way she/he does ministry. It involves how ministry behavior is seen and how it affects others. The purpose of feedback is to help the student become more effective in ministry.

Feedback is not used as a punishment, to get something off one's chest, or to show superiority. It is both positive and negative allowing the student to hear about positive contributions as well as learning from mistakes.

Good feedback is
• specific rather than general;
• descriptive rather than judgmental;
• well-timed and timely;
• checked to ensure clear communication;
• directed at behavior not personality characteristics or physical traits.
Stumbling blocks for supervisors include:

**Confusing supervision with administration**
Supervision does not include such tasks as reviewing calendars, program planning, and delegation of tasks. Rather, supervision focuses on intentional reflections on pastoral practices.

**Confusing supervision with therapy**
Supervision does consider the student's behavior and motives, as well as personal problems. But caution should be used not to blend the healing functions of therapy with the educational functions of supervision, even if the supervisor is trained in psychotherapy.

**Focusing only on skill development**
Supervision also must attend to such issues as vocational clarity, theological competence, and spiritual and pastoral formation.

**Focusing only on the negative**
Supervision does not only mean telling the student only what went wrong, ignoring what went well.

**Failing to honor confidences**

**Focusing only on the theological rhetoric**
Supervision does not ignore internalized theology that is manifest in the student's judgments and actions.

**Avoiding confrontation**
Supervision does not mean being a “pushover” who fears hurting the intern's feelings, or confronting the intern only after a crisis has developed rather than as a routine method of constructive teaching and caring.

**Functioning in excessively authoritarian mode**
Supervision does not include dictating to the student that only the supervisor's approach is acceptable, without being open to the intern's views.
You and the student should agree early in the year as to what the basic agenda for the meetings will be. However, agenda for individual meetings may vary to meet current needs. Suggested areas to cover are:

1. **Current programs or congregational concerns.** For example, the student may be faced with a first funeral, a delicate marriage counseling situation, or attending their first board meeting or making a public presentation regarding the agency.

2. **Theological reflection on ministry.** What are the theological issues at stake in a given situation? What theological values are represented? What is the student's sense of call? How does the student see herself or himself as a minister, or community activist, including gifts, role, etc.? Are the student's preaching and actions in line with her or his theological and denominational tradition? Often case studies and verbatim are a helpful way to encourage deep reflection on a situation.

3. **Long-range planning for ministry and personal development.** For example, discussion may cover working out a ministry pattern that nurtures marriage and family relationships, that avoids burnout, and that provides for continuing education and growth. This may also entail long range planning for the church/agency, for administrative skill improvement, sermon series, prioritizing of community issues or seasonal strategies, leadership development and so on.

4. **Personal spiritual support.** It is always appropriate to ask a student about his or her own spiritual life. What is the student doing, such as regular Bible readings and prayer, to nurture spiritual growth? In what areas is spiritual growth evident? What is he or she learning about God's grace, faithfulness and love? In what areas is your prayer support needed? Please take time to pray for each other.
BASIC LEVELS OF SUPERVISORY CONCERN

1. **Professional Level** - the more technical, skill-oriented level used to evaluate the intern's abilities in preaching, teaching, pastoral care, etc. The supervisor or committee might ask questions such as:
   - In what ways was the student effective in this particular act of ministry?
   - What skills were used with competence?
   - What skills were lacking?

2. **Interpersonal Level** - the realm of human relationships.
   - How did the student relate to other persons in this event?
   - How did the student deal with his or her own emotions in this event?
   - How does the student deal with conflict situations?

3. **Systemic Level** - the way the student demonstrates competence in working with organizations and social structures in the church, agency and community.
   - In what ways did the student exercise good leadership with the committee?
   - How did the student demonstrate sensitivity to the expectations or traditions of the congregation?
   - How did the intern deal with the power struggle going on in this committee?

4. **Theological Level** - the way in which the student integrates his or her theological understandings and convictions with the issues of ministry.
   - What theological questions emerge from this event? What doctrines are helpful for understanding this situation?
   - Where does the student see the activity of God in this event?
   - What biblical events seem parallel to the event being reported by the student?
   - What ways are the two similar?

5. **Vocational Level** - the student's emerging sense of vocational identity and spiritual formation.
   - What did the student learn from this experience about a call to ministry?
   - What concept of ministry is suggested by the way the student functioned?
   - How comfortable was the student in exercising pastoral authority?
   - How has this experience helped the student understand his or her spiritual life?
A SUGGESTED PROCESS FOR
THE SUPERVISORY CONFERENCE
Adapted from Columbia Theological
Seminary Field Education Manual

Prior to the Conference:

- The student prepares a written report of a pastoral event and submits this in advance to the supervisor.
- The supervisor and the student independently examine this report and any notes made following the previous conference.

A Typical Conference

Step 1 Centering
Entry time for shifting gears from other concerns so that both persons can focus on the agenda at hand.

Step 2 Clarifying
The content of the student's report is reviewed and the supervisor raises questions to clarify the content of the report.

Step 3 Setting Priorities
The student identifies what he or she hopes to learn from this event, indicating why this particular event was selected for discussion. (The resource Basic Levels of Supervisory Concern see page 18.)

Step 4 Analysis
The student's report is analyzed in terms of why things happened as they did, and what insights, feelings and theological issues have been generated by this experience of ministry.

Step 5 Identifying learnings and projecting
The conference is concluded by identifying what learnings have emerged from these reflections, and by projecting about how this experience might inform future events in ministry.

(Design adapted from George Hunter,
Supervision and Education Formation for Ministry)
LAY MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM
INTRODUCTION

Laypersons often believe they have little or nothing to contribute to the education of ordained ministers. But our experience suggests the opposite is true. Preparing men and women for a life of professional ministry without significant involvement with the Church’s laity easily leads to professional elitism. It can trivialize essential convictions about the priesthood of all believers—a longstanding tenant of the Reformed faith that is more important than ever as the Church moves further into the Twenty-first Century.

Theological schools can equip candidates for ministry with a working knowledge of Christian tradition and basic concepts about missional leadership. But the nature of theological education requires that we go further. Theological students must also learn by doing ministry—by experiencing the Church, in all its manifestations, at work and reflecting about these individual and communal practices.

Our hope is that in addition to contributing to the intern’s theological education, you will personally benefit from this experience as you continue your own journey with Jesus Christ. As you enable a pastoral intern to understand his or her vocation, we invite you to examine your own vocation, as well. As you explore the student’s theological convictions, we invite you to reevaluate your own beliefs and priorities.

We have found that the most effective people on Lay Ministry Support Teams are people of faith who are open to reflecting on their own experiences as individual disciples and as members of a community of faith.

We welcome you to this venture and thank you for playing a vital role in the partnership of your congregation with McCormick Theological Seminary.
LAY MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM OVERVIEW

The Lay Ministry Support Team is made up of members of the congregation or agency who are in a position to facilitate a student's learning and experience in ministry. The role of the lay ministry support team is to provide a perspective on the community to the student and an additional resource for the student and site supervisor.

Three basic purposes inform the work of the lay ministry support team as follows:

To provide support to the student, including:
- welcoming the student and facilitating his/her entry into the community;
- interpreting to the congregation or agency the purpose and scope of the field studies;
- interpreting to the student the history and vision of the congregation or agency;
- being sensitive to the human needs of the student, accepting mistakes, affirming the person, celebrating new growth; and
- inviting the student (and family) into a common life and ministry.

To provide feedback and evaluation to the student about his or her ministry, including:
- monitoring the Learning/Serving Covenant;
- reflecting on specific acts of ministry, providing constructive criticism;
- participating in the midyear evaluation of the student's ministry which is written by the site supervisor; and
- writing a year-end evaluation of the experience.

To share with the student from your ministry, your involvements in the church/agency and community, and your personal faith journey.

In a congregational setting, it is assumed that the team will be representative of a broad cross-section of the congregation. Members should be persons who are able to be sensitive to what is happening at the levels of the student, the site, and themselves; have the ability to ask themselves the questions which help define feelings; suggest the reason for the feelings as well as their meaning; and communicate these perceptions and evaluations to the student in helpful ways.

In an agency setting the lay team may be comprised of co-workers, board members or a specific individual. The nature and context of the agency will determine the particularities of the Lay Ministry Team.

It is also assumed that the lay ministry support team will take care that any sensitive information shared about the student and others is kept confidential. Failure to honor confidentiality compromises the teaching/learning process as well as causes pain and embarrassment.
Various sites have used different formulas for organizing a lay ministry support team. The needs and characteristics of a particular site will determine which model works best. Some possibilities include:

- **permanently formed:** made up of persons whose skills and interests make them especially able to perform in this area;
- **functionally formed:** made up of persons involved in areas in which the student will be working over the year;
- **student formed:** made up of persons the student feels will give him/her appropriate feedback and will be able to act in a supporting manner; or
- **some combination of the above:** a permanent core, representatives in the area of work and representatives of the student's own choosing.

Ordinarily the lay ministry support team consists of three to five persons, one of whom serves as moderator. Members agree to meet with the student at least monthly. A shared meal often facilitates trust and builds community. The team coordinates meeting times with the student's and seminary calendars. Each member will receive a copy of the Learning/Serving Covenant which is available from the student or the supervisor.

**Benefits for the Lay Ministry Support Team**

The lay ministry support team will be contributing time and energy in providing educational experiences for a student. Along with the intangible benefits of making contributions to the larger mission and ministry of the Church and faithfully living out one's own call, there are also tangible benefits for members of the lay ministry support team. These include the opportunity

- for community building and strengthening of relationships among team members;
- for personal growth;
- to reflect on one's own life and ministry and receive support;
- to demonstrate a model committee to the congregation/agency;
- to gain experience in successful conflict management that can be used in other areas of life;
- to learn how to negotiate one's needs;
- to give and receive support in the presence of one's own doubts;
- to share one's theology; and
- to audit one Masters Level or Doctoral Level course at MTS.
**Benefits for the Congregation/Agency**

The congregation also receives benefits from participating in the field studies program. The congregation/agency

- can gain better understanding of itself and community through the eyes of the student;
- can be in dialogue with the wider church, faith community;
- can be strengthened by the depth of relationships in the lay ministry support team; and
- can learn more about itself as it is in the process of assisting a student.
GENERAL GUIDELINES

The student is in the congregation or agency to learn. The student will contribute to the needs and programs of the site, but learning is primary.

The work of the lay ministry support team complements the supervisory relationship and works independently from the supervisor.

Be confident in your own call to ministry. Don't begin your comments with "Well, I'm only a lay person...." Your voice is important.

Constructive feedback helps the student to grow. Speak the truth in love!

Take time to see the student as a person. Be a friend; field studies in seminary can be an overwhelming experience.

Field students are still students. Be realistic, and remember that field education is a process.

Respect confidentiality.

Organize your own success. Establish a meeting time and place, prepare an agenda and carry it out!
LAY MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Commit to monthly meetings with the student; schedule on a semester basis.

Welcome the student into the congregation/agency; help them get acquainted; share the history and vision of the congregation/agency.

Provide support and guidance -

  Spiritual support: undergird them with prayer
  Emotional support: accept them as a whole person and partner in ministry
  Collegial support: affirm work well done and offer encouragement when mistakes are made; monitor the learning/serving covenant.

Observe the student and how the congregation/agency responds to their leadership.

Listen deeply both to the student and congregation/agency in order to serve as a bridge between the two.

Help the student reflect on their ministry.

Offer feedback.

Be a partner in discernment; observing, listening, reflecting, feedback and evaluation are all part of the discernment process.

Share your own spiritual journey.

Participate in the mid-year evaluation process with the supervisor and student.

Complete a written year-end evaluation and review with the student prior to submission to the Field Studies Office.
LAY MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM MEETINGS
AND PROCESSES - A MODEL

The work of the lay ministry support team will be tailored to the particular site. A portion of a process that has functioned well is offered here as an example.

At Berkeley-Hillside Presbyterian Church, monthly meetings are planned in advance. The agenda for each meeting includes 3 to 6 items which anticipate the needs of the site and the student at that time in the relationship. These items balance the supportive and evaluative roles of the lay ministry support team and create opportunities for the sharing of faith and ministry. Sample agendas for meetings at the beginning, middle and end of the relationship follow.

Sample Agenda for September

- Introduce yourselves; talk about your faith life, your work life, what opportunities for learning you feel your church can give a student. Help the student understand who you are and why ministry happens the way it does at your site.

- Inquire about the adequacy of the office arrangements and transportation. Tour the facility and familiarize the student with the layout of the facilities and location of resources.

- Set monthly meeting dates, times and places for the year.

- Review manual.

Sample Agenda October

- Listen to the student's personal and faith story and what she/he hopes to learn.

- Review the learning/serving covenant. Are the goals clear and accomplishable?

- Share the history of the church/agency and community.

Suggested Process: Telling the Congregation's/Agency's Story

Using a large chalkboard or piece of newsprint, draw a long, horizontal line across the middle of the surface. At the far left of the line, note the founding year of the church/agency. At the far right, note the current year. Then, beginning with the past and working forward by decades, have the group tell the story as they understand it. Record major events, "glory days," crisis, or other turning points below the line. If it is a long history, you might review only the past 30-40 years. Above the line, note key events that were taking place in the community or world that impacted the congregation's/agency's story. After the story is recorded, discuss lasting values of the members that continue to shape the identity of the congregation/agency.
Sample Agenda for February

- Share together your impressions of how fully the student pastor has entered the arena of the congregation/agency and community. If appropriate, challenge him/her to a wider presence and participation.

- If the Learning/Serving Covenant has been renegotiated, review it so that all members of the Team understand the role that the student will take in the life of the congregation. Review the role of the church/agency in the covenant. Where might the lay ministry support team be of more help?

- Continue in a basic evaluation of Learning/Serving Covenant goals. What evidence of growth (or lack of growth) can be seen?

  Evaluate yourselves. How is the lay ministry support team functioning? Are the discussions still challenging? Are meetings focused or are they primarily social events? What are your strengths and weaknesses? Ask for the student’s feedback.

Sample Agenda for April

- Time grows short. How can the committee help the student meet those learning goals as yet unmet?

- Final evaluation is due this month. Try to cover all aspects of the student’s ministry. Where are his/her strengths and in what areas should the student continue to work and grow?

- Discuss the process of closure. Recognize the validity of grief and discuss its symptoms: sorrow at saying goodbye, possibility of unfulfilled expectations, and worries about the unknown future. Encourage the student to write a farewell letter to the congregation/agency for the newsletter.

  Will there be a going away party and/or a special farewell?

During your meetings throughout the year, you might use the following process to examine a specific act of ministry.

This examination involves giving feedback and constructive criticism to the intern on events such as a sermon preached, a lesson taught, or some other pastoral event in which the intern has provided leadership.

The intern should present in advance to each member of the team a written report describing the event and identifying specific questions that the intern wants to explore.
Other Agenda Items
In addition to the items previously noted, the Committee should also include the following in its agenda:

- **Monitoring the Learning/Serving Covenant** - a periodical review of progress made by the student toward stated goals.
- **Identifying Learning** - Some committees have found it meaningful to spend time at the end of each meeting briefly identifying learnings that have emerged from the discussions
- **Praying Together** - for each other, the congregation, and the world.

Helpful Tools:

- **Case Study.** The intern writes a one-page description of a critical incident in ministry in which he or she was involved. The incident normally raises an ethical or theological dilemma.
- **Manuscript or Recording.** The intern submits a manuscript of a sermon, speech, or lesson plan, and seeks constructive criticism on both content and delivery.

Effective Feedback:
Members of the Lay Ministry Support Team can utilize the following principles of effective feedback:

- **Both positive and negative feedback are important.** We grow not only by hearing about our mistakes, but also by reinforcing positive behavior.
- **Feedback should be descriptive rather than judgmental.** Avoiding judgmental language reduces the likelihood that the intern will be defensive about feedback.
- **Feedback should be specific rather than general.**
- **Feedback should be timely.** In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after a given event of ministry.
- **Feedback should be checked to ensure clear communication.** One good way to check for clarity is to ask the intern to rephrase the feedback to see if he or she has heard what was actually said.
- **Feedback should be directed primarily at the intern’s behavior, not personality.**
YOUR FINAL MEETING WITH THE STUDENT

The final meeting with the student, scheduled near the end of the field studies program, is a time of general evaluation of both the student and the congregation/agency.

For the evaluation of the student, the seminary provides evaluation guidelines and forms; it is the responsibility of the supervisor to complete and return the mid-year evaluation although it is expected that the lay ministry support team will provide input and information. For the final evaluation, all of the partners, the student, the supervisor, and the lay ministry support team, are required to submit an evaluation.

For the evaluation of the congregation/agency's program the following questions may be helpful:

• How have we helped or hindered the student in accomplishing his or her learning goals?

• How well have we interpreted the field studies program to the congregation/agency?

• How effective have we been in telling the truth in love (feedback) and in providing personal support to the student?

• How have we helped the student understand our congregation?

• What changes would we make with students in the future?

• What have been our personal learning's and joys through the work of this committee?
LEARNING/SERVING COVENANT
LEARNING/SERVING COVENANT OVERVIEW

The Learning/Serving Covenant is designed to be the plan of action by which the student, site, and seminary articulate their vision and expectations for the outcomes of the learning process in relationship to the overall Learning Outcomes of the Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development programs. These outcomes are as follows.-

A graduate from the Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development Program will:

- Lead communities of faith with integrity, imagination, and compassion.
- Perform the skills related to nurturing the life of faith (for self and others) including preaching, teaching, care-giving, leading public worship, and public ministries.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Bible and Christian traditions and the ability to interpret texts and practices.
- Work and worship with people from diverse backgrounds (racial, ethnic, religious) informed by knowledge from cross-cultural and anti-racist perspectives.
- Analyze social locations and cultural contexts in order to develop contextual forms of Christian ministry.
- Be proficient in theological and ethical reflection related to situations and decisions in local, national and global contexts.
- Practice appropriate habits of spiritual formation and self-care and possess a growing, healthy sense of vocational identity.

Not all of these outcomes will be addressed in every field site placement. However, the learning/serving covenant, as a statement of goals and objectives for the practice of ministry, will make explicit what is to be learned and how, what skills are to be developed and how they are measured, and how progress and/or expected outcomes are to be assessed and evaluated.

Because it is an educational tool, the Learning/Serving Covenant is fluid in its design. It is a framework within which the seminary, the site and the student can establish some basic requirements for the placement and character of participation by all partners. Yet within the framework there is room for negotiation, adjustment and change as is deemed appropriate and necessary by the partners involved.

Goals of the Covenant

- The relationship shall primarily be one of learning for the student and facilitate the development and professional identity of the student.
- The mutual needs of the site and student will be met.
- Both the site and student will grow and benefit in their ministries as a result of this relationship.
- All parties involved bring gifts to ministry which should be recognized and respected.
Elements of the Covenant
The Learning/Serving Covenant includes, but is not limited to, several essential elements:

• the learning goals of the student;
• the process (objectives) by which those goals will be achieved;
• the basis for assessment and evaluation of the student's progress.

A goal is a quantitative statement of an end result to be accomplished. It is meaningful, understandable, actionable, measurable, and attainable. For example, in the area of preaching a goal might be: "To identify my strengths and weaknesses in preaching." The Learning/Serving Covenant contains clear statements of goals for learning and formation, for the acquisition and appropriation of knowledge and skills, for personal growth and spiritual development, and for reflection and integration.

An objective is often defined as a strategy that is developed to accomplish a goal. Well-written objectives are observable and measurable and give direction to the "how to" of achieving a goal. For example, objectives for the above goal in the area of preaching might be:

• to work with the supervisor to identify the various categories which will be assessed (e.g. communication skills, exegetical skills, etc.)
• to develop an evaluation form to give to members of the congregation for their feedback. A plan for implementation of the goals is then developed. It is possible that more than one goal will be identified in each area.

Evaluation of the Covenant
Evaluations are to be completed at midyear and the conclusion of the field studies experience. These written evaluations detail the strengths and weaknesses in the students' performance and provide the basis for constructive discussion. The purposes of evaluation are to:

• describe and assess the student's practice of ministry within the context of the Learning/Serving Covenant, as well as provide additional relevant information such as attendance, quality of performance of duties, initiative taken, etc;
• evaluate the student's progress toward readiness for ministry, including the ability to express and live out vocational intentions;
• reflect upon the student's understanding of and participation in formational activities (personal and professional), to the extent possible; and comment upon the student's needs for further growth and development in specific areas such as formal studies, counseling, interpersonal relations, conflict management/resolution, polity, etc.
SUPERVISORY GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE LEARNING/SERVING COVENANT

An important preparatory step for supervisors working with students in writing a Learning/Serving Covenant is self-assessment. Reflection on the questions listed below will assist the supervisor in clarifying her/his own goals and expectations for the year with regard to the student's learning/serving goal.

• What particular areas of ministry energize me and bring me the most satisfaction?

• How would I assess my experience in this congregation/agency to date, and how does this influence my present approach to ministry in this context?

• How would I describe my style of leadership? How is this likely to influence the way I supervise the student?

• What learning goals do I hope to accomplish for myself during this year of supervision?

• What are the 4-5 areas of service within the congregation/agency in which the student will assume a leadership role?

• What personal expectations do you have of the student regarding:
  ■ office hours
  ■ dress code
  ■ confidential information
  ■ time and place for weekly supervisory conferences
  ■ student's use of written reports for use in supervisory conferences
STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE LEARNING/SERVING COVENANT

The written Learning/Serving Covenant is used to help the student focus work, bring clarity to the nature of this relationship and to minimize misunderstandings. More specifically, it states the learning/serving goals of the student, designates strategies for achieving those goals and identifies specific ways in which the learning/serving will be evaluated. The following questions will assist you in your preparation.

1. What experience, knowledge, strengths, areas of growth or concern do you bring in the following areas of ministerial responsibility?
   • pastoral care
   • worship and preaching
   • teaching and education
   • public ministry
   • administration

2. What do you need to understand about how a congregation/ agency functions?
   • How do you assess your current skills for relating to other people?
   • How do you assess your current skills for interpreting theologically your experiences in life and ministry?
   • What is your present understanding of your vocation?
   • How do you assess your present level of spiritual discernment?
   • Are there specific issues you want to address during this year?
   • Given your own knowledge of who you are and how you learn, what kind of supervision would you find most helpful?

In addition to goals based on five major fields of ministry, it is required that the Learning/Serving Covenant include goals in the area of spiritual care, growth and renewal.
TIPS FOR WRITING YOUR LEARNING COVENANT

Adapted from Western Theological Seminary

1. **Be specific**—for example, if you select the ministry of leadership and administration as your focus, a broad goal statement like, "I want to learn how the church runs," is not very helpful. More to the point would be, "I want to learn how to lead and facilitate more effective meetings," or "I will learn how to lead a consistory through a planning/visioning process."

2. **Be stretching**—add a little challenge and excitement to your learning! Your goal should be something that you are stretching for, not something you already know and are comfortable with.

3. **Be realistic**—temper your enthusiasm, however, with realism! Your goal should be something attainable within the semester framework.

4. **Be focused**—on results that are measurable— you need to be able to say at the end of the semester whether you reached your goal. Clear goals that are measurable are so much easier to evaluate and thus are more helpful to the learner, "I want to be a better preacher," is not adequate. Something like, "I will improve my preaching by trying three different kinds of sermons," will be much more helpful.

5. So the first step is **deciding and describing** your goal, your target. You need to know where you want to end up at the end of the semester. Next, you need to be clear about how you are going to get there. If your goal is to get your congregation to be an active participant in an ecumenical housing ministry (social justice focus area), then your list of strategies and action steps might include the following:

   - **Education**—put information about the housing need in the neighborhood and information about the organization in the church newsletter.
   - **Direct Volunteering**—get church members to help with a rehab project on Saturday.
   - **Community Research**—interview some participants in the housing ministry about the housing needs in the area.
   - **Worship**—work with the worship planning team to weave a housing theme into Sunday worship: songs, litanies, sermon, etc.
6. **Resources** - think creatively about what persons, organizations, activities, events, written materials or other kinds of resources could help you reach your goals. List them on your covenant.

7. **Evidence of learning** - how can you demonstrate that you have reached your goal? Other than the fact that you look visibly wiser, you should have some other evidence of your learning! Depending on your focus area and learning covenant, that might include a copy of the curriculum you were helping develop, the visioning plan you helped facilitate, pictures of an event you organized, etc.
LEARNING/SERVING COVENANT WORKSHEET

As you prepare to write your Learning/Serving Covenant, keep in mind the following questions:

^ Goal: What do I need to learn?

^ Strategies: What could I do to learn this?

^ Resources: What resources do I need in order to learn this?

^ Action Steps: What steps do I need to take in order to learn this?

^ Evaluation: How will I, my field site supervisors, lay ministry support team, peers, and faculty know that I have accomplished my learning goal?

On the next page is a list of primary skills pastors employ in the course of their ministry (taken from PCUSA Personal Information Form). You can use this list as a basis for developing your Learning Objectives, as follows:

1. In the list, put an *asterisk* beside the skills you feel you already possess.

2. In the list, put a check mark beside the skills you would like to develop (no more than ten).

3. Rank order four to six skills you would like to work on in your Field Studies placement. Try to address each of the five ministry areas.

4. Develop a Learning/Serving Goal that will help you gain or improve each of the skills you selected in Step Three.
Administration of Programs
Administration Leadership
Adult Ministry
Budget Preparation
Building Renovation/Development
Children's Ministry
Communication
Community Ministries
Community Service/Leadership
Conflict Management
Congregational Communication
Congregational Fellowship
Congregational Home Visitation
Congregational Revitalization
Corporate Worship/Sacraments
Counseling
Cross Cultural Collaboration
Curriculum Building
Defining Program Needs
Ecumenical and Interfaith Activities
Evaluation of Program Staff
Evangelism
Facility Management
Group Facilitation/Dynamics
Governing Body Ministry
Information Technology
Involvement in Mission beyond Local Church
Leadership Development
Leadership of Staff/Volunteers
Meditation Skills
New Church Development
Office Management
Older Adult Ministry
Organizational Development
Organizational Leadership
Pastoral Care
Preaching
Problem Solving
Project Development
Public Relations
Small Membership Church Ministry
Spiritual Development
Staffing
Stewardship
Strategic Planning
Teaching
Training Volunteers
Transformational/Interim Ministry
Urban Ministry
Youth Ministry
WRITING THE LEARNING/SERVING COVENANT

Learning and serving take place at various levels of involvement and leadership determined by such factors as prior experience, comfort level, learning goals, the needs of the site and available time. It is helpful to name the expected level of involvement in the covenant and to indicate where the level of involvement will change as the year progresses. Four levels of involvement can be identified: **primary leadership, team leadership, participation, and observation.** Definitions and examples of each follow.

**Primary Leadership** - Student assumes primary responsibility for planning, development, recruitment, training, implementation, follow-through, and evaluation, as appropriate, for learning project/event.

*Example:* in the area of *worship,* primary leadership would mean designing worship services, which involves the creative process, formation, and writing of liturgies for worship. It would also include leading in worship services, taking responsibility in a service or other worship setting for aspects not printed in the bulletin.

*Example:* In the area of *pastoral care,* primary leadership would involve taking initiative and responsibility for calling on persons, counseling, etc. and being a pastor to the congregation within parameters negotiated with site and supervisor.

**Team Leadership** - Student works with site supervisor and/or other persons in leadership positions in the planning, development, recruitment, training, implementation, follow through, and evaluation, as appropriate for the learning project/event.

*Example:* In the area of *worship,* team leadership involves working with others (pastor, worship committee) in designing worship services. Student shares in responsibility for leading worship.

*Example:* In the area of *outreach,* team leadership involves working with others in decision-making regarding interpreting the church/agency to the community as well as developing programs and events to respond to community needs.

**Participation** - Student is an active, participating member of the learning project/event and does not assume decision-making responsibilities.

*Example:* in the area of *worship,* participation involves assisting in worship services: reading scripture, prepared prayers and litanies, following patterns prescribed by others.

*Example:* In the area of *administration,* participation involves fulfilling management responsibilities that have been defined by others.
Observation - Student observes projects/events as means of learning. Student does not assume any responsibility for the project/event and is not an active participant. Post activity reflection with the site supervisor is an essential component of this level of involvement.

Example: In the area of worship, observation involves becoming aware of and understanding the dynamics in worship at the site. This includes patterns of worship, traditions, physical and spiritual environment, verbal and nonverbal communications, etc. A theological and pastoral understanding of the limitations and possibilities that exist is important. When possible this might include weddings, funerals, and other special services as appropriate.

Example: In the area of spiritual formation, observation involves observing and understanding how other persons develop and maintain their faith and spiritual disciplines in the midst of performance pressures, and/or how a congregation goes about leading and/or assisting its members in their spiritual formation.

Opportunities for learning and serving are not mutually exclusive categories and it is the intent of the Learning/Serving Covenant to identify the components of each so that the site, student and seminary can be intentional in their work together. Listed below are categories that might be helpful to consider in developing the covenant:

- Worship
- Administration
- Preaching
- Programming
- Pastoral Care
- Outreach Education
- Spiritual Formation

(See Ministry Area Statements for related information regarding Preaching, Pastoral Care, Education, Administration, and Public Ministry, pp 53)
SAMPLE LEARNING/SERVING COVENANTS

Just as each student is an individual, each Learning/Serving Covenant is uniquely formulated and expressed to fit the student and site. Based on the parameters outlined in this manual, students have developed a wide variety of Learning/ Serving Covenants. Examples below provide suggestions for a way to begin writing the covenant.

Below is an example of a covenant using ministry areas as a basis for organizing learning objectives.

Sample I

Worship

Goals: Taking part in worship weekly. Designing three worship services with the help and approval of minister, choir director, and worship committee.

Strategies/Objectives: Choose in advance 3 days to plan for the school year. Choose and develop written materials. Present at least two weeks in advance to supervisor.

Evaluation: Feedback from Lay Ministry Team on appropriateness, effectiveness and learning value. How did this engage the congregation to reflect on its worship life?

Preaching

Goals: To preach a minimum of 4 times during the school year. To make each sermon both specific and relevant to the congregation; to present the sermon effectively so that it is heard and understood; to share with the congregation my own spiritual journey.

Strategies/Objectives: Preach 4 sermons. Meet with Lay Ministry Team for Sermon Formation, by leading a Bible Study with the lectionary passage(s) prior to the service.

Evaluation: Meet with Lay Ministry Team and supervisor following sermon for feedback using the sermon response form developed with team.

Teaching and Education

Goals: Teach at least one class to Adults, Youth Group and one Children’s age group. To learn the history of how the current form of Christian Education came to be shaped, and what the goals are for maintaining, expanding or changing the structure. How is Christian education valued by the teachers? By the congregation? How are these values communicated?

Strategies/Objectives: Work with Sunday School Superintendent to develop lessons for each age group. Attend two teacher’s meetings. Attend Adult Bible classes for one month. Attend/observe two classes beforehand for each class I teach.

Evaluation: Feedback from Sunday School Superintendent and/or teachers, as well as one or two participants on each class given. Feedback from supervisor on preparation and written materials, and use of resources both within and outside the congregation.
Pastoral Care

**Goals:** To provide regular hospital and homebound visitation. To connect with members on crisis as well as non-crisis situations. To help develop and encourage members' spiritual/devotional life. To help members reflect theologically and acknowledge their faithfulness and struggles. To explore the areas of neglect. To welcome everyone to worship and the life of the church.

**Strategies/Objectives:** To learn 2-3 member's names each week. To develop 23 relationships within the pastoral care setting and maintain those relationships regularly through visitation, prayer and/or phone contact. To encourage individuals to use their gifts through sharing and presenting those gifts. To pray for and with those individuals.

**Evaluation:** To describe those specific individuals' faith journey, experience, needs and development throughout the school year.

Administration

**Goals:** Learn the weekly and monthly tasks that take place in the congregations and persons responsible for them. Learn how roles are defined by the needs of the congregation. Learn how goals are set within this congregation and managed.

**Strategies/Objectives:** Observe different committee meetings as well as at least one Board of Deacons and Session meeting. Read minutes of Session and Deacons every month. Know what projects are currently underway.

**Evaluation:** Feedback from Supervisor on how well I can assess what happens on any given week in specific terms.

Leadership

**Goals:** To progress in leadership in relationship to the congregation. To become more familiar with the congregation and take initiative to become actively involved in structured and unstructured ways, while keeping proper boundaries. To foster relationships which invite members to take initiative in strengthening and defining that relationship within proper boundaries.

**Strategies:** To complete goals and objectives of Learning/Serving Covenant. To develop existing leadership for the two new groups.

**Evaluation:** Lay Ministry Team, Supervisor, Sunday School Superintendent and leaders of new groups give feedback on goals completed.
Programming/Outreach

**Goals:** To assess and begin work on a Young Adults Group aimed primarily at singles. To assess and begin work on a married couples group.

**Strategies/Objectives:** Meet twice with core group first semester; discern where God is leading; assess needs of community, church, individuals in this age range; develop assessment of group identity; write a mission statement and sign a covenant by February; host two to three events by June. Re-evaluate group in May.

**Evaluation:** Develop an evaluation tool according to the goals developed by each group after mission statement is written. Fill out in May.

Spiritual Formation

**Goals:** Regularly maintain a devotional life. Regularly develop/use an art form that expresses devotionals: Painting/drawing; photography; and/or music.

**Strategies/Objectives:** To maintain a journal of daily devotions, reflecting on personal and theological growth and understanding.

**Evaluation:** Turn in reflections weekly to supervisor.

Sample II

Yet another student learning and serving in an agency developed a covenant that included vocational discernment as one of her goals.

Pastoral Care

**Goal:** To understand how pastoral relationships are built,

**Objectives:** Follow through on pastoral needs, and study the work of and dialogue with staff.

**Plan:** Participate in regular home visits; Assist with hospital calls as needed; Interact with staff and clients during agency activities.
Education

**Goal:** To gain an understanding of prevention and intervention programs for HIV/AIDS clients and their associations.

**Objectives:** Work with supervisor and staff members in the care process; Observe and reflect on current programs.

**Plan:** Work with chaplain and staff in planning and implementing the care process; Participate in weekly calls and conversations with staff, pastors and clients; Read and reflect on written resource materials about HIV/AIDS; Organize and develop a resource guide for HIV/AIDS care givers.

Administration

**Goal:** To gain an understanding of how agency work is carried out.

**Objectives:** Attend and reflect upon agency activities; Observe and discuss the function of individual programs & staff roles.

**Plan:** Attend and participate in regular meetings with chaplain and lay ministry team; Assist in agency programs and at related locations (i.e. hospital).

Vocational Discernment

**Goal:** To gain a clearer understanding of vocational intentions.

**Objectives:** Dialogue and reflect on a theology of ministry; Discuss and compare parish ministry and agency ministry.

**Plan:** Develop a brief theology of ministry statement; Reflect and analyze experiences in agency through personal journal writing.

Evaluation

Regular reflection and analysis with supervisor and lay ministry team; Midyear written evaluation by supervisor; Final written evaluation of student's development and progress by supervisor; A two page self-evaluation by student of growth and goals.

*(Marilyn Nash, Circle Family Care HIV/AIDS Early Intervention Program, 1996)*
Sample III

The following example from the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary uses three different resources - literary, human and denominational - to meet the stated objectives. This example also includes spiritual and personal goals.

First Ministry Focus: Preaching

Learning Goal: To learn to preach more effectively.

Objectives:

2. Human Resource: Interview one clergy woman and one clergy man to discuss the way they each plan, prepare and deliver sermons.
3. Denominational Resource: Contact the regional and national offices of my denomination to see what resources they might have on preaching and gender differences.

Action Plan:

1. Plan, prepare and deliver one sermon each month.
2. Write a manuscript for each sermon or make a full text transcription after it is preached.
3. Make arrangements to tape each sermon (videotape if at all possible.)

Second Ministry Focus: Evangelism

Learning Goal: To learn to do local church outreach and evangelism.

Objectives:

1. Literary Resource: Read *Church for the Unchurched* by George G. Hunter.
2. Human Resource: Interview one clergy person with proven experience in reaching out to the unchurched.
3. Denominational Resource: Contact the regional and national offices of my denomination to see what resources they might have on reaching the unchurched.

Action Plan:

1. Visit at least one church with an effective outreach program.
2. Write a rough draft of a plan to reach out to the unchurched.
3. Present the plan to the Evangelism Committee for discussion and revision. Means of Feedback:
   a. Discuss the insights from my reading with my supervisor and lay committee.
   b. Discuss the response of the Evangelism Committee with my supervisor.
   c. Discuss the insights from my reading with my supervisor and lay committee.
   d. Discuss the insights and notes from my interviews with my supervisor and lay committee.
Spiritual Focus: Prayer

Learning Goal: To learn new and more effective ways to pray.

Objectives:
1. Literary Resource: Read *Teach Me to Pray* by Tom Albin.
3. Denominational Resource: Contact the regional and national offices of my denomination to see what resources they might have on reaching the unchurched through prayer.

Action Plan:
1. Make time in my schedule for a regular prayer time.
2. Experiment with at least three different forms of prayer this semester.

Means of Feedback:
- Discuss the insights from my reading with my supervisor and lay committee.
- Discuss the insights and notes from my interview with my supervisor and lay committee.
- Discuss the insights from my prayer journal with my supervisor and lay committee (the journal will remain confidential and will not be shared).

Personal Care Focus: Personal Spiritual Direction

Learning Goal: To experience personal spiritual direction.

Objectives:
1. Literary Resource: Read *Exploring Spiritual Direction* by Alan Jones.
2. Human Resource: Interview one clergy person who is a spiritual director.
3. Denominational Resource: Contact the regional and national offices of my denomination to see what resources they might have on personal spiritual direction.

Action Plan:
1. Make time in my schedule for a bi-weekly meeting with a spiritual director.
2. Keep a journal of my thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Means of Feedback:
- Discuss the insights from my reading with my supervisor and lay committee.
- Discuss the insights and notes from my interview with my supervisor and lay committee.
- Discuss the insights from my spiritual direction with my supervisor and lay committee (the actual meetings will be remaining confidential and will not be shared).
ASSESSMENT
Assessment in theological education is grounded in three basic theological affirmations about the nature of God and God's activity in the human community.

We affirm that God has graced all Christians with gifts for ministry. In the priesthood of all believers, persons are empowered to identify and nurture their gifts for service in the church and world. In field education, we seek to provide means by which persons evaluate their skills, assess their gifts for ministry, and discern the nature of their calls.

We affirm that God is both judge and redeemer. As judge God chooses to relate to us as persons who are accountable as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ and stewards of all God's many gifts to us. Yet God is also the redeemer who empowers us through the Holy Spirit to grow, to be transformed, and to live in hope. In field education, accountability and affirmation are both important. Assessment is intended to be candid and honest and to promote growth. Evaluative judgments are always tentative and temporal, not ultimate and absolute.

We affirm that God calls humankind to live in community. Authority in the Church is exercised in community, not by individuals working apart from the body, and field education students, supervisors and lay committees all have important roles in the assessment process. The community of faith becomes the primary context in which persons grow in their understanding of ministry.

**Assessment and Its Purposes**

Terms like assessment and evaluation can be anxiety producing for those whose experience with either or both of these processes has not been positive. Evaluation, as understood in this context of supervised ministry, is a relatively narrow term which assumes certain standards against which an individual is measured as a means of determining the person’s level of knowledge or skill development. It seeks to describe the student's performance in ministry in terms of academic grades or statements which judge how the student compares to others being equipped for similar service.
Assessment is a much broader concept which builds upon the work of evaluation and attempts to assist the student in determining important vocational information like, "who am I," "who do I want to become," and "how can I get there." Assessment not only describes the person, but it also aids in choosing a path to constructive, new directions for growth. Whereas, evaluation is concerned primarily with "doing and knowing," assessment additionally raises issues of "being."

In supervised ministry the purpose of assessment is both educational (doing and knowing) and formational (being) in nature. It is conducted not only as a way to certify to the school or denomination that the student has met stated educational requirements; it is also done as a process leading to the individual's growth for ministry. It is a process which extends beyond the formal academic preparation of theological education, teaching the student to make effective use of evaluation throughout a lifetime of ministry.

Such assessment helps theological students discern the wisdom of their vocational choices in ministry. Assessment data may also contribute to the selection and screening of persons by appropriate church bodies.

Guidance, Assessment and Evaluation

Guidance, assessment and evaluation are integral ongoing activities which occur at regular intervals during the course of the field studies year at McCormick. The Learning/Serving Covenant, established early in the year and renegotiated as necessary, forms a foundation for guidance, assessment and evaluation to take place involving the student and his/her supervisor and lay ministry support team. Regularly scheduled supervisor and student conferences, and mid-year and year-end evaluations all provide ample opportunity for the partners in supervised ministry to participate.

Guidance, assessment and evaluation provide critical feedback for the student as s/he makes progress toward learning/serving goals and in the relationships of supervision and support which make up the field studies component of McCormick's Master degree programs.
MINISTRY AREAS ASSESSMENT

Educational Readiness for the Practice of Ministry

The Master of Divinity degree at McCormick Theological Seminary is described as a three year program to prepare persons for ordained ministry in a church and for vocations of religious leadership in related agencies. The degree represents an educational readiness for the practice of ministry, such as is required by denominational ordaining bodies and certifying agencies. Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development degrees are awarded upon the completion of the required course load, the recommendation of a review committee, and the decision of the faculty that all requirements have been met including one year of field studies and the course MIN404/405 Reflection on Ministry.

Readiness for ministry at McCormick is more than a matter of academic record keeping. The practice of ministry presumes certain competencies which belong to excellence in all forms of ministry. Historically, ministers have been expected to preach and lead worship, to be educators and care givers in a congregation or related agency as well as in a larger community, to be concerned about public good, to be thoughtful and insightful moral and spiritual leaders, and to be effective administrators as they interpret the traditions of faith and practice which belong to their religious community. Increasingly, they must be world citizens as they offer leadership in local communities, pursuing a larger peace and justice in a world of many cultures and peoples.

The Seminary has the responsibility to state what it believes to be significant initial accomplishment in the various areas of ministry and to offer ways to gain and assess it. The educational program for achievement in such areas of ministry is best carried out in the practice of ministry under supervision; therefore experiential education and field studies are central.

The seminary faculty is supplemented by field faculty and lay ministry support teams in assessing the level of achievement of any student in a way that takes account of the thickly cultured contexts within which effective acts of ministry are performed. To assist in this assessment, five ministry area statements have been developed as guidelines and standards which provide a framework for integrating formal studies with the practice of ministry. It is important to use these guidelines to help shape course selections, learning/serving covenants, and in all discussions related to assessment and evaluation.
MINISTRY AREA STATEMENTS

Each statement has several parts which when taken together are designed to recognize and assess achievement in the practice of ministry. The statements help to facilitate and guide reflection on ministry experience no matter how competent an individual is.

RATIONALE: states the purpose of the particular area

OUTCOME: describes the practice in the particular area

DEMONSTRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT: details relevant activities

CRITERIA AND STANDARDS: describes high quality practice
ADMINISTRATOR

RATIONALE
Administration is a dimension of all the Church’s ministry in which leadership skills are used to enlist and enable persons and groups to engage in acts of ministry and to evaluate them. The practice of ministry involves ministers in a variety of administrative responsibilities and management tasks with congregations, judicatories, or agencies to develop leaders. The minister brings to this role a conviction of faith nourished through diverse educational experiences.

OUTCOME: MEANING AND PRACTICE
The student who understands administration as the practice of ministry can plan and carry out, individually and with others, within the context of Christian tradition, the administrative responsibilities and tasks necessary to advance the mission and goals of the congregation, judicatory, or agency. Continued maturation and growth in the development of abilities to plan and implement responsibilities and tasks are critical for effective ministry.

DEMONSTRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
Ministry Activities on Site - The student will engage in two different leadership responsibilities, one where she or he is the primary administrator and the other as part of an administrative team. Both the primary administration and the shared leadership activities are done in consultation with field and seminary faculty, and with persons in the congregation, judicatory, or agency and make provisions for a comprehensive evaluation.

Instructional Activities - The student will participate in relevant courses, independent studies, and experiential learning activities and work to apply, practice, and demonstrate learning in pastoral administration.

Special Educational Opportunities (e.g. church administration workshops)

Reflection Paper - The student will reflect with her/his faculty advisor on the significance of administration for the practice of ministry and write a one page reflection paper articulating that understanding.
COMPONENTS: CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

The student is able to understand the congregation or agency within which administrative responsibility is borne in terms of relevant theoretical perspectives and appropriate institutional practices. Such understanding takes account of the religious cultural traditions, organizational systems, leadership patterns, institutional mission, and social context of the congregation or agency. It is resourced by knowledge of the behavioral sciences, critical theory, theological interpretations, and conversations with other persons involved.

The student is able to envision and develop with others a plan for meeting a challenge for ministry in a congregation or agency by clarifying goals, forming objectives, identifying resources, and selecting a mode of shared leadership appropriate to its polity and the situation. Examples of such challenges are stewardship, resource development, evangelism, worship, and community and global mission. Such planning is a creative response to challenges for ministry and embodies the values and purposes espoused by the congregation or agency. It expresses the faith commitment of the student and other persons involved, using clear methods and public processes for designing a plan for ministry.

The student is able to manage the planned activities and evaluate the outcome as an act of ministry effectively meeting the challenge and enabling the people involved to mature in their own faith and ministerial capabilities. Such management and evaluation takes account of social structures, processes, and cultural and religious forms through which the congregation or agency carries on its life and meets the challenge for ministry. The end-in-view is the transformation of persons and situations better to embody the justice, grace, and joy exemplified in the Gospel.

The student is able to work collaboratively with others as a person of faith and to develop a personal style of leadership which invites cooperation, invokes consensus, deals with conflict, and creates a climate of mutual trust as a basis for effective action. Such leadership grows out of mature self-knowledge, developed relational skills, and a genuine desire to enhance the well-being of others and to promote the legitimate purposes of the congregation or agency. It is informed by the student’s own theological perspective, knowledge of leadership theory, and attention to the concrete setting.
CAREGIVER

RATIONALE
Effective ministerial leadership includes capability for faithful and intelligent care-giving, both in the role of a primary CAREGIVER and as in developing a caring community. The goal of care-giving is to offer an appropriate environment for personal growth and enhancement of relationships in the context of a faith community. The minister is a pastoral leader in the setting of a congregation or agency.

OUTCOME: MEANING AND PRACTICE
The student can intentionally respond with appropriate care-giving to individuals, families, or groups in the setting of a congregation or agency. Such care-giving brings together a religious concern for persons, knowledge of social and psychological dynamics and structures that enhance or impede emotional and spiritual growth, and the resources of the Christian tradition that nourish and guide it.

DEMONSTRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT

Ministry Activities on Site - The student will engage in a supervised relation of primary care-giving for individuals, families or groups and take leadership in planning a program to equip others to improve their own understanding and practice of care-giving. The primary care-giving and program activity are done in consultation with field and seminary faculty, and with persons in the congregation or agency.

Instructional Activities - The student will participate in relevant courses, independent studies, and experiential learning activities and apply, practice, and demonstrate learnings in pastoral care-giving.

Special Educational Opportunities (e.g., pastoral care workshops)

Reflection Paper - The student will reflect with her/his faculty advisor on the significance of care-giving for the practice of ministry and write a one page reflection paper expressing their perspective.
COMPONENTS: CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

The student is able to analyze information about persons and groups, including their contexts, and to assess the important issues which must be dealt with in a care-giving relation and resources that can be drawn upon (including the caregiver’s own). Such an analysis and assessment is achieved through the use of appropriate methods, carefully gathered information, multiple sources of knowledge, and an experienced awareness of human interactions.

The student is able to clarify her or his relation to the persons or groups who are recipients of care-giving. This includes awareness of one's own strengths and limitations, perspectives on the Christian religious tradition, appropriate social and psychological theory, and knowledge of and experience with therapeutic processes. Such clarity of understanding respects the integrity of both CARE GIVER and the persons/groups being cared for. It is informed by self-knowledge as well as careful observations of others and insightful use of theoretical and practical resources.

The student is able to formulate appropriate goals for a care-giving relation in consultation with the persons or groups who are the recipients, and to carry out a mutually agreeable plan of action. Such goals reflect the gifts and needs of persons/groups in the care-giving relation, the insights and capabilities of the student, elements of the situation, and the values of the tradition of faith which offers support and guidance to care-giving in the congregation or agency.

The student is able to evaluate the outcome of a care-giving relation in the light of a carefully reflected understanding of pastoral care, the personal growth in faith and human interactions of the persons or groups involved, and the enrichment of the relevant communities. Such evaluation is honest and informed, conducted with a view to locating growth issues for both the student and the persons/groups involved, and leading to personal and corporate change.
PREACHING

RATIONALE
Preaching is an integral part of the practice of ministry. Within the context of worship, the proclamation of the Word is an essential event. Careful preparation and practice enhance the preacher's effectiveness as a personal witness to the Gospel, as a pastoral theologian, as a communicator, and church leader.

OUTCOME: MEANING AND PRACTICE
The student can prepare and deliver effective sermons within the context of Christian worship which are expressive of faith, grounded in Scripture, responsive to Christian tradition, and reflective of his/her commitment to personal and communal transformation.

DEMONSTRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
Ministry Activities on Site - The student will preach two sermons in a congregation (or other setting), prepared and reflected on in a collaborative relation with persons in that setting, and commented on by field and seminary faculty.

Instructional Activities - The student will participate in relevant instructional activities such as biblical studies, congregational studies, homiletic and worship studies, theological and ethical studies.

Special Educational Opportunities (e.g., preaching workshops)

Reflection Paper - The student will reflect with his/her faculty advisor on the significance of preaching for the practice of ministry and write a one page reflection paper.

COMPONENTS: CRITERIA AND STANDARDS
The student is able to interpret biblical texts in their historical, literary, and theological contexts and to interpret the congregation (or other setting) in its social, cultural, historical and theological context. Such interpretation is faithful to both the text and the setting, respecting their integrity and seeking to understand their significant meanings. It is informed by broadly based knowledge of both text and setting and careful exegetical method. It is discerning of the contribution and understanding that the text may make to the life of the Church and its mission in the world.
The student is able to **communicate** through a sermon and to deliver it in an appropriate and effective manner. Such a sermon has a clear theme and purpose accessible to those who are receiving it, is well-organized, and creatively presented. The sermon is delivered with good use of voice and body, in an engaged attitude, and in a manner which fits the preacher, the congregation, and the content of the sermon.

The student is able to **integrate** his/her own identity, the content/style of the sermon, the character of the worshiping congregation, and the historical location. Such integration connects the student's personal and professional identity with the situation of preaching, is respectful of appropriate boundaries (e.g., personal, social), and responsible to the demands of the text and the setting, presenting the hearers with the meaning of the text.

The student is able to **plan and prepare** sermons thoughtfully, with a disciplined management of time, and a full engagement of her/his personal gifts. Such preparation uses a variety of resources to perform the sermon, chooses appropriate methods of study, manages the time required, and brings together the preacher's gifts and those of the congregation.
EDUCATOR/TEACHER

RATIONALE
The practice of ministry requires an understanding of religious education in a broadly defined context including worship, mission, and stewardship, as well as church school and programs for special groups. The goal of such education is to nurture the optimal faith development of persons of every age within a religious tradition. The minister is an educational leader in the setting of a congregation or agency.

OUTCOME: MEANING AND PRACTICE
The student can design, carry out, and evaluate an effective religious educational program, individually and with others, in the setting of a congregation or agency. Such a program connects curriculum, methods of teaching and learning, and resources in that setting to the religious gifts and needs of persons and groups. It also exemplifies the student's own ability as a teacher/learner and a person of maturing faith.

DEMONSTRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
Ministry Activities on Site - The student will teach a group and provide leadership in planning a religious educational program individually and/or with others. The teaching and program activity is done in consultation with field and seminary faculty, and with persons in the congregation or agency.

Instructional Activities - The student will participate in relevant courses, independent studies, and experiential learning activities and work to apply, practice, and demonstrate learning's in educational practice.

Special Educational Opportunities (e.g., educational workshops)

Reflection Paper - The student will reflect with her/his faculty advisor on the significance of teaching and religious education for the practice of ministry and write a one page reflection paper.
COMPONENTS: CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

The student is able to **design** the content of an educational activity appropriate to the needs and interests of the persons involved, reflecting the relevance of the Christian religious tradition, and identifying the educational goal and learning objectives relevant to the social/cultural environment. Such a design respects the integrity of the faith journey of persons involved and of the Christian tradition in both its larger and local form, and focuses on issues pertinent to the congregation/agency and its environment.

The student is able to **plan** utilizing appropriate educational theory and methods and integrate them with the specific ways a congregation or agency approaches religious education, worship, mission, and stewardship. Such plans are an important part of the overall life of a congregation/agency, and reflect the interpretations and decisions that inform other aspects of its existence as well as the best religious educational knowledge available.

The student is able to **lead** a teaching/learning activity or program planning process using the selected content and learning theory and methods with the identified learning group. Such leadership is creative in its use of resources, responsive in its relations to learning/planning groups, and effective in nourishing faith development of persons involved.

The student is able to **participate** in a critique of the design and implementation of learning activities/educational program planning which includes an assessment of the student's educational leadership, an evaluation of the significance for the persons involved and for the congregation or agency, and a proposal for subsequent development. Such critique is well informed, judicious, and clear in its identification of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for the continued growth of the student as educator/teacher, for the congregation/agency as a setting for religious education, and for the persons who are part of the learning group.
PUBLIC MINISTRY

RATIONALE
The witness of the church in the world includes the practice of ministry for the public good. The practitioner interacts and forms alliances with persons who bring a variety of perspectives to a situation. In that setting, practitioners are called to articulate the faith that impels them to action, drawing on personal commitments which include a passion for justice, compassion with the oppressed, and coherence between commitment and action.

OUTCOME: MEANING AND PRACTICE
The student can with others plan, carry out, and evaluate responsible action on a public issue, anchored in Christian commitment expressed contextually. Such public ministry demands appropriate analysis in the midst of conflict, creative development of strategy and tactics, leadership which mobilizes without creating dependency, and ongoing theological reflection in relation to action.

DEMONSTRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
Ministry Activities on Site - Working with a group, the student will engage in acts of public ministry that demand leadership responsibility in analyzing, planning, implementing, and evaluating a project for the public good. This activity is done with regular consultation with field and seminary faculty, persons in the congregation or agency, and those affected by the project.

Instructional Activities - The student will participate in relevant courses, independent studies, and experiential learning activities (e.g., biblical, historical and theological/ethical studies, social, cultural, and political studies, organizational methods, etc.).

Educational Opportunities - (e.g., workshops on intergroup conflict, poverty, domestic violence, etc.) related to the projects and the larger issue of public good.

Reflection Paper - The student will reflect with her/his faculty advisor on the significance of public ministry for the practice of ministry and write a one-to-two page reflection paper. The student will connect this achievement in public ministry to prior learning, activities in related fields, and her/his own faith development and leadership skills.
COMPONENTS: CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

The student is able to **analyze** in cooperation with others the wider communal context of an issue of public concern, including historical/cultural, social/economic, political and religious factors, and the organization's capacity to act in relation to it. Such analysis takes account of the range of possible action, the structures and processes which enable or impede effective action, the leadership patterns of interested communities, and the theological dimensions of care and justice addressed by biblical interpretation, historical awareness, and theological/ethical resources.

The student is able to **develop** in cooperation with others a general strategy and specific plan of action and to discern appropriate leadership styles for herself/himself and to encourage others. Such planning includes identifying sources of support, possible barriers, necessary resource materials, as well as having familiarity with critical theories of social change and human transformation and the viewpoints of the marginalized.

The student is able to **contribute** to implementing the plan of action, to exercise leadership, and to evaluate the outcome as an act of public ministry appropriate to the organization and the demands of the situation, leading to further reflection and action. Such a plan of action is based on clear and public processes for making decisions and taking actions and informed by multiple sources of information and a critically reflected theological and social perspective. It takes account of the many environments which shape effective action and leads to more just and healthful social structures, group relations, and political arrangements.

The student is able to **work collegially** with others as a person of faith with valuable knowledge and skills and to develop a leadership style that invites cooperation, deals with conflict productively, and creates a climate of mutual trust as a basis for effective action. Such leadership presumes maturing self-knowledge, developed relational skills, and strong commitment to public ministry in the context of the organization and its purposes. It manifests an awareness of the roles and actions of others in common action and the degree to which those involved are respected and their various gifts honored.
EVALUATION
THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Evaluation serves multiple purposes. It teaches students to make effective use of self-appraisal throughout a lifetime of ministry. Evaluation also helps students discern the wisdom of her/his vocational choice which may include a confirmation of one’s call to ordained ministry or guide some to another form of Christian ministry. It provides a means by which the student is accountable for her/his service in the field studies site.

The purpose of the midyear evaluation is to determine the extent to which the mutually established goals of the Learning/Serving Covenant are being fulfilled and whether renegotiation is necessary. It describes the beginning of the learning/serving relationship, and preliminary progress of the covenantal goals. In addition, it notes strengths and weaknesses in skills, knowledge, attitudes and habits and the student's on-going growth in vocational clarity.

The final evaluation focuses on the basic competencies identified in the learning/serving covenant as it relates to the overall Learning Outcomes of the Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development programs. It identifies the student's strengths using a continuum scale and allows for articulation of any needs for further development including professional formation, spiritual formation, vocational clarity and skills in interpersonal relations, social analysis and theological discernment. It considers the student's ability to integrate experience with theory, private convictions with public actions and individual discipleship with life in Christian community. Secondly, the final evaluation asks for reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of various program components (e.g. Learning/Serving Covenant, placement process, supervision, lay ministry support team experience, and seminary support). Evaluation should be both descriptive and prescriptive. It is not a final judgment but rather part of an ongoing process of assessment which should continue through one's ministry. Optimally, it should contain no surprises.

Evaluations are a critical component of the seminary’s advising process. The mid-year evaluation is an integral part of the Middler year review. Supervisors are frequently invited to be a part of this review process with the student and their academic advisor.

The year-end evaluation is used in the Senior review as the student looks forward to graduation. Supervisors may be invited to join the student for conversation with their advisor and another member of the faculty designated by the dean; in addition, the year-end evaluation is often requested by denominational Judicatories and governing boards engaged in the ordination process. It is also kept in the Registrar's file for five years.

The supervisor is responsible for guiding the evaluation process, considering input from the student and the lay ministry support team, preparing the evaluation and submitting it to the seminary in a timely manner.
MIDYEAR EVALUATION

Please submit to the Office of Experiential Education and Field Studies.

As covenant partners in the preparation of church leaders, it is time not only to review the student's progress but to also reflect on our own responsibilities. As student, supervisor, and lay ministry support team reflect on the student's learning and serving, please review the responsibility checklists to determine if there are any areas that need attention and note any adjustments in the evaluation.

- Describe the beginning phase of the supervisory relationship including regularity of supervisory conferences, usual agenda, and use of written reports by the student.

- Evaluate the beginning phase of the learning/serving relationship. What has happened to facilitate a positive relationship between student, site and supervisor? What would you have done differently? How would you describe the student's general temperament/disposition as she/he has been experienced in your setting (e.g. confident, nervous, casual, angry, serious, warm, joyful, etc.)?

- Describe the progress made on the Learning/Serving Covenant goals. Does the Learning/Serving Covenant need to be renegotiated at this juncture? In what areas? (If revisions are to be made, please submit these to the Office of Experiential Education and Field Studies.)

- Describe and evaluate the student's strengths and weaknesses in ministry, as observed thus far. Have you discussed the strengths and weaknesses with the student? How does the student respond and make use of feedback?

- What skills, knowledge, attitudes or habits do you perceive need additional attention in the coming months? Are there personal or professional issues that need continued work as the student prepares for ministry?

- How would you evaluate the student's vocational clarity or sense of call to ministry at this point?

- What is the student's leadership style (thoughtful, cooperative, directing, forceful, competitive, tactful, flexible, inspiring, adapting, reserved, etc.)?

- How has the lay ministry support team functioned so far? What mid-course corrections are needed?

- Upon completion of the written form of this evaluation, it should be signed and dated by the site supervisor, a representative of the lay ministry support team, and the student.
FINAL EVALUATION

There are two parts to this evaluation. The first section asks for your evaluation of the student's competencies in five areas related to the outcomes for all students in the McCormick Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry and Master of Discipleship Development programs. The second section asks for narrative reflection on strengths and weaknesses of the various program components. Thank you.

Student Name: ____________________________________________

Evaluators Name: __________________________________________

Please place an x by the appropriate title: ___ Supervisor ___ Student ___LMST

Section 1: Evaluation of Student Competencies

McCormick Theological Seminary believes each student who completes its Master of Divinity, Master of Urban Ministry, or Master of Discipleship Development course of studies should exhibit basic competencies in a variety of areas essential to a future ministry that is faithful and fruitful, and has developed a set of outcomes to help measure the success of both the seminary and the student. You are being asked to evaluate the student in very specific behaviors related to those outcomes, using a seven-point scale. It is expected a student's competencies will be varied with some competencies at the beginning/developing level and some competencies more evolved.

Please provide a numerical ranking for each statement, using the scale provided.

1. A student who completes the Field Studies Program will be able to............ lead communities of faith with integrity, imagination and compassion.

   Scale:
   Exemplary (7) ...... Excellent (6) ...... Good(5) ...... Adequate(4) ...... Developing(3) ...... Beginning(2) ...... NA(1)

   ___ Integrates her or his own private convictions and public actions in a manner consistent with a clearly formed set of personal values.

   ___ Communicates in a style and manner that is open, honest, straightforward, and fits the cultural setting of the congregation.

   ___ Uses pastoral authority and standing to focus attention on issues, not on self.

   ___ Engages others in ways that encourage and empowers them, but does not do their work for them.

   ___ Promotes theological reflection on both private convictions and congregational commitments.

Comments:
2. A student who completes the Field Studies Program will be able to analyze social locations and understand how context shapes and challenges mission.

Scale: Exemplary (7) ... Excellent (6) ... Good (5) ... Adequate (4) ... Developing (3) ... Beginning (2) ... NA (1)

- Identifies the social, cultural and theological factors influencing the world view of those with whom he/she ministers, both in the immediate geographical context and in wider settings (local, national, global, denominational, etc.).
- Draws a broad variety of resources - the biblical witness, social and cultural analysis, and personal theological reflections - into conversation with local and global sources and settings.
- Positions church/ministry as integrated into community, and can articulate the connections, both direct and indirect, between the wider social and cultural events and local ministry.
- Recognizes his/her own strengths and values in ministry and the possible ways in which they might influence positively or negatively her/his own local ministry.

Comments:

3. A student who completes the Field Studies Program will be able to perform skills related to nurturing the life of faith for self and others (e.g. preaching, teaching, pastoral care, leading public worship and public ministries).

Scale: Exemplary (7) ... Excellent (6) ... Good (5) ... Adequate (4) ... Developing (3) ... Beginning (2) ... NA (1)

- Accepts people different from her/himself; listens empathically to understand and discern needs without personal agenda intruding; respects confidential information in appropriate ways.
- Demonstrates poise and presence in the public role of preacher/worship leader.
- Interprets the biblical text in preaching in ways that are relevant to the community, faithful to the text, and uses lively and engaging language.
- Communicates Christian beliefs clearly by taking into consideration the concepts and methodologies suitable for the developmental age of learners and the diversity of learning styles.
- Identifies and analyzes social/community issues relating them to biblical/theological insights that encourage participation in the development of strategies for social change that integrate concern for personal faith/ethics with concerns for social justice.

Comments:
4. A student who completes the Field Studies Program will be able to practice appropriate habits of spiritual formation and self-care.

Scale:
Exemplary (7) ...... Excellent (6)...... Good(5) ...... Adequate(4) ...... Developing(3) ...... Beginning(2) ...... NA(1)

_____ Exhibits sustained growth in authentic personal piety/devotional life/spiritual formation.
_____ Practices a Sabbath lifestyle with healthy balance of work and rest/recreation.
_____ Keeps regular time for prayer, meditation and discernment.
_____ Tends family relationships and friendships.
_____ Understands and interprets his/her experience of personal faith journey and ministry experiences in light of faith tradition and theological disciplines.

Comments:

5. A student who completes the Field Studies Program will be able to articulate and experience a growing sense of vocational identity.

Scale:
Exemplary (7)...... Excellent (6)...... Good(5) ...... Adequate(4) ...... Developing(3) ...... Beginning(2)...... NA(1)

_____ Shows evidence of an increased clarity about her/his vocation amidst the people of God.
_____ Expresses knowledge of self - both limitations and strengths - and how those qualities fit into and affect the community of faith.
_____ Engages in relationships with others that are ethically appropriate, respectful of boundaries and built upon a well-nurtured relationship with God.
_____ Employs the skill of theological reflection to discern what constitutes ministry and how God's spirit is evident in one's life and ongoing discernment of call.

Comments:

Signatures: (only for supervisor final evaluation) indicating that this evaluation was discussed by Supervisor with the Student.

Student: ______________________________________________________ Date: ______________

Supervisor: ____________________________________________________ Date: ______________
Section 2: Evaluation of Field Education Program Components

McCormick Theological Seminary believes that a healthy and robust field education program is essential to training persons for ministry. Please answer the following questions at whatever length you feel is warranted; use additional sheets if necessary. These answers will help McCormick improve and strengthen the program for years to come.

1. Briefly describe and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your experience in the field studies program at McCormick Theological Seminary. Please identify the role you played in the process, and, as you are able, address each of the following:

   Learning/Serving Covenant: Describe the usefulness of the Learning/Serving Covenant. Was it renegotiated at any time during the year? If a particular goal was not met, describe why.

   The site. What factors at this site promoted or inhibited student learning? How? Should this site be renewed as a learning site? Why or why not?
The supervisor and supervisory experience. Describe and reflect on the interaction between the student and the supervisor, including frequency of meeting, helpfulness of reflection time and supervision, and importance of the role modeling done by the supervisor.

The lay ministry support team. Describe and discuss the interactions between the student and the lay ministry support team, such as frequency and style of interaction, feedback on specific practices of ministry (e.g., administration, preaching, teaching, caring for others, etc.), encouragement and support, and advice offered.

The Experiential Education and Field Studies Program at McCormick. Describe and discuss processes such as site selection, selection of supervisors, matching students with sites, ongoing support, communication, and the materials provided for you.

Concrete, constructive suggestions for program improvement are welcome. Please feel free to offer any you might have. Thank you.
RESOURCES ON THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
Assumptions and Definitions
Theological reflection is an integral part of the field education process. One does not learn solely from experience but rather from reflecting on experience. Theological reflection involves examination of the motives and assumptions of action. It pushes us to look beyond the action and investigate the accuracy and validity of our assumptions and motives. It is a disciplined approach to help us make sense of our ministry. Theological reflection requires us to examine our faith in light of experience and to examine our experience in light of our faith.

Theological Reflection
• focuses on what one believes and how one lives out that belief;
• presses the question about where God is present in one's life to the implications for that Presence;
• brings the narratives of God's activity and the narratives of human experience into dialogue for the purpose of shaping the convictions out of which people live;
• facilitates the assessment of the experience;
• calls upon historical, psychological, sociological, and theological resources to understand the human social condition and to discern the power, activity, and will of God in a ministry event; and
• is examining one's faith in the light of experience and experience in the light of one's faith.

A Theological Reflection Model
The student will be sharing a variety of ministry situations with you during the course of the year. As you reflect with the student on those situations, the following process may be helpful.

• After the student shares a ministry situation with you either verbally or with a written incident report, ask clarifying questions. (Who was present; what happened; what was significant for the student?)
• Help the student identify the most important moment. Help the student focus on that specific moment and thoughts and feelings connected with that moment.
• Share any experiences or from your own lives in which you have experienced the same or similar thoughts and feelings.
• Develop an image or metaphor which captures the thoughts and feelings of the incident. What kinds of perspectives does this image offer?
• Identify any biblical passages or events in Christian history which speak of this event and/or metaphor. Read the passage together.
• How does the scripture interact with this event? How does the scripture shape your understanding of this incident? Would you do anything differently the next time?
As Christians, if we believe God exists as a loving presence in our lives, how do we make connections with that loving presence day by day? How do we think or feel about God when crisis hits or when difficult decisions needs to be made? The following is a series of questions to enable reflection with God. Although you could reflect in your own mind, it is better to write your responses. A different process takes place when you commit your thoughts to paper.

1. Name one event that stands out for you this week.

2. What happened in this event?

3. How did you feel?

4. How do your faith/beliefs/values speak to this event? What doubts were evoked?

5. How was God present to you in this situation? How was God absent?

6. What did you learn from this experience?

7. What might you try to do next time?

8. What question still exists for you?
INDIVIDUAL THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Naming the Experience
Choose an event, a moment, a conversation, or a situation that has challenged, stimulated, or disturbed you. As you recall the event, ask yourself:

What happened? Who was involved? What did you do or say? How did you feel? What did you think?

Reflecting on the Experience
Exploring another layer in this event, ask yourself:

What challenged, stimulated, or disturbed you? What was happening for others in the situation? What values inform your reflections? What values are in conflict with yours? Are there other ways to look at this event: social, economic, historical, cultural, and psychological?

Digging Deeper
To discover theological layers, ask yourself:

Does this event remind you of a scripture passage? What theological issues are present? Where is God present for you in this situation? Where is God present for others?

Making Connections
To move on with this situation, ask yourself:

Are you affirmed in your present actions or beliefs? Were you challenged to change present actions or beliefs? What will you do now? What do you need? What have you learned about yourself? About God? What question still lingers?

Presenting to the Group
Either verbally, or in written form, present your reflection to the group for discussion. As you think about the discussion time, what would help you to continue reflecting on your situation? Here are some suggestions:

Is there a question still lingering? Can group members share their experiences with a similar issue? Do you want to see more layers to the presenting issue? Can the group help you clarify the issue? Do you want further theological discussion?
METHODS OF THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION WITH LAY MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM

Together, the lay committee members and the student can explore a ministry report by following the steps outlined below. Very often the steps will merge or overlap, and that's to be expected. A key goal of this method is to prevent readers from leaping too quickly to suggesting an “answer” or opinion to the student!

1. **Informative Stage**
   - Everyone reads the report.
   - Individuals may ask the student for clarification of unclear points in the report.

2. **Evaluation Stage**
   - The student is given an opportunity to identify the emotions he or she experienced at the time of the incident as well as his/her feelings about the incident now. Members of the lay committee can share their feelings as well.
   - The student (and others) shares feelings about significant “characters” in the report.
   - The student and others identify key issues in the report.

3. **Theologizing Stage**
   Participants explore:
   - New insights about self? Humankind? Church?
   - Insights from Christian tradition
   - Denominational guidance

4. **Resolution Stage**
   Participants explore:
   - Alternative ways of viewing the situation
   - Realistic options
   - What do you want to have happen?
   - Best option?

5. **Commitment Stage**
   Participant considers:
   - What have you learned about ministry?
   - Self?
   - What changes are in order?
   - What new skills do you need to develop?
During a lay committee meeting a student may present a situation that she or he has encountered during the week. This particular situation may be new to the student, present a variety of pastoral roles for intervention, or may be a theological or ethical dilemma to the student.

Instead of helping the student "solve" the problem or "fix" the situation, lay committee members ask questions seeking to open the presenting situation to new light. In some disciplines, this is known as shifting from "problem solving" to "problem setting."

Such problem setting questions might be:

- How would you like to play God in this situation?
- Who in your family of origin is most like this parishioner?
- Where do you think the Spirit of God is in the midst of this crisis?
- Is healing possible in this situation?
- What are three different roles the pastor could play given the presenting situation?
- Who is most like you in this situation?
- If forgiveness were to be experienced, what form might it take?
- What would reconciliation look like to you?
- Is God's justice or mercy called for in this situation?
- Can you forgive yourself for your inadequacies in this area of ministry?

Following a time of discussion, the student can identify any key learnings or insights that have occurred.
APPROACHES TO SUPERVISED THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

Adapted from San Francisco Theological Seminary
Field Education & Integrative Studies Manual

APPROACH ONE: (Note: This approach calls for more than one week to complete. Therefore, it may be used on a monthly basis with the student.)

Steps Prior to Supervision Session:
1. The student writes up a one-page case study of a situation she/he has encountered in the field placement setting. This case study should not be a “shining star” example used to prove what fine potential the student has for ministry. Rather, this case study should be one in which the student has questions, concerns or doubts about her/his response or future role, it provides a brief narrative of the event and questions/issues emerging in reflection.
2. This case study should be in the hands of the supervisor at least two days prior to the supervisory session in order to allow ample reading and reflection time.

Steps during First Supervision Session:
3. During the supervision session, questions for clarification may be asked of the student by the supervisor in order to gain further clarity about the case.
4. In the same session, the student comes with a list of at least five theological issues raised by the presenting case study.
5. Together, the student and supervisor come to common agreement as to the one crucial theological issue raised in this particular case study.

Subsequent Steps during the Week:
6. The student then takes the agreed upon theological issue and during the next week reflects upon all of the Biblical stories and passages that shed light upon this particular situation.
7. Again, prior to the supervision session, the student gives the supervisor a list of no less than five possible Biblical passages. Accompanying each Biblical passage is a two-sentence summary of the reason(s) for the selection of each particular passage.

Steps during the Second Supervisory Session:
8. Student and supervisory pastor review the Biblical texts and come to common agreement as to one choice.

Steps for Follow-up:
9. A three-page paper is written and submitted to the supervisory pastor.
APPROACH TWO

Steps Prior to Supervision Session:

1. Again, the student writes up a one-page case study of a situation she/he has encountered in the field placement setting. This case study should be one in which the student has questions, concerns or doubts about her/his response or potential future role.

2. This case study should be given to the supervisor at least two days prior to the supervision session in order to allow ample reading and reflection time.

3. On their own, student and supervisor come up with a list of issues presented by the case as well as Biblical texts informing understanding of and response to these issues.

4. Prior to supervisory session, both student and pastor take no more than ten minutes to write a reflective piece on the case study to be shared during time together.

Steps during Supervisory Session:

5. Same as #8 in Approach One.

Steps for Follow-up:

6. Same as #9 in Approach One.
GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

MTS recognizes that theological education for ministry involves professional preparation as well as academic preparation. In the course of fulfilling the experiential education requirement for Master of Divinity degree, Master of Urban Ministry, and Master of Discipleship Development, students will be placed in professional ministry roles and situations. While in such roles and situations experiential education students must recognize that there are certain legitimate professional standards and expectations. Denominational bodies, congregations, and agencies to which the student will be called will likely have their own code of professional ethics. While these guidelines are specific to field site situations, they are also applicable to continuing service in ministry.

The Principal of Pastoral Responsibility

- Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship, and service as you strive to be responsive to God's will.
- Use your knowledge and professional standing for the benefit of the people.
- Provide ministry only for those problems, issues, or conditions that are within the reasonable boundaries of your competence. At those times when you are unable, or unwilling for appropriate reasons, to provide professional help, take pastoral initiative and locate other professionals or appropriate persons and ministries for continuation of ministry. Become well acquainted with the community's pastoral ministries and social service agencies.
- Regard all people with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God. Avoid discriminating against or refusing opportunities to or from anyone on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disabilities, age, or any other human condition.
- Be truthful and honest in your relationships with others.
- Refrain from abusive, addictive, and exploitative behavior and if it occurs, seek help to overcome such behavior.
- Refrain from engaging in scandalous and malicious gossip.
- Avoid dual relationships with parishioners and clients (e.g., business or close personal relationships), which could impair your capacity to minister with integrity to all. Thus friendships that might lead to business dealings or to amorous relationships which might affect your professional effectiveness are to be avoided.

IMPORTANT NOTE: All forms of sexual behavior or harassment with parishioners, clients and other staff members are unethical, even when that person invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. In addition, such behavior may be a punishable violation of the MTS “Policy on Sexual Harassment” and/or criminal laws. Sexual behavior is defined as, but limited to, all forms of overt and covert seductive speech, gestures or physical contacts of a sexual nature. See the MTS “Policy on Sexual Harassment” for more information about the definition of sexual harassment.
The Principle of Self Care

- Seek out and engage in collegial relationships.
- Manage your personal life in a healthful fashion and seek appropriate assistance for any of your personal problems or conflicts. Your field site is not the appropriate place for personal therapy.
- Maintain your spiritual life as a priority through the practice of spiritual disciplines and, if desired, meeting regularly with a spiritual mentor.
- Remain accountable for honoring the duty of self-improvement, continuing education, and physical well-being.

The Principle of Confidentiality

- Respect the integrity and protect the welfare of all persons.
- Do not disclose the confidences of parishioners, clients, or staff members to anyone, unless mandated by law.

Note: These standards of confidentiality are not to be used to avoid intervention when it is necessary: e.g., when there is evidence of abuse. Therefore, discuss with your supervisor how confidential matters will be handled. Also inform yourself of the situations in which you are legally accountable.

The Principle of Stewardship

- Be a faithful steward of and fully accountable for funds and property related to your ministry.
- Conserve and allocate the financial assets of your site according to the stated goals and priorities of the local ministry body, the community of which it is a part, the Church Universal, and the goodness of God's creation.
- Refrain from incurring debtedness which compromises your ministry.
- Guard against the use of personal monies for professional duties and/or the use of church/agency monies for personal use.
- Learn and use effective time management skills.

Resources: San Francisco Theological Seminary Presbyterian Church (USA) draft document on ethical conduct for Clergy 12/11/97, Approved by Faculty.
PROCEDURE FOR TERMINATION/DISENGAGEMENT OF PLACEMENT

It is the intention the Office of Experiential Education and Field Studies at McCormick Theological Seminary to arrange the best possible match of students with partnering institutions committed to the preparation of women and men for ministry. Our task is to facilitate a successful placement for all parties. There may be occasions when a match does not best meet the needs of the student or the site. In those instances, the Field Studies Office encourages students and supervisors to look for ways to work together recognizing that differing expectations are operative in any organization. You are invited to contact the Field Studies Office at the first sign of concern so that we might work together to mediate differences. Since a covenant has been signed, neither the student nor the supervisor should terminate the relationship unilaterally. Any proposed termination/disenagement in placement must be by mutual consent between the student, the supervisor and the director of field studies.

If, during the course of placement, termination/disenagement is being considered, a consultation between the student, the supervisor and the director of the field studies program will take place. The goal of this consultation is to reach a joint decision about the proposed termination/disenagement. This same procedure will be followed if a student takes a leave of absence. In addition, the student will be required to have an exit interview with the field studies director.

If the termination results from changes at the site or in the original agreement, the student may be placed at a different site. This decision is made on an individual basis and is not automatic. There will be no partial credit granted for terminated placements.

Ordinarily, if the student chooses not to begin the placement after the Administrative Covenant has been signed by all parties, then the student must wait until the next academic year to complete the field studies requirement, even if that decision postpones commencement for the student.
LEGAL ISSUES
HOW INTERNS AND SUPERVISORS
GET THEMSELVES IN LEGAL TROUBLES

Excerpts from Handbook on Legal Issues in Theological Field Education Presbyterian Theological Field Educators, Susan Fox & Judith Guy, Editors, 2000

HANDLING INFORMATION

Privileged Communication: A communication that is protected by law from forced disclosure (H.C. Black, 1999). Privileged communication can most likely be invoked if the confessor is an ordained religious official, the communication is "confessional" and not counseling, and the confession is given in official surroundings (Bullis and Mazur). Popular culture contributes to misunderstandings about what communications are privileged. Eighty-two percent of the clergy and lay people responding to a survey of Congregationalist Christian Churches believe that anything told to a minister under any circumstances is confidential (Audette, 1998). In fact, very specific criteria pertain to the application of privilege, and while ordination status may be a factor when determining the application of privilege, it is not necessarily conclusive. There are variations in the privilege from state to state.

For these reasons, if a minister is accused of invading someone's privacy, it is viewed by most as a serious breach of the minister's moral, and sometimes legal, obligation to that person (Taylor 1996).

Defamation: Communication that injures the reputation of another without just cause. Defamation can be either spoken (slander) or written (libel) (Shaughnessy). State laws can vary widely. Since the boundaries between defamation, gossip, and rumor can be hazy, students and their supervisors would do well to avoid criticizing others in public (even "for their own good"), to create an atmosphere where gossip is unwelcome, to verify facts and get permission (particularly about death and illness) before publishing information in newsletters, never to make jokes at someone else's expense, and not to allow untrue and harmful charges or innuendoes to circulate about themselves.

Abuse and Neglect Reporting: Reporting of child or elder abuse as required by law. According to the Center for the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence, "in every state... persons in helping professions (teachers, doctors, counselors, police officers, social workers, health professionals) are legally mandated to report suspicion of child abuse or neglect to child abuse authorities." State laws vary on definitions of exactly who must report such suspected abuse.

Invasion of Privacy: An unjustified exploitation of one's personality or intrusion into one's personal activity (Black). Maintaining the privacy of others goes right to the heart of ministry. Ministers are those whom we can trust not to intrude into our personal lives or dealings, until we are ready to share those things with them. And (then) we presume we can confess our darkest secrets without condemnation, reprisals, or publication of those secrets to others.
Some statutes indicate that anyone may report. Statutes also vary greatly with regard to reporting elder abuse.

**HANDLING RELATIONSHIPS**

**Fraud:** A knowing misinterpretation of the truth or concealment of a matter of fact to induce another to act to his or her detriment (Black). Some states have described fraud more broadly, to include a variety of means by which human beings may gain advantage over another by false suggestions or suppression of truth. These means may include surprise, trick, cunning, or any other unfair way another can be cheated. This definition includes fraud as including all acts that deceive, [including negligent misrepresentations], omissions and concealments calculated to deceive, and which result in damage to another person” (Taylor).

**Breach of Fiduciary Duty:** A “fiduciary duty” is a duty of utmost good faith, confidence, and candor owed by the fiduciary [person in whom another party has placed special trust and confidence] to the beneficiary; a duty to act with the highest degree of honesty and loyalty toward another person and in the best interests of that person (Black). This duty is concerned with trust, traditionally trust with regard to someone else's property or money. When a minister is sued in civil court for breach of fiduciary duty, it often involves the minister's having divulged confidences or having used a counseling session to initiate or engage in sexual activity.

**Undue Influence:** Misuse of a position of confidence or taking advantage of another person's weakness, infirmity, or distress to change improperly that person's actions (Black). Undue influence is related to fiduciary duty, in that it, too, addresses the behavior of a person entrusted with some authority who uses that authority for his or her own best interests, rather than the best interests of the congregation member, the intern, etc. The sources of power and authority in a ministerial relationship are many and can be subtle or remain unrecognized. Students are often unaware of the power ascribed to them merely by virtue of their position as a ministry intern. Self-awareness and an understanding of both the obvious and more inconspicuous sources of authority can guard against the potential misuse of power.

**Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress:** Intentionally causing another person severe emotional distress [a highly unpleasant emotional reaction such as anguish, humiliation, or fury] through one’s extreme or outrageous acts (Black). [This refers to] behavior so outrageous and harmfully antisocial that a reasonable person would be extremely shocked and upset.

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition for employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting individuals; (3) such conduct has the power or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment (Equal Opportunity Commission Guidelines).
REFERENCES


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