Course Syllabus
KNP1601HS – Theology and Practice of Ministry
Knox College
Toronto School of Theology
Winter 2025

Instructor Information

Instructor: Professor Sarah Travis
Office Location: Knox College, 2nd Floor near the Chapel
Telephone: 289-795-1065
E-mail: sarah.travis@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Identification

Course Number: KNP1601HS
Course Format: *ONLINE*
Course Name: Theology and Practice of Ministry
Course Location: via zoom
Class Times: Mondays, 11am-1pm
Prerequisites: none

Course Description

This course explores various aspects of ministry, in particular the theology and practice of ordained ministry within the Reformed traditions. Topics include understandings of ministry, the call, functions and roles in ministry, challenges and contexts for ministry today and in the future, leadership and authority, and spiritual practices.

This course engages with the theme of ministry, leadership and context in the Knox MDiv.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

All required resources can be accessed through Quercus: Library Resources.

Bolsinger, Tod E. *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books/ an imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2015.

Cahalan, Kathleen A. *Introducing the Practice of Ministry*. Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 2010.

Cooper-White, Pamela and Michael. *Exploring Practices of Ministry* (Fortress, 2014)

For PCC students: "Together in Ministry: The Theology and Practice of Ministry in the Presbyterian Church in Canada"– https://presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-ministry/

Course Website

        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 experiencing difficulties accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office of their college.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1
January 6   Course introduction
                      Syllabus
                      Sign Up for Presentations/In-Class Devotions
                      Lecture: Pastoral Ministry as Conversation

                      Reading: Cooper-White Introduction and Ch 1

Week 2
January 13   Articulating a Theology of Ministry

                      Read: Cahalan chapter 1, 4, 5

Week 3
January 20   The Call and Formation of the Leader

                      Read: Cahalan chapter 3,6,7

Week 4
January 27   Context for Ministry: The Community we Serve

                      Read: Bolsinger, Part I and II

Week 5
February 3   Diakonia: Service among Others

        Read: Cooper-White Chapter 6; Cahalan chapter 2

Week 6
February 10   Kerygma: Proclaiming Jesus Christ in Word and Action
        Read: Cooper-White chapter 2

Week 7
February 24   Didache: Facilitating Christian Education

        Read: Cooper-White Chapter 5

Week 8
March 3   Liturgia: The Worship Life of the Church

        Read: Cooper-White chapter 3

Week 9
March 10   Koinonia: Being the Church in Community

        Read: Cooper-White chapter 4

Week 10
March 17   Mentorship Presentations

        Read: Bolsinger Part 3

Week 11
March 24   Mentorship Presentations

        Read Bolsinger Part 4

Week 12
March 31   Integrating Ministry
        Please come prepared to describe the image(s) of ministry that are most meaningful to you.

        Read Bolsinger Part 5.

Exam Week
TBD

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

(1) <u>Participation </u>(15%) – In addition to participating in class discussions, students are expected to read the required texts and show evidence in class discussions that they have read and reflected upon them. In addition, students are invited to bring an offering of worship to share with the class once during the term. This can be a song, prayer, reflection, or any other element of worship that will spiritually prepare us for the work of our class. Due as scheduled.

(2) (20%) – <u>A concise theology of ministry</u>. Students will prepare a 500-word statement which summarizes their own theology of ministry. Evaluation will not be based on the content of the theology but the clarity and concision with which it is stated. This will be a work in progress, it is meant to produce a snapshot of where the student finds themselves in relation to the theologies and practices of pastoral ministry. Instructions will be provided. Due February 10th

(3) <u>Mentorship Experience</u> (35%) Students will choose and approach a pastoral leader who is willing to provide a 15-hour Mentorship experience. The time you spend together will include conversation, but also the actual work of ministry within the pastoral setting. For example, you will 'shadow' them as they go about their daily tasks. There are three aspects to this assignment.

1. By January 27th – **submit proposal** by email for approval of mentorship plan including, name, contact information, mentor's position and plan for use of hours and what you hope to learn.
2. Over a 3-5-week period you will **spend a minimum of 15 hours with a mentor for ministry**. The 15 hours will include individual conversations about ministry exploring the mentor's experiences and reflections on ministry, being present with the mentor in ministry experiences (worship, pastoral visiting, congregational/community events, social justice/mission experiences, etc.) and having an opportunity to discuss these experiences toward the end of the mentoring time.
3. March 17th, 24th: **In-Class Presentation**. Reflect on the 15-hour mentorship experience in a 15-minute class presentation (time-limit will be strictly enforced). Visuals are welcome. Describe your mentorship setting. What did you learn about ministry? What questions and surprises emerged? How did it help you reflect on the contexts of the church's ministry today? How did is help you to reflect on yourself in ministry and about your own gifts and challenges in ministry?

(4) <u>Final paper</u> (30%)

Write a 10- page integrative paper focusing on the theology and practice of ministry as explored through a pastoral image (or story/metaphor/scripture passage). The paper will draw on class lectures, discussions, Scripture and texts (required and recommended). The paper will describe a pastoral image (scripture passage/story/ metaphor) that can function as an integrative focus for one's theology and practice of ministry. The pastoral image (story/metaphor/passage) will be considered theologically (how it expresses a theology of ministry), contextually (how it engages the North American contexts of ministry) and personally (how it intersects with one's faith journey, sense of call). Further, the pastoral image (story/metaphor/passage) will be explored through the theology and practice of the different functions of ministry (diakonia, koinonia, kerygma, didache, liturgia) discussed throughout the course. The assignment must include a thorough exploration of a pastoral image (story/metaphor/passage) and how it relates, at this point, to the student's discernment process and to their understanding of the theology and practice of ministry. Due April 7th

Grading System - Basic Degree Students   **Grading System - Graduate Degree Students**

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale:		5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale:		
90-100 (A+)	Exceptional	A+	(90-100)	Profound & creative
85-89 (A)	Outstanding	A	(85-89)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent	A-	(80-84)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good	B+	(77-79)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good	B	(73-76)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable	B-	(70-72)	Satisfactory
0-69 (FZ)	Failure	FZ	(0-69)	Failure

Please see the appropriate Conjoint Degree handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc.).

Policies

A note about "triggers": As you prepare for your vocation, you will encounter situations in class and in the real world that stretch the limits of your emotional capacity. If you are struggling with your emotions, please reach out to the Professor. In this class, you are welcome to turn off your screen for a couple of minutes, or take a walk if you need time to pull yourself together. If your distress continues, please reach out to the Registrar's office whose staff will be ready to assist you. In your practice of ministry you will not necessarily have an opportunity to collect yourself before responding to uncomfortable emotions. It is vital that you learn coping skills and strategies for caring for yourself.

Class attendance. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner congruent with the vocation they are seeking to enter and in which they desire to give leadership. To that end, it is a regulation of Knox College that a minimum of approximately 80% attendance at courses (10 of 12 weeks) is required for credit; 100% attendance is expected at seminar courses. Habitual lateness for class will be counted as absence.

Teaching and learning are interactive, not passive, activities. Therefore, students may not "attend" an in-person class through unauthorized audio or video streaming or by watching or listening to a recording; instructors are not obligated to record or permitted to stream their in-person classes. Online classes that include a synchronous video component require the same level of attendance as an in-person course, and students may not "attend" by watching or listening to a recording. Online classes that include an asynchronous component require participation in all the activities for each week or module to meet the attendance requirement. Students requiring accommodations to attend class must present medical and/or Accessibility Services documentation that outlines the type and duration of accommodation(s) required.

Class recording. Much of the learning that goes on in the virtual or in-person classroom is founded upon mutual disclosure that takes place between instructor and student, and between students. Parties outside of this learning community have not committed themselves to this relationship of trust. A student without an approved accommodation who wishes to make an audio recording of an in-person class must secure the agreement of the instructor and all classmates; livestreaming and video recordings are not permitted. Online video-streamed classes may be recorded at the discretion of the instructor.

Personal recordings may be used only by the student who made the recording; no recording may be reproduced, posted, or distributed without the written permission of the instructor.

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. If you need more time to complete an assignment you must contact the Professor prior to the due date. There is no penalty for late work. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

Students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor 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.

Late work (Graduate). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student's college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor's signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

Course grades. Consistently 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 https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Inclusive Language. In your assignments and class discussions, you are expected to use language that is inclusive for people, and use a variety of terms to refer to God. Knox College has an inclusive language policy, available at https://knox.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Knox-College-Policy_Use-of-Language-Policy-and-Glossary_221003.pdf.

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.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as. 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 their head of college or delegate according to the Graduate program Handbook linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019. 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: https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/

Use of Generative AI, e.g., ChatGPT. While AI may be used as a conversation partner in developing your assignments, you may not submit assignments generated by AI unless it is specifically required by the instructor for a particular assignment.

Other academic offences*.* TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019 .

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

Obligation to check email*.* At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. 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 regularly 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 me 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.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Basic Degrees – Knox and TST

This course has the following course-level learning outcomes	
Outcome	**Evaluation**
1. Describe ministry in relation to a variety of vocations within the Christian Church • Identify theology and practices of ministry related to central functions of ministry including teaching, serving, leading worship, facilitating community; and proclamation. • Describe the distinctive theology and practices of Reformed understandings of ministry within the larger Christian tradition.	Final Paper
2. Cultural Context • Identify theology and practices of ministry that demonstrate respect for difference - cultural, ethnic, gender, and physical ability diversity, etc.; • Demonstrate willingness to engage the diversity of the church; • Demonstrate basic understanding of contextual issues (societal, ecclesial, global) and an emerging awareness of how these factors impact what it means to be a leader today in a particular contexts.	Final Paper Mentorship Presentation
3. Personal Spiritual Formation • Articulate one's own emerging self-understanding in ministry; • Display willingness to engage in prayer, Bible study, worship, discipleship and growth in the fruit of the Spirit.	Concise Theology of Ministry Weekly Devotions
4. Capacity for Ministry • Show care for others and act in a compassionate manner towards others, including people of different backgrounds, ages, and perspectives; • Ability to articulate one's emerging pastoral identity and emerging theology of ministry in relation to the Reformed traditions.	Class Discussions Mentorship Presentations Final Paper

A student successfully completing this course has made progress towards the following Knox College degree program learning outcomes:		
MDiv	**MTS**	**MPS**

☒	Interprets Scripture and Christian tradition (Reformed), using a variety of methods, sources, and norms, to preach, teach, write, and to provide care and witness. *Evaluation:* Concise theology of ministry; final paper	☒	Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines. *Evaluation:* Concise theology; final paper	☒	Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines, in the Reformed or another tradition. [* the student may come from another tradition] *Evaluation:* Final paper
☒	Demonstrates skills in creative, faith-centred, adaptive, and innovative leadership for current and emerging communities of faith. *Evaluation:* Concise Theology of Ministry Mentorship Presentation Devotions Final Paper	☒	Finds, selects, reads, and appropriately integrates theological information. *Evaluation:* Final paper	☐	Demonstrates knowledge and skills in spiritual care and therapy, grounded in appropriate theories, for professional practice and leadership in community and institutional settings. *Evaluation:* *Click or tap here to enter text.*
☒	Enhances the vocational and spiritual development, practices, and well-being of self and others. (See Professional and Critical Competencies.) *Evaluation:* Class Discussions Mentorship Experience Final Paper	☒	Engages respectfully and constructively in a theological community of scholarship. *Evaluation:* Participation; mentorship presentation	☒	Demonstrates an appropriate spiritual and professional identity formation in relation to specialized practice. *Evaluation:* Concise theology; final paper
☒	Analyzes and evaluates social, cultural, and community contexts to enable communities of faith to participate in God's work and justice in a diverse and changing world. *Evaluation:* Class Discussions Mentorship Presentation Final Paper	☒	Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in theological discourse. *Evaluation:* Concise theology; final paper	☒	Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in professional practice. *Evaluation:* Concise theology; final paper