

Course Syllabus
KNF3010Y – Theological Field Education
Knox College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2023-Winter 2024

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Rev. Konnie Vissers, PhD Candidate, ABD, TFE Coordinator, Knox College
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Course Identification

Course Number:	KNF3010Y
Course Format:	<i>Remote learning via Zoom for year 2023-2024</i>
Course Name:	Theological Field Education for MDiv, MRE, MTS or MPS students
Course Location:	Zoom:
Class Times:	Mondays 1:00pm – 4:00pm (see <i>Course Calendar</i> below for exact dates)
Prerequisites:	KNP1601HS (Theology and Practice in Ministry)

Course Description

An approved field placement with appropriate supervision and theological reflection seminar.

Expanded Description:

Theological Field Education invites the student to integrate their studies in theology, Bible (sacred texts), and pastoral care (spiritual care) with direct experience in a congregational or community-based setting. The two central components of learning in a ministry context are to gain experience in the practice of ministry (such as preaching, leading a study group, or pastoral care) followed by reflection on that practice. The action-reflection model promotes transformation of our future attitudes and actions while providing the basis of the formation of our professional identity and sense of call.

Students spend eight hours a week in a designated placement arranged by the TFE Coordinator. During those eight hours the students will have a one-hour meeting with their on-site supervisor (Site Educator). The remaining hours include observation, participation and leadership in the central activities of the site (i.e. for congregations it will include worship services, bible study, outreach activities). Students will also attend a three-hour class at Knox College once a week for group integration and learning related to the practice of ministry. Students will write a Learning Covenant, five Reflection Journals, a Case Study Report and a Spiritual Care Visit Report, and will complete mid-term and final evaluations.

Course Resources

Required Course Text

- Floding, Matthew (Ed) (2017). Engage: A Theological Field Education Toolkit. Rowman and Littlefield: New York.

This book is available through Chapters/Indigo (paperback or Kobo) and also through Amazon (paperback and Kindle). It is also accessible through Utoronto libraries.

Students are encouraged to also use this text with their Site Educator (Site Educators have been encouraged to buy the text).

Supplementary Readings

- There will be additional readings added to Quercus periodically throughout the year. These are not mandatory to read, but will provide helpful content to the related topics of the day. If you are writing a paper for another course on one of these topics, you may want to look at these readings.

Course Website(s)

- Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>. Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Joan Pries, Librarian, for further help.]

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

- Students will be placed in a context that both supports their theological understandings while also stretching their experience of faith in practice.
- Students will learn to reflect theologically and be able to apply a method of theological reflection to their experience of ministry.
- Students placed in congregations will gain knowledge and exposure to the Reformed Christian worship context.
- Students will demonstrate respect for diversity in gender, sexuality, ethnicity, theological understanding and religious experience of class members and those encountered in their theological field education placement.
- Students will examine their cultural bias and how this impacts their understanding of faith and practice.
- Students will reflect upon their experience of ministry with their supervisor, lay committee, and integration group as part of their professional formation.
- Students will function as a group member to develop safe and effective use of self to increase self-awareness as well as personal skills and knowledge.
- Students will have opportunities to further discern their call to either congregational or community-based vocations.

- Students will gain experience in public leadership by speaking in public (preaching), leading services and meetings, offering support and pastoral/spiritual care, and leading groups in study and learning.
- Students will gain an understanding of the importance of on-going supervision and mentorship in ministry to sustain ethical practice.
- Students will be able to identify areas of strength in ministry and note their growing edges in their mid-term and final evaluations as well as discussions with their peer groups and supervisors.

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course is a Pass/Fail and will be based on evaluations in three areas:

(1) Participation – *In addition to participating in the regular small group activity of the class, students are expected to come to class having read the designated readings and be prepared on your designated day to present your Ministry Experience Report or Pastoral Visit Report. (Schedules will be negotiated)*

(2) Written Work for Submission: *Students are expected to submit five Reflection Journals, one Case Study Report (Fall) and one Spiritual Care Visit Report (Winter)*

(3) Mid-term and Final Evaluations – *Evaluations must be completed on forms provided by Knox College, which will be sent to students and Site Educators at a later date.*

1) Participation:

Students must attend both the class portions of the TFE on Monday afternoons from 1:00–4:00, as well as their placements on a weekly basis. Students may negotiate time away from their placements with their Site Educators for personal events, illness or vacation. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain regular contact with their Site Educators.

Students will be assigned a peer group (Integration Group) led by a Faculty member or Teaching Assistant and will participate in presentations and discussions of Ministry Experience Reports and Pastoral Visit Reports.

2) Written Work:

Learning Covenant: Structure is presented in the TFE Handbook. Developed in discussion and collaboration with your Site Educator. Due on September 25.

Reflection Journals: Students will complete five Reflection Journals over the course of the academic year. Structure is presented in the TFE Handbook. Please choose something that has occurred in your placement that is of significance to you and which you would like to reflect on. Share your reflection with your Site Educator. Due dates are posted in Quercus. Oct 2, Nov 20, Jan 8, Feb 12, Mar 18.

Case Study Report: Structure is in the TFE Handbook and will be discussed in class. Please send by email to all your Integration Group members and your group leader. Due date is Friday Oct 28.

Spiritual Care Visit Report: The structure is in the TFE Handbook and will be discussed in class. Students will write a report on a pastoral visit you have had in your placement. Due on Jan 26.

3) Mid-term and Final Evaluations

Due December 11 and April 1, respectively. These evaluations are discussed with the Site Educator prior to sending them to the TFE Coordinator.

Late work or incomplete course. Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline unless they have an SDF or have communicated with the TFE Coordinator in advance. The course instructor/TFE Coordinator will strive to have assignments graded and returned within one week of submission. If an assignment is submitted late, it will be graded with the next round of assignments.

A penalty for late assignments does not apply to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with the TFE Coordinator, who should make a recommendation on the matter and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistent with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal

with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. It is expected that you check your Utoronto email at least once per week. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email weekly at a minimum* for messages about the course.

Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Inclusive Language Policy.

The instructor will strive to use language which is inclusive and respectful for God and people. We will discuss, in detail, as part of the course, appropriate use of language for “God” in a congregation, and how that may differ depending on context. It is expected that students will show respect for one another in use of language, and that students will use language within the bounds of the Knox College Policy for all written work.

Please see the Knox College Policy and Procedure on the Use of Language for further details: https://knox.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Knox-College-Policy_Use-of-Language-Policy-and-Glossary_221003.pdf.

2023-2024 TFE Calendar

FALL SEMESTER (2023)

Date	Content	Reading	Assignment Due
Sept 11	Orientation (Students & Site Educators) Writing a Learning Covenant	<i>Engage</i> , chs.1-2	
Sept 18	Handbook Overview Writing a Reflection Journal *Healthy Boundaries Workshop	<i>Engage</i> , chs.4, 5, 6	
Sept 25	*Ministry in a Post-COVID world (Guest speakers TBD)		Learning Covenant
Oct 2	*Climate Crisis and the Church	<i>Engage</i> , ch.17	Journal #1
Oct 9	No Class Meeting (Thanksgiving)		
Oct 16	*Theological Reflection Workshop Writing a Case Study Report	TBC	
Oct 23	No Class Meeting (Reading Week)		
Nov 6	*Going Digital (Guest speaker TBD) Integration Groups	<i>Engage</i> , chs.7-8	Case Study Report (Fri Oct. 28)
Nov 13	Integration Groups Case Study Reports	<i>Engage</i> , ch.9	
Nov 20	No Class Meeting		Journal #2

Nov 27	Integration Groups Case Study Reports	<i>Engage</i> , ch.10	
Dec 4	Integration Groups *Leading with Care	<i>Engage</i> , ch.12	
Dec 11	Peer to Peer Feedback		Mid-Term Evaluations

WINTER SEMESTER (2024)

Date	Content	Reading	Assignment Due
Jan 8	*Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care Writing a Spiritual Care Visit Report	<i>Engage</i> , ch.11	Journal #3
Jan 15	*Mental Health Issues Check-In with Groups	<i>Engage</i> , ch.13	
Jan 22	No Class Meeting		
Jan 29	*SASH Workshop (PCC sensitivity training)		Spiritual Care Visit Report (Fri 26)
Feb 5	Integration Groups Spiritual Care Visit Reports	<i>Engage</i> , ch.15	
Feb 12	*Ministry to the Dying (church) Integration Groups Spiritual Care Visit Reports	<i>Engage</i> , ch.16	Journal #4
Feb 19	No Class Reading Week		
Feb 26	No Class Family Day		

Mar 4	Integration Groups Spiritual Care Visit Reports	<i>Engage, chs.18-19</i>	
Mar 11	Integration Groups	<i>Engage, ch.14</i>	
Mar 18	*Finding a Call		Journal #5
Mar 25	*Admin and Finances		
Apr 1	Final Evaluation Day		Final Evals due

*The topics marked with an asterisk are didactics/lectures with content on a specific topic pertinent to the practice of ministry and TFE.