

## **Section 1**

### **Introduction to Theological Field Education**

# Introduction to Theological Field Education

## Purpose

“The Whole Gospel for the Whole World through Whole Persons,” Palmer Theological Seminary’s (PTS) motto, calls us to understand the broad purpose of theological education: providing supervised experience in ministry to prepare the whole person to respond to the Gospel imperative to meet the varied challenges of our changing world.

Palmer Theological Seminary’s understanding is that TFE is an integral part of Seminary training. Using an action/reflection style of learning, seminarians are enabled to test their vocational calling, utilize persons and events as sources of theological and ministry learning, and integrate theory with practice. TFE provides a grounding of students' seminary training in ministry experience, enabling the development of professional competency and confidence in ministerial identity and authority. We are preparing students for the wider church. TFE is an opportunity to experience a variety of ministry settings.

## Who We Are

PTS has vested the Supervised Ministries Office (SMO) with responsibility for these programs: Theological Field Education (TFE), Clinical Pastoral Care (CPC), Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), and Placement Information. TFE is our largest program. Please feel free to visit us online or call to receive information about our programs.

## Curriculum Options for Students

**Palmer students who are on the M.Div. Pastoral Leadership Track are required to take:**

- TFE 1A & 1B (SUPV525 & 526) earning 3 credits

Entrance to the TFE program is singular, in September of each year.

- CPE (SUPV532) earning 3 credits for ½ Unit of CPE or CPC for 3 credits

Student may take a full unit of CPE for 3 elective credits. Students are encouraged to check with denominational requirements, if necessary.

**Palmer students who are on the M.Div. Adaptive Leadership Track are required to take:**

- TFE 1A & 1B (SUPV525 & 526) earning 3 credits

Entrance to the TFE program is singular, in September of each year.

You may also take as one of your courses

- CPE (SUPV532) earning 3 credits for ½ unit of CPE or 6 credits for 1 unit of CPE

## Student Readiness for TFE

Prerequisites for TFE 1A & 1B are as follows:

- Minimum 24 credit hours completed
- PRMN510 Foundations of Pastoral Care and Counseling
- SFRM505 Nurturing Spiritual Life and Character I
- THLE520 Systematic Theology and Ethics: Vision of Community **or** THLE 521 Systematic Theology and Ethics: Reign of God (the course may be taken concurrently and must be successfully completed in the fall semester of the TFE year in order to continue in TFE)

Prerequisites for TFE 2A & 2B are as follows:

- Minimum 48 credit hours completed
- SUPV 525/526 TFE 1A/1B **or** SUPV 520/521 TFE 1A/1B

## Academic Requirements and PTS Policies

TFE requirements are based on the academic policies and procedures of PTS, with adaptations made for the contextual education component that is also required.

Faculty has mandated that no student shall be waived from TFE. The amount of reading and written material required for successful completion of TFE 1A & 1B and TFE 2A & 2B meet the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and PTS standards required for granting these credits per semester.

Given the participatory nature of TFE, attendance in the TFE seminar group is **mandatory**. Small group dynamics are impacted by absences; therefore, students are expected to attend all classes. Work cannot be made up outside of class. Students are expected to arrive on time and to remain for the duration of the class. Tardiness of ten minutes or more for any three seminars will constitute one absence. Students are allowed no more than two excused absences for each semester. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to restrict absences for emergency needs only. Collegiality and confidentiality are essential to the effectiveness of the seminar group formation.

Extensions given for written work must follow the guidelines in the PTS Student Handbook (Policy on Incomplete Coursework/Requests for Extensions). The SMO staff and Administrative Leadership represent the faculty in this case. No exceptions to the printed guidelines will be accepted.

A failure to comply with the requirements of the course will result in a designation of “No Credit” for the course. TFE courses are required for graduation with the M. Div. degree. The successful completion of **both semesters is required to earn credit for each**. All correspondence concerning TFE will be forwarded to students via “eastern.edu” accounts. Any Seminary forms that require an official TFE signature (e.g. Verification form) must come from the SMO.

## PTS International Student Policy

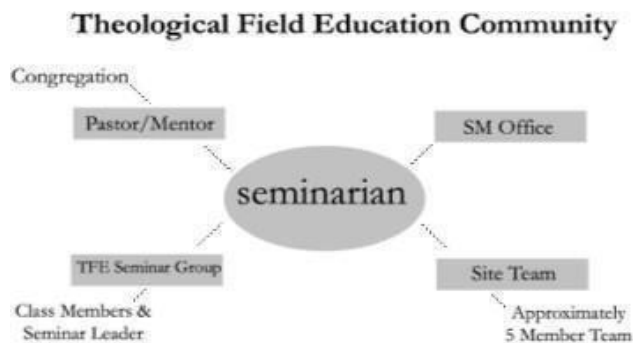
The Primary Designated School Official (DSO) for PTS is the Director of International Student and Scholar Services for all of Eastern University, whose office is located on the St. David’s campus. International students on an F-1 visa must have curricular practical training (CPT) authorization

added to their I-20 when starting TFE or CPE. For questions about international student policy or to request CPT authorization, please contact their office. Ms. Augusta Allen is Director of International Student and Scholar Services. The office number is: 610-341-5870. *Her email is: aallen6@eastern.edu.*

## TFE Structure

Partners in TFE include the ministry site, Site Team, Pastor/Mentor and Supervised Ministries' teaching faculty and staff. In addition, students are part of a weekly Seminar Group. Definitions of these terms may be found in the glossary of this handbook.

The following represents the interwoven relationships among the various TFE partners:



Weekly seminar groups are formed through the SMO with the intention of creating diverse groups. Students who are being mentored in the same TFE ministry site must attend different weekly seminar groups. Students are responsible for notifying the SMO immediately if they are placed in a group that has an intern serving in the same TFE ministry site. In most cases, this will result in a change in the group membership. The SMO is responsible for addressing any student concerns about the seminar group.

## TFE Policies

*Policies for TFE are established within the SMO and are in alignment with the academic policies and procedures of PTS. Adaptations are made for the contextual education component that is required.*

### Attendance

Given the participatory nature of TFE, attendance in the seminar group is **mandatory**. Small group dynamics are impacted by absences; therefore, students are expected to attend all classes. Work cannot be made up outside of class. Students are expected to arrive on time and to remain for the duration of the class. Tardiness of ten minutes or more for any three seminars will constitute one absence. Students are allowed no more than two excused absences for each semester. Therefore, students are strongly encouraged to restrict absences for emergency needs only.

### **Consultation with the Supervised Ministries Office**

Students with issues related to their ministry site placement and its continuation, relationship to their Pastor/Mentor, absences from class and other concerns related to the structure of the internship and its grading should contact staff members of the SMO.

### **Code of Ethics**

It is expected that all the participants in TFE (Seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, Site Team, Supervised Ministries' staff and TFE faculty) be committed to the standards of ethics of the Christian church, which promotes the dignity and worth of all persons. We are accountable for our ministry as expressed in relationship to parishioners, clients, members of the community, seminarians, Pastor/Mentors, churches, agencies, and the seminary. Commitment to the following standards is expected in TFE internships.

**Avoid discrimination** against or refusing pastoral assistance or educational opportunity to anyone on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, age or physical attributes.

**Do not engage** in any forms of harassment, abusive words, or actions, or exploitative coercion.

All forms of sexual behavior or harassment by Pastor/Mentor, seminarian, or parishioner/client within the framework of the pastoral internship are unethical, even when a parishioner or client invites or consents to such behavior. Sexual behavior includes, but is not limited to, seductive speech, gestures and behavior, and physical contact of a sexual nature. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, comments, gestures or physical contacts of a sexual nature.

**Confidentiality** of the parishioner, client, and seminarian is expected. Records are to be kept in a manner that assures security. Communication from seminarian, parishioners and Pastor/Mentor are treated with professional confidence. Confidences are not disclosed except:

- as mandated by law
- to prevent a clear and immediate danger to someone
- for purposes of supervision or consultation, or
- by previously obtained written permission.

**Pastor/Mentors**, Supervised Ministries' staff and TFE faculty do not engage in ongoing psychological counseling with Supervised Ministries' students.

**Seminarians** engage in ministry appropriate to their level of training and within the boundaries of their serving/learning covenants. They are not to engage in professional services beyond their training, level of experience and competence. Seminarians are also responsible to uphold Conduct and Standards expectations as set forth in the PTS Student Handbook.

Charges of violation of these ethical standards are to be reported to the Director of Supervised Ministries. In the case of charges filed against the Director, they are to be reported to the Dean of Palmer Theological Seminary for evaluation.

**Full Disclosure**

Pastor/Mentors are required to offer full disclosure of the seminarian's performance and conduct while under their supervision. Disclosure of misconduct will be directed to the Supervised Ministries Director.

**Pastor/Mentor Confirmation**

Qualifications for Pastor/Mentors of Palmer Seminary students include an earned Master's level degree in theology from an institution accredited by the U.S. Department of Education and a minimum of two years of competent parish or professional ministry experience following degree completion. Pastor/Mentors who are ordained may be accepted into the TFE program at Palmer with ten years of competent ministry experience in lieu of a Master's degree.

**TFE 700: The Ministry of Supervision**

Pastor/Mentors must have completed, or be willing to complete, TFE 700, the training event offered by the Seminary every fall (and sometimes spring). The purpose of this training is to clearly communicate the PTS Field Education process and expectations, striving to foster the best first field education experience for all partners. Certification training must be completed within the academic year that the Pastor/Mentor serves in this capacity. Pastor/Mentors will not be considered for a second year of service until they have completed TFE 700. (Also see "Criteria for Selecting a Pastor/Mentor," Section 5.)

**Ministry Site Confirmation**

The SMO must approve all TFE ministry site placements for participation in the program. Official notification of non-approval will be communicated to the ministry setting. All ministry site placements must be fully endorsed by the Pastor/Mentor and, when appropriate, by congregational leadership. In instances where the Pastor/Mentor is off-site, endorsement comes from the ministry site, where the intern serves. Students may complete both levels of TFE in the same site, (except in the case of the Home Church Waiver which is not automatically renewed), but are not required to do so. Students should check with their denomination for other requirements.

**Ministry Site Supervisory Personnel**

No member of the seminarian's family may serve as their Pastor/Mentor or serve on the Site Team. Current Palmer seminarians may not be considered for supervisory positions regardless of years and quality of ministry experience, nor may they serve on Site Teams. Please refer to the section "Pastor/Mentor Confirmation" for further requirements. Non-traditional placements and supervisors will be assessed based upon their graduate education and professional experience equivalent to the M. Div. standard. Theological reflection, even in a non-traditional placement, is a core educational component of the supervisory experience. Non-traditional placements refer to any site other than the local church.

**Early Termination**

The Seminarian is expected to serve in the same TFE placement for the duration of both fall and spring semesters. As agreed in the Serving Learning Covenant, neither the seminarian nor the Pastor/Mentor may terminate the TFE ministry site placement without approval of the SMO. If the internship is terminated by the seminarian without approval, a grade of "No Credit" may be given to the student for the year. When an internship is terminated, the SMO will determine the next step. This may include participation in individual reflection on the circumstances of that departure.

This reflection would take place with a staff member of Supervised Ministries for the duration of the academic year. The purpose of this singular work is educational; it is an opportunity for learning from the experience through guided reflection.

### **Home Church Policy**

A home church is defined as a church of origin in which the seminarian acquired membership or devoted a substantial amount of time in fellowship. Or, a church in which the seminarian has developed a substantial relationship with the congregation either as layperson or as part of ministerial leadership.

It is the policy of Supervised Ministries that no seminarian may serve in their home church except with the expressed written consent of the Director. Approval of one seminarian's proposal does not constitute precedent for another seminarian to obtain approval. Each proposal is treated as unique. Exemption from this policy may be granted under the following conditions and are for one year only. Students may reapply for a second year unless otherwise noted:

- The seminarian gives evidence that he/she is the senior pastor of the ministry site in consideration.
- The seminarian is not a senior pastor:
  - A completed Home Church Waiver Application must be submitted to the SMO.
  - An interview/meeting between the seminarian and staff or director may be required.
  - An interview or meeting between the potential Pastor/Mentor and the Director may be required.

Applications for a waiver from the Home Church Policy may be obtained in the SMO. The application and all other supporting materials need to be submitted to the SMO for review and action. The SMO will make a decision within two weeks of receipt of the completed waiver application.

## **TFE Elective Internship – SUPV 650**

The TFE Elective Internship (SUPV 650) is an internship that offers the possibility of an intensive serving/learning experience in ministry. Arrangements must be negotiated with and approved by the SMO. The seminarian may earn up to a total of eleven credit hours in TFE of which only three may be electives. These three credit hours are in addition to the units required of TFE students in the M.Div. degree track.

## **TFE and Technology**

### **Communication**

All correspondence concerning TFE will be forwarded to students via "eastern.edu" accounts.

### **On-line Learning and Theological Field Education (TFE)**

Palmer Theological Seminary courses utilize on-line learning in a variety of ways. Some courses are taught entirely online while others, such as TFE, are considered to be web-enhanced courses. As a web-enhanced course we utilize the resources of technology but do not use them as the sole means of instruction. **Note: All seminary classes, including TFE, will be online in Fall 2020.**

## **Expectations for Zoom Online Classes and Meetings**



Since all classes have been moved online for the Fall 2020 semester, please see the below guidelines to help you succeed in an online environment:

1. Be on time, and check your equipment and WiFi connections before the start of class time.
2. Connect using audio and video (as much as possible). If you cannot connect using your video, please communicate with the instructor in advance.
3. If you have a poor WiFi connection, stay with your audio and disable your video, but again please communicate that with the instructor.
4. Make sure your full name appears in your participant box.
5. Mute your audio when you are not speaking but only listening to others.
6. Avoid distractions. Refrain from doing the things you wouldn't be expected to do while participating in a face-to-face class such as surfing the web, replying to emails, etc. It might also mean that you need to use headphones to help you stay focused.
7. Seek to have a private space as much as possible for these sessions. If you are in a space being shared by others please use headsets.
8. Use Zoom tools (i.e. reactions, chats, share screens, etc.) appropriately and for the purposes of advancing the class.
9. Apply the same rules and expectations for class interactions that you would in a face-to-face class (i.e. attentiveness, listening skills, avoiding interruptions, etc.)
10. Be present to your classmates and professors!

### **All Students**

The handbook is available online as are all of the forms. This makes the Handbook and forms readily available to pastoral interns at <https://www.palmerseminary.edu/student-life/supervised-ministries/theological-field-education/theological-field-education-handbook>. Once on the Supervised Ministries Homepage, click on “Theological Field Education” (in the sidebar), then “TFE Handbook and Selected Documents” (under Quicklinks). You can then navigate from section to section. All forms are included and can be downloaded to print.

### **Pastor/Mentors and Site Teams**

The Handbook is available on-line as are all of the forms. This makes the Handbook readily available to you and your ministry site at <https://www.palmerseminary.edu/student-life/supervised-ministries/theological-field-education/theological-field-education-handbook>. Once on the Supervised Ministries Homepage, click on “Theological Field Education” (in the sidebar), then “TFE Handbook and Selected Documents” (under Quicklinks). You can then navigate from section to section. All forms are included and can be downloaded.

### **Seminar Groups and Brightspace**

Seminar Groups may use Brightspace for discussion, information sharing, assignment submission and tracking, and group announcements. Your group will be identified by your Seminar Leader's name and level TFE 1A&1B or TFE 2A&2B. You will use the same password that you have received for use with your eastern.edu/myEastern account. Your Seminar Leader will let you know to what extent your group is using Brightspace. TFE assignment forms and program documents are not available on Brightspace, but are instead on the TFE website.

### **Technical Support**

For information including tutorials and FAQ about Tech support visit <https://whd.eastern.edu/helpdesk/WebObjects/Helpdesk.woa>. For Academic Computing

(Email/Computer Lab/Wireless Access): 484-823-0121 or [helpdesk@eastern.edu](mailto:helpdesk@eastern.edu). For Brightspace support, contact Sue Yavor: 610- 341-4363 or [syavor@eastern.edu](mailto:syavor@eastern.edu) or [Brightspace@eastern.edu](mailto:Brightspace@eastern.edu).

## Glossary of Terms

The following glossary for Theological Field Education represents terms useful for all TFE partners:

**Pastoral Intern** is the Seminarian enrolled in Theological Field Education. The experience is comprised of ministry performed in the field under supervision and faculty-led weekly seminars. Some seminarians serve in approved ministry sites new to them while others may function within established calls to the pastorate.

**Ministry Site** is the church/agency where seminarians serve and learn with persons in professional and lay ministry. While recognizing that some seminarians may serve in full-time pastoral positions, which are year-round, Theological Field Education credit requires a minimum 10-12 hours-per-week commitment in ministry from September through May. Students must begin placement in an approved setting before September 18. Students may complete both levels of TFE in the same site, (except in the case of the Home Church Waiver which is not automatically renewed), but are not required to do so. Students should check with their denomination for other requirements.

**Pastor/Mentor** is the professional person in the field who is responsible for guiding and supporting the seminarian's serving and learning. This person (usually a parish pastor, agency director, denominational leader or chaplain) provides a significant function in the theological education of the seminarian. Some serve as mentors to pastoral interns while not practicing ministry in the same site as the intern. We designate these mentors as "Off-Site" Pastor/Mentors. A key requirement of this education is the weekly supervisory conference with the seminarian. The Pastor/Mentor must agree with the program's philosophy and participate in its training events. The structure of the supervisory conferences between interns and their mentors may be different for Off-site mentors (See Section 5 for additional information).

**Site Team** is a mostly lay group that represents the larger church/agency in providing a channel of communication, education, and feedback between seminarian and congregation or agency in an atmosphere of support, accountability and practice of ministry experience. This group meets six to eight times throughout the year (monthly) and contributes to the mid-year and final evaluations of the pastoral intern.

**Seminar Group** is the gathering of students that meets weekly for theological reflection upon ministerial experiences for the sake of learning and growing. Written reflection papers/case studies are presented for discussion by students. The seminars are facilitated by TFE faculty.

**Theological Field Education Faculty and Staff** are the seminary personnel who coordinate and implement the program of Theological Field Education. This includes the Director of Supervised

Ministries and TFE faculty.

**TFE Partners** are the Palmer Supervised Ministries Office, the Pastor/Mentor, the Site Team, and the Pastoral Intern.

**Serving/Learning Covenant** is the basic agreement that defines the relationship between seminarian and church/agency in light of mutual expectations, commitments, and obligations. The covenant must be negotiated, completed, signed, and submitted to the SMO by October 2 in order to participate in the program. **The covenant is not to be terminated** prior to a meeting of the seminarian, the Pastor/Mentor, the director or a member of the Administrative Leadership Team, and when possible, the Site Team chairperson. The seminarian and Pastor/Mentor negotiate hours, including holidays and January term.

**Theological Field Education Internship** involves a time commitment to the TFE ministry site of 10 to 12 hours per week.

**Financial Remuneration** of at least \$12.00-\$15.00 per hour is strongly recommended, but it is recognized that some ministry sites are able to offer more and others offer less. While this is only one of the considerations in deciding upon a TFE site placement, increasing expenses are a concern for seminarians. We encourage both seminarians and Pastor/Mentors to think of other benefits that can be given when financial remuneration is not possible. Compensation from internships is taxable income requiring a federal W-2 form. U.S. Department of Justice form I-538 is required for all international students.

**Diverse Ministry Experience** is desired for each seminarian. While the church/agency has particular ministry needs, the seminarian needs to be challenged for professional growth by a full spectrum of ministry opportunities. The church/agency, Pastor/Mentor, and seminarian need to work together to make this possible.

**Theological Reflection** is an ongoing process of reflection upon ministry, used intentionally during supervisory conferences, and in the seminarian's TFE seminars. Theological reflection always concludes with the questions: "Where is God in this situation" and "What does God require of me in this situation?" The principles of that process undergird the supervisory conference with the Pastor/Mentor, in meetings of the Site Team with the seminarian and in participation in the TFE seminar.

**Media Interaction Reviews** provide the opportunity to think and to reflect upon theological themes as they are expressed through performance art and film.

**Assessments** related to the **Serving Learning Covenant** are:

- Appraisal by the seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, and the Site Team concerning their covenant-keeping
- Assessment of the seminarian's growth. While this is to be an ongoing process among seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, and Site Team, two written assessments are slated per academic year. The mid-year and end of year assessments will be administered among all three partners. Evaluations are to be jointly shared and discussed. The seminarian is responsible to return the completed and signed

evaluation forms to the Supervised Ministries Office. Note that the

assessment forms are different for each of the TFE partners

- Students are encouraged to assess their progress and growth throughout the year informally
- Throughout the year, the seminar groups will be involved in group evaluations. Written evaluations are requested at the end of each semester
- Assessment of student as ongoing process by Seminar Leader



## **Section 2**

### **Syllabi for TFE 1A & 1B and 2A & 2B Field Education**

# TFE 1A & 1B Syllabus—SUPV 525/526 Fall and Spring 2020-2021

Rev. Dr. Marsha Brown Woodard, Director

## Course Prerequisites

- Minimum 30 credit hours completed
- PRMN510 Foundations of Pastoral Care and Counseling
- SFRM505 Nurturing Spiritual Life and Character I
- THLE520 Systematic Theology and Ethics: Vision of Community **or** THLE 521 Systematic Theology and Ethics: Reign of God (the course may be taken concurrently and must be successfully completed in the fall semester of the TFE year in order to continue in TFE)

## Course Description

TFE 1A & 1B is comprised of supervised ministry in a church-based or other ministry setting and participation in a faculty-led weekly seminar group utilizing an integrative, reflective and practice model. Students must begin theological field education courses with the fall semester and remain in the same seminar group and ministry site placement through fall and spring semesters.

## Program Learning Goals and Indicators

This course will support the following M.Div. Program Goals and Indicators:

Program Goal	Program Indicator (s)
<b>Goal 1: A hunger for lifelong spiritual formation &amp; a commitment to fostering interdependent relationships (Whole Persons)</b>	<b>1.2</b> Develops a respect for and ability to partner effectively with others; <b>1.3</b> Employs reliance upon connection with God for the purpose of Christian service
<b>Goal 3: A biblically informed and theologically grounded commitment to a Holistic Gospel Witness (Whole Gospel)</b>	<b>3.2</b> Clearly communicates biblical content and understanding in a variety of ways, e.g. preaching, Christian Education, pastoral care; <b>3.4</b> Reports/Observes ability to minister with a Christian spirit conducive to creating peace and reconciliation
<b>Goal 4: A commitment to service in the church and community to minister to changing times (Whole Gospel)</b>	<b>4.1</b> Articulates a call to a particular area of Christian service; <b>4.2</b> Articulates and demonstrates biblical and theological foundations for the practice of ministry; <b>4.3</b> Documents awareness of the impact of oneself in the practice of ministry through personal reflection; <b>4.4</b> Applies skills in ministry, e.g. preaching, pastoral care, teaching, administrating, engaging in mission and evangelism

The complete M.Div. Program Goals and Indicators Table are found at the end of this syllabus.



## Course Rationale

To build on the foundation of one's theological background and to engage in the practice of ministry; to explore one's calling and discern one's gifts and skills for ministry utilizing a field-based approach to theological field education.

## Desired Course Learning Outcomes

- Develop personal and professional skills through the implementation of the serving/learning covenant
- Integrate theory, theology and tradition with the practice of ministry
- Perform with increasing competence in the broader dimensions of ministry
- Learn appropriate methods of theological reflection on ministry experience
- Engage in relationships of support and evaluation with peers, supervisor, laity, and faculty
- Develop a philosophy of life-long learning and collegiality

## Teaching and Learning Strategies

The course is structured in small group formation, and uses a variety of learning models including didactic, case studies, theological reflection, videos, small group interaction, role-playing, and supervision. The seminar works in conjunction with the ministry experience where seminarians serve outside of the classroom, typically in a local church/agency. TFE course content relies heavily on the student's experience in their ministry settings. The seminar groups are formed and function through the auspices of the SMO and its representatives, the Seminar Leaders.

## Textbooks

### SUPV 525 (Fall 2020)

1. Required: Floding, Matthew, ed. Welcome to Theological Field Education. Herndon, Virginia: Alban, 2011.
2. Recommended: Pyle, William T. and Mary Alice Seals, eds. Experiencing Ministry Supervision: A Field-Based Approach. Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995. Chapters 4, 5 & 8.
3. Additional reading, assignments, and resources as assigned by seminar faculty.

### SUPV 526 (Spring 2021)

1. Required Text: To Be Announced.
2. Additional reading, assignments and resources as assigned by seminar faculty.

## Course Requirements

1. Begin serving in an approved internship no later than **September 18**.
2. Negotiate and confirm the serving/learning covenant no later than **October 2**. Any changes are due no later than **October 18**.

**Failure to meet these dates/deadlines will, in most cases, mean postponement of this course for another year.**

3. Participate in the practice of ministry, reflection, weekly seminar group formation and accountability:
  - a. Participate weekly in 10-12 hours of serving and learning in an approved church-based or agency setting.

- b. Attend and participate in weekly supervision conferences with the Pastor/Mentor or supervisor of ministry context.
  - c. Attend weekly seminar group sessions with seminar faculty and colleagues.
  - d. Complete all Theological Reflection papers and readings as assigned by the Seminar Leader. Five short papers are required each semester of both the TFE 1A & 1B and TFE 2A & 2B year. The faculty will designate the selection of these. (See Guidelines, Section IV, TFE Handbook.)
  - e. Participate in 6-8 Site Team meetings (monthly) throughout the academic year.
  - f. Complete one Reading Critique in the spring semester, as instructed. (See Guidelines, Section IV, TFE Handbook.)
4. Participate in TFE Assessments
- g. The Pastor/Mentor, Site Team chair, and seminarian will each complete a Mid-Year Reflection on Learning due in the SMO by **January 3**. The seminarian is responsible for submitting the assessments and signatures to the SMO. Also submit any changes in the Serving Learning Covenant, in writing, at this time.
  - h. The Pastor/Mentor, Site Team chair, and seminarian will each complete an End-of-the-Year Assessment no later than **April 13**. The seminarian must submit all forms and signatures to the Seminar Leader.
  - i. All assessment forms are in the TFE Handbook in Section 3 for all TFE partners. **Please note that the forms are different for each of the TFE partners.** The seminarian is responsible for the timely submission of all forms and signatures.
5. Write a “Professional Identity in Ministry” paper. (See Guidelines, Section IV, TFE Handbook.) Two copies due the week of **March 23**. Submit two copies to your Seminar Leader.

### **Consultation with Seminar Leader**

Students with questions regarding the syllabus, assignments or peer group experience are invited to contact their Seminar Leader. Contact information is listed at the beginning of this handbook. In addition to class, Seminar Leaders may ask for brief consultations with students to inquire about their progress.

### **Grading and Final Evaluation**

The amount of reading and written material required for successful completion of TFE 1A & 1B and TFE 2A & 2B meet the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and PTS standards required for granting credit per semester.

It is expected that all coursework and evaluations will be submitted in a timely fashion. Grades will be awarded as either Credit or No-Credit. The seminarian must successfully complete all requirements listed above as numbers 1 through 5. **Seminarians must successfully complete both semesters to receive credit for either.** Evaluations not submitted on time may result in a grade of No Credit for the year.

Seminar Leaders will write brief assessments, by rubric and narrative, for each student at the end of the year. This will become part of the student’s permanent TFE file (available for student access). The SMO may conduct, when requested, M. Div. degree assessments on behalf of the seminary.

TFE students are required to file for a formal extension for any work not submitted at the end of the semester. (See policy for extensions in the Palmer Student Handbook).

**Note:** Graduating students and students on academic probation may not apply for a course extension and are responsible for ensuring that all coursework and evaluative forms are submitted by the due date designated for student coursework by the Seminary.

### **Palmer Course Policies**

Students may use personal electronic equipment in classrooms only in ways that serve the direct purposes of the classroom session. Students must turn cell phones off during classes. If you are expecting an emergency call, set your cell phone on “vibrate” rather than sound. Activities such as internet surfing, instant messaging and checking for email are strictly prohibited during class time. Each instructor may set additional guidelines for his/her class.

Consult your Student Handbook and the current Seminary Catalog (On line at the Palmer Seminary website) for information about the following policies: Use of inclusive language for human beings, availability of writing tutors, plagiarism, extensions for late work, and other related policies.

### **Retention of Student Records**

The Supervised Ministries office retains TFE student records for four years following completion of the last Supervised Ministries course taken. Due to the limited nature of the retention of student records, we recommend that students maintain their own records.

In light of the fact that judicatories and denominations may ask for recommendations based on these records, we encourage students to develop and keep files of their TFE materials. This may include the serving/learning covenants, theological reflection papers and evaluations. While it is not required, students may want to ask their Pastor/Mentor and a couple of lay persons to write generic recommendations for future use.

### **Expectations for Zoom Online Classes and Meetings**

Since all classes have been moved online for the Fall 2020 semester, please see the below guidelines to help you succeed in an online environment:

1. Be on time, and check your equipment and WiFi connections before the start of class time.
2. Connect using audio and video (as much as possible). If you cannot connect using your video, please communicate with the instructor in advance.
3. If you have a poor WiFi connection, stay with your audio and disable your video, but again please communicate that with the instructor.
4. Make sure your full name appears in your participant box.
5. Mute your audio when you are not speaking but only listening to others.
6. Avoid distractions. Refrain from doing the things you wouldn't be expected to do while participating in a face-to-face class such as surfing the web, replying to emails, etc. It might also mean that you need to use headphones to help you stay focused.
7. Seek to have a private space as much as possible for these sessions. If you are in a space being shared by others please use headsets.
8. Use Zoom tools (i.e. reactions, chats, share screens, etc.) appropriately and for the purposes of advancing the class.
9. Apply the same rules and expectations for class interactions that you would in a face-to-face class (i.e. attentiveness, listening skills, avoiding interruptions, etc.)

10. Be present to your classmates and professors!

## MDIV Program Goals and Indicators Table

INDICATORS	<b>Goal 1</b> A hunger for lifelong spiritual formation & A commitment to fostering interdependent relationships (WHOLE PERSONS)	<b>Goal 2</b> The ability to engage in the reality and the theology of diverse communities; [global context of the Christian tradition; intercultural understanding] (WHOLE WORLD)	<b>Goal 3</b> A biblically informed and theologically grounded commitment to a Holistic Gospel Witness. [WHOLE GOSPEL]	<b>Goal 4</b> A commitment to service in the church and community to minister to changing times [WHOLE GOSPEL]
<b>Indicator 1</b>	1.1 Demonstrates an awareness of self in relationship to God by identifying and using a variety of spiritual disciplines and practices	2.1 Defines and describes the heritage and traditions of the communities out of which the student comes, in which the student serves, and to which the student relates	3.1 Applies skill in the use of biblical, theological and ethical tools for ministry, such as language study, research methods, hermeneutics, critical reflection and clear communication	4.1 Articulates a call to a particular area of Christian service
<b>Indicator 2</b>	1.2 Shows respect for and ability to partner effectively with others	2.2 Uses the tools of critical reflection, research methods, interpretation of sources and clear communication in intercultural understanding	3.2 Clearly communicates biblical content and understanding in a variety of ways, e.g. preaching, Christian Education, pastoral care	4.2 Explains and demonstrates biblical and theological foundations for the practice of ministry
<b>Indicator 3</b>	1.3 Employs reliance upon connection with God for the purpose of Christian service	2.3 Integrates and synthesizes the content of Christian heritage and mission into a personal theology and practice of ministry	3.3 Demonstrates ability to address personal, social, and global questions and issues biblically, theologically and ethically in ways that lead toward healing and wholeness	4.3 Evaluates awareness of the impact of oneself in the practice of ministry through personal reflection
<b>Indicator 4</b>	1.4 Expresses a personal confession of faith that demonstrates biblical and theological understanding at a level consistent with seminary education		3.4 Reports/Observes ability to minister with a Christian spirit conducive to creating peace and reconciliation	4.4 Applies skills in ministry, e.g. preaching, pastoral care, teaching, administrating, engaging in mission and evangelism

**TFE 1A & 1B Assignments and Due Dates**

<b>TFE Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Read “Welcome to Theological Field Education,” Chapters 1-3	By week of September 3
Read “Welcome to Theological Field Education,” Chapters 4-11	As assigned by the Seminar Leader throughout the semester
Begin serving in approved site	No later than <b>September 18</b>
Serving Learning Covenant, including learning goals, (pp. 29-31)	<b>September 25</b> to Seminar Leader <b>October 2</b> to Supervised Ministries Office (no later than)
Serving Learning Covenant –Required Revisions, if any (pp. 29-31)	<b>October 18</b>
Five Reflection Papers (Theological Reflection/Media Interaction, pp. 43-45) <b>*Due the following dates, unless otherwise instructed by your Seminar Leader</b>	Paper 1 due September 9 (In-class, week of) 2 due September 23 (In-class, week of) 3 due October 7 (In-class, week of) 4 due November 11 (In-class, week of) 5 due November 25 (In-class, week of)
Mid-Year Reflection on Learning (for all 3 TFE partners, pp. 33-36)	<b>January 3</b> (In SM Office no later than)
Five Reflection Papers (Theological Reflection/Media Interaction, pp. 43-45) <b>*Due the following dates, unless otherwise instructed by your Seminar Leader</b>	Paper 1 due January 27 (In-class, week of) 2 due February 10 (In-class, week of) 3 due March 9 (In-class, week of) 4 due March 23 (In-class, week of) 5 due April 6 (In-class, week of)
Professional Identity in Ministry Paper (p. 50)	<b>March 23</b> (In-class, week of)
Reading Critique (p. 49)	<b>March 9</b> (In-class, week of)
End of Year TFE Assessments (for all 3 TFE partners, pp. 38-40)	<b>April 13</b> (In-class, week of)

**Important:**

- It is expected that all assignments and forms will be submitted in a timely fashion
- Seminar Leaders may give groups additional dates
- The bolded dates, however, are mandatory. Failure to comply will, in most cases, result in the student being dropped from the program for the year
- It is recommended that students maintain electronic or hard copies of all submitted documents
- The guidelines for assignments can be found in Section 4

## TFE 2A & 2B Syllabus–SUPV535/536 Fall and Spring 2020-2021

Rev. Dr. Marsha Brown Woodard, Director

### Course Prerequisites

- Minimum 48 credit hours completed
- SUPV525/526 TFE 1A & 1B or SUPV520/521TFE 1A & 1B

### Course Description

TFE 2A & 2B may be required following successful completion of TFE 1A & 1B (SUPV520/521 or SUPV 525/526). The focus is on enhancing and identifying personal and professional areas of growth for ministry. Students participate in supervised ministry in a church-based or other ministry setting. Faculty-led weekly seminar groups utilize an integrative reflective and practice model. Students must begin theological field education courses with the fall semester and remain in the same seminar group and ministry site placement through fall and spring semesters.

### Program Learning Goals and Indicators

This course will support the following M.Div. Program Goals and Indicators:

<b>Program Goal</b>	<b>Program Indicator (s)</b>
<b>Goal 1: A hunger for lifelong spiritual formation &amp; a commitment to fostering interdependent relationships (Whole Persons)</b>	<b>1.2</b> Develops a respect for and ability to partner effectively with others; <b>1.3</b> Employs reliance upon connection with God for the purpose of Christian service
<b>Goal 3: A biblically informed and theologically grounded commitment to a Holistic Gospel Witness (Whole Gospel)</b>	<b>3.2</b> Clearly communicates biblical content and understanding in a variety of ways, e.g. preaching, Christian Education, pastoral care; <b>3.4</b> Reports/Observes ability to minister with a Christian spirit conducive to creating peace and reconciliation
<b>Goal 4: A commitment to service in the church and community to minister to changing times (Whole Gospel)</b>	<b>4.1</b> Articulates a call to a particular area of Christian service; <b>4.2</b> Articulates and demonstrates biblical and theological foundations for the practice of ministry; <b>4.3</b> Documents awareness of the impact of oneself in the practice of ministry through personal reflection; <b>4.4</b> Applies skills in ministry, e.g. preaching, pastoral care, teaching, administrating, engaging in mission and evangelism

The complete M.Div. Program Goals and Indicators Table are found at the end of this syllabus.

## Course Rationale

To build on the foundation of one's theological formation and practice of ministry experiences. TFE 2A & 2B students will be challenged to integrate theory, theology, and traditions with their practice of ministry experiences and to establish goals to foster growth to the next level of professional competency and skill development.

## Desired Course Learning Outcomes

- Enhance personal and professional skills through the implementation of the serving/learning covenant
- Integrate theory, theology and tradition with the practice of ministry
- Perform with increasing competence in the broader dimensions of ministry
- Increase expertise in using appropriate methods of theological reflection
- Engage more intentionally in relationships of support and evaluation with peers, supervisor, laity and faculty
- Continue to grow in developing a philosophy of life-long learning and collegiality

## Teaching and Learning Strategies

The course is structured in small group formation, and uses a variety of learning models including didactic, case studies, theological reflection, videos, small group interaction, role-playing, and supervision. The seminar works in conjunction with the ministry experience where seminarians serve outside of the classroom, typically in a local church/agency. TFE course content relies heavily on the student's experience in their ministry settings. The seminar groups are formed and function through the auspices of the SM office and its representatives, the Seminar Leaders.

## Textbooks

### SUPV 535 (Fall 2020)

1. Required: Oswald, Roy M. *Clergy Self-Care: Finding A Balance for Effective Ministry*. The Alban Institute, 1991.
2. Additional reading, assignments, and resources as assigned by seminar faculty.

### SUPV 536 (Spring 2021)

1. Each seminarian will select a book that reflects an area of specialization within their ministry that will move them in an area of needed growth (e.g. hospice, finances, management, leadership etc.) **This may not be a book from any other current or past course**
2. Additional reading, assignments and resources as assigned by seminar faculty

## Course Requirements

1. Begin serving in an approved internship no later than **September 18**.
2. Negotiate and confirm the serving/learning covenant no later than **October 2**. Any changes are due no later than **October 18**.

**Failure to meet these dates/deadlines will, in most cases, mean postponement of this course for another year.**

3. Participate in the practice of ministry, reflection, weekly seminar group formation and accountability:



- a. Participate weekly in 10-12 hours of serving and learning in an approved church-based or agency setting.
  - b. Attend and participate in weekly supervision conferences with the Pastor/Mentor or supervisor of ministry context.
  - c. Attend weekly seminar group sessions with seminar faculty and colleagues
  - d. Complete all Theological Reflection papers and Readings as assigned by the Seminar Leader. Five short papers are required each semester of both the TFE 1A & 1B and TFE 2A & 2B year. The faculty will designate the selection of these. (See Guidelines, Section IV, TFE Handbook.)
  - e. Participate in 6-8 Site Team meetings (monthly) throughout the academic year.
  - f. Complete one Reading Critique in both semesters, as instructed. (See Guidelines, Section IV, TFE Handbook.)
4. Participate in TFE Assessments (note: all partners will have a different form)
- a. The Pastor/Mentor, Site Team chair, and seminarian will each complete a Mid-Year Reflection on Learning due in the Supervised Ministries office by **January 3**. The seminarian is responsible for submitting the assessments and signatures to Supervised Ministries. Also submit any changes in the Serving Learning Covenant, in writing, at this time.
  - b. The Pastor/Mentor, Site Team chair, and seminarian will each complete an End-of-the-Year Assessment no later than **April 13**. The seminarian must submit all forms and signatures to the Seminar Leader.
  - c. All assessment forms are in the TFE Handbook in Section 3 for all TFE partners. Please note that the forms are different for each of the TFE partners. The seminarian is responsible for the timely submission of all forms and signatures
  - d. Write a “Professional Identity in Ministry” paper. (See Guidelines, Section IV, TFE Handbook.) Two copies due the week of **March 23**. Submit two copies to your Seminar Leader.

### **Consultation with Seminar Leader**

Students with questions regarding the syllabus, assignments or peer group experience are invited to contact their Seminar Leader. Contact information is listed on page 4 of this handbook. In addition to class, Seminar Leaders may ask for brief consultations with students to inquire about their progress.

### **Grading and Final Evaluation**

The amount of reading and written material required for successful completion of TFE 1A & 1B and TFE 2A & 2B meet the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and Palmer Theological Seminary standards required for granting credit per semester.

It is expected that all coursework and evaluations will be submitted in a timely fashion. Grades will be awarded as either Credit or No-Credit. The seminarian must successfully complete all requirements listed above. **Seminarians must successfully complete both semesters to receive credit for either.** Evaluations not submitted on time may result in a grade of No Credit for the year. Seminar Leaders will write brief assessments, by rubric and narrative, for each student at the end of the year. This will become part of the student’s permanent TFE file (available for student access). The SMO may conduct, when requested, M. Div. degree assessments on behalf of the seminary.

TFE students are required to file for a formal extension for any work not submitted at the end of the semester. (See policy for extensions in the Palmer Student Handbook)

**Note:** Graduating students cannot apply for a course extension and are responsible for ensuring that all coursework and evaluative forms are submitted by the due date designated for Level 3 student coursework by the seminary. Grade verification and probation forms are signed in the SMO.

### **Palmer Course Policies**

Students may use personal electronic equipment in classrooms only in ways that serve the direct purposes of the classroom session. Students must turn cell phones off during classes. If you are expecting an emergency call, set your cell phone on “vibrate” rather than sound. Activities such as internet surfing, instant messaging and checking for email are strictly prohibited during class time. Each instructor may set additional guidelines for his/her class.

Consult your Student Handbook and the current seminary catalog (Online at the Palmer Seminary website) for information about the following policies: Use of inclusive language for human beings, availability of writing tutors, plagiarism, extensions for late work, and other related policies.

### **Retention of Student Records**

The Supervised Ministries office retains TFE student records for four years following completion of the last Supervised Ministries course taken. Due to the limited nature of the retention of student records, we recommend that students maintain their own records. In light of the fact that judicatories and denominations may ask for recommendations based on these records, we encourage students to develop and keep files of their TFE materials. This may include the serving/learning covenants, theological reflection papers and evaluations. While it is not required, students may want to ask their Pastor/Mentor and a couple of lay persons to write generic recommendations for future use.

### **Expectations for Zoom Online Classes and Meetings**

Since all classes have been moved online for the Fall 2020 semester, please see the below guidelines to help you succeed in an online environment:

1. Be on time, and check your equipment and WiFi connections before the start of class time.
2. Connect using audio and video (as much as possible). If you cannot connect using your video, please communicate with the instructor in advance.
3. If you have a poor WiFi connection, stay with your audio and disable your video, but again please communicate that with the instructor.
4. Make sure your full name appears in your participant box.
5. Mute your audio when you are not speaking but only listening to others.
6. Avoid distractions. Refrain from doing the things you wouldn't be expected to do while participating in a face-to-face class such as surfing the web, replying to emails, etc. It might also mean that you need to use headphones to help you stay focused.
7. Seek to have a private space as much as possible for these sessions. If you are in a space being shared by others please use headsets.
8. Use Zoom tools (i.e. reactions, chats, share screens, etc.) appropriately and for the purposes of advancing the class.
9. Apply the same rules and expectations for class interactions that you would in a face-to-face class (i.e. attentiveness, listening skills, avoiding interruptions, etc.)
10. Be present to your classmates and professors!

## MDIV Program Goals and Indicators Table

INDICATORS	Goal 1 A hunger for lifelong spiritual formation & A commitment to fostering interdependent relationships (WHOLE PERSONS)	Goal 2 The ability to engage in the reality and the theology of diverse communities; [global context of the Christian tradition; intercultural understanding] (WHOLE WORLD)	Goal 3 A biblically informed and theologically grounded commitment to a Holistic Gospel Witness. [WHOLE GOSPEL]	Goal 4 A commitment to service in the church and community to minister to changing times [WHOLE GOSPEL]
<b>Indicator 1</b>	1.1 Demonstrates an awareness of self in relationship to God by identifying and using a variety of spiritual disciplines and practices	2.1 Defines and describes the heritage and traditions of the communities out of which the student comes, in which the student serves, and to which the student relates	3.1 Applies skill in the use of biblical, theological and ethical tools for ministry, such as language study, research methods, hermeneutics, critical reflection and clear communication	4.1 Articulates a call to a particular area of Christian service
<b>Indicator 2</b>	1.2 Shows respect for and ability to partner effectively with others	2.2 Uses the tools of critical reflection, research methods, interpretation of sources and clear communication in intercultural understanding	3.2 Clearly communicates biblical content and understanding in a variety of ways, e.g. preaching, Christian Education, pastoral care	4.2 Explains and demonstrates biblical and theological foundations for the practice of ministry
<b>Indicator 3</b>	1.3 Employs reliance upon connection with God for the purpose of Christian service	2.3 Integrates and synthesizes the content of Christian heritage and mission into a personal theology and practice of ministry	3.3 Demonstrates ability to address personal, social, and global questions and issues biblically, theologically and ethically in ways that lead toward healing and wholeness	4.3 Evaluates awareness of the impact of oneself in the practice of ministry through personal reflection
<b>Indicator 4</b>	1.4 Expresses a personal confession of faith that demonstrates biblical and theological understanding at a level consistent with seminary education		3.4 Reports/Observes ability to minister with a Christian spirit conducive to creating peace and reconciliation	4.4 Applies skills in ministry, e.g. preaching, pastoral care, teaching, administrating, engaging in mission and evangelism

**TFE 2A & 2B Assignments and Due Dates**

<b>TFE Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Begin serving in approved site	No later than <b>September 18</b>
Serving Learning Covenant- including learning goals (pp. 29-31)	<b>September 25</b> Seminar Leader  <b>October 2 due in SMO Office</b> (submit no later than)
Serving Learning Covenant –Required Revisions, if any (pp. 29-31)	<b>October 18</b>
Five Reflection Papers (Theological Reflection/Media Interaction, pp. 43-45) <b>*Due the following dates, unless otherwise instructed by your Seminar Leader</b>	Paper 1 due September 9 (In-class, week of) 2 due September 23 (In-class, week of) 3 due October 7 (In-class, week of) 4 due November 11 (In-class, week of) 5 due November 25 (In-class, week of)
Reading Critique (p. 49) Clergy Self Care	November 4 (In-class, week of)
Mid-Year Reflection on Learning (for all 3 TFE partners, pp. 33-36)	<b>January 3</b> (In SM Office no later than)
Five Reflection Papers (Theological Reflection/Media Interaction, pp. 43-45) <b>*Due the following dates, unless otherwise instructed by your Seminar Leader</b>	Paper 1 due January 27 (In-class, week of) 2 due February 10 (In-class, week of) 3 due March 9 (In-class, week of) 4 due March 23 (In-class, week of) 5 due April 6 (In-class, week of)
Professional Identity in Ministry Paper Addendum (p. 51)	<b>March 23</b> (In-class, week of)
Reading Critique (p. 49)	March 9 (In-class, week of)
End of Year TFE Assessments (for all 3 TFE partners, pp. 38-40)	<b>April 13</b> (In-class, week of)

**Important:**

- It is expected that all assignments and forms will be submitted in a timely fashion
- Seminar Leaders may give groups additional dates
- The bolded dates, however, are mandatory. Failure to comply will, in most cases, result in the student being dropped from the program for the year
- It is recommended that students maintain electronic or hard copies of all submitted documents
- The guidelines for assignments can be found in Section 4



## Section 3

# Serving-Learning Covenant and Assessment Forms

Serving Learning Covenant  
Tips for Writing Goals for TFE (Smart Goals)  
Mid-Year Reflection on Learning  
Year-End Assessment

Students are expected to download their forms and those of the other TFE partners, as necessary. All forms are available online: <https://www.palmerseminary.edu/student-life/supervised-ministries/theological-field-education>

**Serving Learning Covenant  
Palmer Theological Seminary**

**A. Seminarian**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Circle: home/cell): \_\_\_\_\_

Seminary Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @eastern.edu

**B. Theological Field Education Site**

Church/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address/ P.O. Box: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Site Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Pastor/Mentor**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: [Circle: home/cell]: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Site Team Chair**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Seminarian Learning Goals**

Palmer Theological Seminary expects that the seminarian will engage in a broad range of ministry experience with quality supervision, integrity of feedback and assessment in an atmosphere that fosters growth for **all** persons involved. On a **separate page(s)** list very specific learning goals that the seminarian commits to working toward during the year. There should be at least three and no more than four. (See Smart Goals in TFE Handbook following this Covenant w/ Sample or the section on goal setting in Experiencing Ministry Supervision (pp. 60-62).) A typed copy of the goals should be given to the Pastor/Mentor and the TFE Seminar Leader for consideration prior to submitting the Covenant. A job description does not constitute goals. **Initial all additional pages.**

**F. Serving Commitments (10-12 hours per week)**

Attach Position/Job Description, if applicable

Responsibilities	Hours per Week
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Do not include travel time when calculating “Hours Per Week”; do include preparation time.**

**G. Terms of Covenant**

1. Begin\_\_\_\_\_ Terminate \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Mentoring Conferences: (once per week for one hour)  
Day\_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Site Team Conferences: (monthly or at least 3 per semester)  
Day\_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Remuneration: Salary \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year to be paid weekly?  
Monthly?\_\_\_\_ Other?\_\_\_\_\_ Travel allowance: \_\_\_\_\_
- 
5. Scheduled Time Away– Be sure to list the dates and “paid” or “unpaid” for each (i.e. vacation, holidays, and/or school breaks, etc.)  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

**You may attach additional pages. Initial all additional pages.**



**H. Assessment**

Assessment takes place through your supervisory conferences (informally) and through comprehensive mid-year and end-of-the-year reviews by all parties. The purpose is to provide feedback regarding the seminarian’s development in light of stated learning goals. Seminarian, Pastor/Mentor, Seminar Leader, and Site Team are all involved in the process of completing the mid and end-of-year assessments. Please note that all forms for these assessments are available online.

**I. Covenant Agreement**

I commit myself to the terms of the Covenant:

Seminarian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_

Pastor/Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_

Site Team Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_

Seminar Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_

Judicatory Official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_

**(Judicatory/Denominational approval, if required)**

**The Serving Learning Covenant serves as the guideline for the educational direction and growth of the pastoral intern. Therefore, failure to submit the Covenant by the Oct. 2 deadline (and required revisions by Oct. 18) in most cases will result in postponement of TFE for the seminarian for the year. This covenant must not be terminated prior to a meeting of the seminarian, the Pastor/Mentor, the Director of Supervised Ministries and, when possible the Site Team Chair.**

## Tips for Writing Goals in TFE (Smart Goals)

TFE is a learning experience that is undergirded with **three to four goals** that will serve to support your experience. These goals help you in making decisions throughout the year, and you will work throughout the year so that they may be accomplished by year's end. In addition to the goals, you will also need to develop objectives/tasks that can be accomplished during the year to support the goals. As a lifelong-learner you will always have new things that you desire to learn and we believe this process will provide a model that you can adapt for ministry in the years to come.

Using the model of Smart Goals from Experiencing Ministry Supervision by Pyle and Seals (pp 60-62), your goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and trackable.

**S:** Specific and observable behavior

**M:** Measurable how many, how long, how much

**A:** Attainable with the resources available i.e. books, money, time

**R:** Relevant to your vocational goal, or personal growth

**T:** Trackable by dates, process, etc.

A goal then is a future target or end result. The objectives/tasks are the steps that you take to achieve the goal. For your Serving Learning Covenant you need **at least one** goal from each of the following areas: \*

**Cognitive:** Something you need to 'know'

**Skills:** Something you need to learn how to do

**Personal:** Something that will enable a change in you personally

\*Additional goals can be a duplicate of any of the areas.

In Addition to your Learning Goals, you may also have a Job/Position Description from the ministry site that calls for additional responsibilities. These can be attached to your Covenant, but do not replace the Learning Goals.

Some of the goals in the past have reflected on:

- Developing leadership skills
- Understanding how to minister in a new context (rural, urban, etc.)
- Gaining confidence and effectiveness in preaching
- Overcoming resistance to bereavement ministry as I face my own losses
- Building conflict-management skills
- Facing my theological biases
- Developing a pattern for spiritual growth
- Learning how to balance the commitments in my life

Reminder: Goals should be typed and attached to the Covenant. Be sure to make clear your goals, tasks, and results

(Please note: you will need to download the form from the Palmer website)

## Mid-Year Reflection on Learning

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor/Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

TFE Ministry Site \_\_\_\_\_

TFE Seminar Leader \_\_\_\_\_

### Note:

- The Mid-Year Reflection on Learning assessment presents an opportunity for the Seminarian to engage in conversation with the Pastor/Mentor and Site Team about growth since September [Possible conversation questions are included below]. This conversation may lead to needed changes in the student's Covenant. If so, please submit the amended, signed Covenant along with this Assessment.
- Attach this page as the coversheet to the collective responses from yourself, your Pastor/Mentor and Site Team and include the signatures.
- Each Partner is to complete a Mid-Year Reflection **Grid**. The Pastor/Mentor and Seminarian also complete the additional questions included below.
- The Seminarian is responsible for obtaining and submitting three (3) completed grids, the additional narrative responses from the Pastor/Mentor and Seminarian, and one (1) Signature Page. **The Seminarian** is responsible for the timely submission of all forms to the Supervised Ministries Office. Forms are to be **submitted in hard copy** which can either be mailed or hand delivered to SMO. The due date is no later than **January 3**.

### Possible Conversation Starters:

**Seminarian:** Questions for **your** reflective conversation may include “How do I see myself growing in ministry?” “How do I see myself growing in relation to my Covenant learning goals?,” and “Do others see me growing in ministry?,” and “In what ways?”

**Pastor/Mentor:** Questions for **your** reflection may include “How do I see the seminarian working through his/her learning goals?,” and “How do I see the seminarian in his/her ability to self-reflect on her/his ministry?”

**Site Team:** Questions for **your** reflection may include “How do I see the seminarian working through her/his learning goals?,” and “How do I see the seminarian in his/her ability to self-reflect on his/her ministry?”

**Additional Questions for the Seminarian (to be answered on a separate sheet of paper and attached to grid):**

1. In what ways have your learning goals been helpful/not helpful to your learning? What progress have you made toward the fulfillment of your learning goals? (Please include a copy of learning goals)
2. What has been helpful/not helpful in your time together with your Pastor/Mentor? What was missing?
3. How have you incorporated the discipline of theological reflection in your experience? Describe how and why this has been useful or challenging.
4. What, if anything, do you want to be different in the second semester? Are there any other comments you would like to share at this time?
5. Any additional comments?

**Additional Questions for the Pastor/Mentor (to be answered on a separate sheet of paper and attached to grid):**

1. In what ways have the seminarian's learning goals been helpful/not helpful? Have you any revisions to suggest at this point in the program?
2. Please add comment to two or three of your grid ratings
3. What, if anything, do you want to do differently next term?
4. What, if anything, do you want the student to do differently next term?
5. Are there any other comments you would like to share at this time?

**Reminders**

- Each partner is to complete a Mid-Year Reflection Grid. (A total of 3 grids.) The Pastor/Mentor and seminarian also complete their additional questions (The form you will need can be download from the website).
- Both the grid and responses to the additional questions of this Mid-Year Reflection on Learning should be submitted to the student after they have been reviewed and discussed by all parties together at the ministry site.
- The due date is no later than **January 3**.
- The seminarian is responsible for timely submission of all forms to the SMO.

## Grid for Mid-Year Reflection on Learning

For each item below decide which of the following best describes the seminarian at this time in her/his journey. Please place a number between 1 to 5 that best describes the seminarian at this time.

1. Not applicable to this internship
2. Will be addressed in the second semester
3. Challenging area for the student with her/his current level of experience
4. Improving in this area at the appropriate rate for her/his level of experience
5. Competent in this area for the student's level of experience

### Interpersonal Dynamics

1-5

Accepts people as they are	
Respects confidential information	
Responds to needs with empathy and resourcefulness	
Shows appropriate initiative in responding to needs of others	
Demonstrates a positive attitude towards responsibilities	
Accepts and learns from criticism	
Deals constructively with conflict	
Contributes positively in groups and committees	

### Communication Skills

1-5

Leads in prayer and scripture reading	
Uses appropriate language in conversation, teaching, preaching, inclusive language and grammar in teaching and preaching	
Interprets biblical text faithfully in various contexts	
Sermons are clear, understandable, and applicable	
Involves learners in the educational process	
Selects concepts appropriate for learners' ages and needs	
Communicates Christian beliefs effectively to persons of various ages	
Leads group discussions in a purposeful way	

### Theological Development

1-5

Relates biblical and theological insights to community/world issues	
Relates the gospel to people outside the church/agency	

### Personal Work Habits

1-5

Uses time effectively	
Is dependable	
Is prepared	
Completes tasks	
Personal appearance/hygiene is appropriate	

This assessment was completed by (circle one):

Seminarian

Pastor/Mentor

Site Team



# Year End Assessment

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor/Mentor \_\_\_\_\_

TFE Ministry Site \_\_\_\_\_

TFE Seminar Leader \_\_\_\_\_

## Seminarian

**Note:** These are the **seminarian** questions. This assessment is designed to provide an opportunity for you to reflect on your ministry this year. **This Assessment should be a part of an end of the year conversation with your Pastor/Mentor, and Site Team chair and committee.** Please respond to the questions below on a separate sheet of paper. Attach these pages as the coversheet to the collective responses from yourself, your Pastor/Mentor and Site Team and be sure to include the signature page (complete with the required signatures). You are responsible for obtaining the needed signatures and for the timely submission of all forms to your Seminar Leader. The due date is in class the week of April 13.

### Seminarian Questions:

- Describe three things that excite you about your ministry this year
- In what ways did you meet the goals stated in the Serving/Learning Covenant?  
Give examples to illustrate your assessment
- To what extent were you able to partner with others in performing ministry tasks?
- What strengths are evident in your ministry at this stage of the formation process?
- What particular areas need attention?
- What has been helpful in your time with your Pastor/Mentor? With your Site Team? What more would you have liked to have seen happen in your time with your Pastor/Mentor and Site Team?
- Are there recommendations or suggestions that you would like to give to your ministry setting?
- Any additional comments?

## Pastor/Mentor

**Note:** These are the **Pastor/Mentor** questions. The following questions are intended to stimulate reflection on the student's growth in ministry and theological reflection. The assessment is a careful review of the learning goals specified in the Serving/Learning Covenant. The process is intended to affirm the growth observed in the seminarian and to help clarify direction for future learning. **This assessment should be a part of an end of the year conversation with your intern and the Site Team chair and possibly members of the committee.** Please respond to the questions below on a separate sheet of paper and submit them to the seminarian. The seminarian is responsible for

obtaining your signature and for the timely submission of all forms to her/his seminar leader. The due date is the week of April 13.

### **Pastor/Mentor Questions:**

- Describe the seminarian in terms of ministerial identity, sense of call, spiritual growth, personal maturity and ability to work effectively with others
- Describe the seminarian's ability to reflect theologically on pastoral issues
- In what ways did the seminarian meet the goals stated in the Serving/Learning Covenant? Give examples to illustrate your assessment
- What strengths are evident in the seminarian's ministry at this stage of his/her formation?
- What particular areas need attention?
- How often have you met with the seminarian for supervisory conversation? Describe the dynamics and effectiveness of the supervisory relationship
- Any additional comments?

### **Site Team**

**Note:** These are the **Site Team** questions. The following questions are intended to stimulate reflection on the student's growth in ministry and theological reflection. This assessment should be a part of an end of the year conversation among the student intern, Pastor/Mentor, and the Site Team chair and possibly members of the committee. Each person on the Team contributes to the assessment. One member then summarizes the responses and submits responses to the seminarian on a separate sheet of paper. The assessment is a careful review of the learning goals specified in the Serving/Learning Covenant. The process is intended to affirm the growth observed in the seminarian and to help clarify future learning expectations. Please respond to the questions below on a separate sheet of paper and submit them to the seminarian. The seminarian is responsible for obtaining your signature and for the timely submission of all forms to your Seminar Leader. The due date is the week of April 13.

### **Site Team Questions:**

- Describe the seminarian in terms of ministerial identity, sense of call, spiritual growth, personal maturity, and ability to work effectively with others
- In what ways does the seminarian meet the goals stated in the Serving/Learning Covenant? Give examples to illustrate your assessment
- What strengths are evident in the seminarian's ministry at this stage of his/her formation?
- What particular areas need improvement?
- How often has the Site Team met with the seminarian? In what ways is the group effective? How can the functioning of the group be improved?
- Any additional comments?







## **Section 4**

# **Guidelines for Student Assignments**

**A Guide to Theological Reflection  
Writing Rubric for Theological Reflection Papers (TRP)  
TFE Reading Critiques  
TFE 1A & 1B Paper, “Professional Identity in Ministry”  
TFE 2A & 2B Paper, “Professional Identity in Ministry”**

## A Guide to Theological Reflection

“What makes theological reflection theological? The shortest answer is God. That’s also the most profound and the most true answer. Theological reflection is theo-logical. Its overriding interest is God. But theological reflection is not interested in God abstractly or as proclaimed in doctrines and rituals and church policies...It is not satisfied with learning more about God but with leading a person more directly to encounter God. As this happens, theological reflection asks the person to consider what difference God’s presence makes (the reflection stage) and what God expects as a result (the action stage). This integration of reflection and action is what ultimately makes theological reflection theological.”

-Robert L. Kinast in *Let Ministry Teach: A Guide to Theological Reflection*

### The Goal

The goal of theological reflection is to help you to (1) **discover** deeper levels of meaning for ministry (2) **connect** scripture and theology to your experience of ministry and (3) **recognize** God’s presence in your life/ministry so that it will help shape your practice of ministry.

### The Process

- Choose a pastoral encounter/ministry experience in which you are personally involved from your current ministry setting. This needs to be a significant enough experience to warrant reflection at a meaningful level. If possible, choose an experience that is provocative or perplexing to you. Only one paper per semester may reflect on something that comes from outside your ministry setting. These papers will be most beneficial for you if they are submitted at regular intervals throughout the semesters
- Pray about your experience in the ministry encounter. Ask the Spirit to stimulate and guide you to work with the thoughts, feelings, and intuitions that are important for your reflection so that you can more clearly present and understand your ministry experience
- Consult the Writing Rubric for Theological Reflection Papers, Model One in this section of the Handbook to understand the expectations for a well-crafted and well-thought reflection paper
- Write up your reflection according to one of the models outlined below as instructed by your Seminar Leader. The result of your theological reflection on the ministry experience will be a computer-generated, 3-4 page, double-spaced paper, formatted with one-inch margins and 12 pt. font
- Feedback on your written theological reflection will be given by your Seminar Leader through comments on your paper. Some Seminar Leaders will use a Writing Rubric Grading Grid based on the Writing Rubric to give you further feedback on your reflection. If the Seminar Leader decides that the paper is written at the Moderate or Low Performance Level, it may be returned to you for a rewrite. Further input may be given in your Seminar Group should you choose to present it to the class. Some students find it helpful to seek further reflection on their ministry experience with their Pastor/Mentor

For a fuller understanding of the process and art of theological reflection, see chapter three of Matthew Floding's *Welcome to Theological Field Education*.

Seminar groups often use student reflections as part of the content of seminar sessions. Students should be prepared to share their theological reflections in the TFE seminar groups. When a paper contains personal, private or confidential information, a student may request that the content or issues of his/her paper not be shared with the class at large. Seminar Leaders may discuss issues with the student and with the Supervised Ministries department. Seminar Leaders may require students to submit papers and receive feedback on Theological Reflection papers by email using eastern.edu or through Brightspace.

### **Model 1**

One model of theological reflection (and the primary one to be used for your papers) would follow this progression. Ask yourself the following questions, responding to all categories listed:

- **Experience:** Recall a ministry experience. What did you do? What made this experience ministry?
- **Personal:** Identify your feelings related to the experience (e.g. affirmed, confused). What about this ministry did you find life giving?
- **Cultural/Sociological Dynamics:** Describe the culture of the ministry setting. Explore the cultural/sociological issues present in this experience (gender, race, age, etc.). Who were you in this event? How did others relate to you? Where were the issues of power present?
- **Theological:** Identify your theological perspectives in this experience (God, humanity, the Church, Scripture, etc.). Where did you see the activity of God in this event of ministry? What is God inviting you to learn? How was your understanding of the Church or Scripture or humanity affected by this experience?
- **Pastoral Learning:** What did you learn about professional ministry in this experience? What are you learning about your own pastoral identity in this experience? What would you do differently after reflecting on your experience?
- **Spiritual Insight:** Where is the sacred in this experience? Where do you feel God is calling you to stretch and grow? What Spiritual Disciplines will be helpful to you in further processing this incident?

## **Model 2**

Another model for theological reflection relates to Media Interaction Reviews. Media Interaction Reviews give the student the opportunity to think and reflect upon theological themes as they are expressed through performance art and film.

The purpose of these reviews is to dialogue with the author/creator and to reflect upon the concepts that most intrigued or challenged you while reading/watching/interacting with the work. (Ask yourself the following questions):

- What did the creator say that I never thought about before?
- What about this art form enhanced the communication of its ideas/experience that other forms could not?
- How did I encounter God within this work? How does reflection on this work impact my overall theology?
- Of what use could this be to my ministry understanding particularly in my current site?

Note: You may also reflect on the questions from Model 1, as they also may be helpful in the Media Interaction Review.

# Writing Rubric for Theological Reflection Papers (TRP)<sup>1</sup>

## Model 1

### 1. Writing

#### A. Organization

##### High Performance Range:

- The paper is organized around the categories listed in the Theological Field Education Handbook for Theological Reflection Papers, Model One
- Each category, representing a different lens through which to view, analyze and reflect upon the incident, is addressed clearly and directly so that the reader has unambiguous understanding of the student's perspective

##### Moderate Performance Range:

- The student has addressed all the TRP Model One categories, but has not given appropriate consideration to each one

##### Low Performance Range:

- The student has neglected to address all the TRP Model One categories required for Model One or has given little reflective effort to them

#### B. Word Choice, Voice, Grammar

##### High Performance Range:

- The writer demonstrates a strong grasp of standard writing conventions, including spelling, punctuation, word usage, and uses this ability to enhance the paper's readability

##### Moderate Performance Range:

- The writing lacks detail and precision and overuses "generic" words or phrases
- The writer shows good control over simple sentences, but struggles with complex syntax and, therefore, does not adequately communicate the issues and analysis of the ministry incident
- Some problems with word usage and grammar are present

##### Low Performance Range:

- The writer struggles with a limited vocabulary and is unable to convey meaning. For example, words seem imprecise, inadequate, or are improperly used

<sup>1</sup> Adapted by Supervised Ministries (2006) for Theological Reflection Papers from *Integrated Writing Rubric for Written Work* used for courses at Palmer Theological Seminary. Revised by Supervised Ministries, 2007.

- The language can be vague, abstract or redundant enough so as to convey only the most general messages and, therefore, does not communicate the issues and analysis of the ministry incident
- Many sentences seem disjointed or awkward
- Spelling and basic punctuation are often incorrect

## **II. Content**

### **A. Grasp of Issues**

#### **High Performance Range:**

- The student has chosen a significant ministry incident or issue of ministry identity from their current ministry internship that is clearly stated in the Experience section of their reflection paper
- The student demonstrates an accurate understanding of the incident and the factors contributing to it, without ignoring the complexities
- The student demonstrates the ability to link the ministry experience to the five other categories for response which are the relevant issues in theology, culture and society, spirituality, and personal and professional considerations

#### **Moderate Performance Range:**

- The paper is clear and focused as in the High Performance description, but the reflection does not build or flow from one category to the next
- All six categories have been identified in the TRP and at least four of the six categories of Model One have been addressed fully

#### **Low Performance Range:**

- The student has chosen a ministry incident that is less fruitful for examination in terms of opportunity for depth of reflection
- The student has not identified the pertinent issues within the ministry incident that would allow for fruitful theological reflection
- Three or less categories of Model One have been addressed. For example, the student has written only a description of the ministry experience from a personal point of view and has neglected the other categories

### **B. Critical Thinking and Completeness of Analysis**

#### **High Performance Range:**

- In each of the six sections of the paper the student has identified the basis for her/his analysis and addressed it with explanation and evidence of supportive reflective material. Ideas describing what has led to the incident, what contributed to its unfolding and possible responses for further action are clearly stated and supported
- Logical cause and effect are in evidence as the student addresses the impact of the factors affecting the critical incident. For example, in the category, "Spiritual Insights," the spiritual dimension related to the ministry incident is fully explored



noting the range of God's activity in the experience and identifying where the student's spiritual growth is needed.

- Assumptions are checked for validity
- The interrelationship among the categories in relation to the ministry incident is explored. The thinking reflects an attitude of pastoral responsibility, expands on the theological implications of the experience, and engages cultural factors both personal and in the wider communities of church and society
- The conclusions /recommendations directly address the presenting experience in ministry

#### **Moderate Performance Range:**

- Major components of analysis are identified. Ideas conveyed in the reflection are clear, however the explanations are not easy to follow and/or they are not linked to the categories/components of the TRP, Model One
- Assumptions may not be thoroughly checked
- The interrelationship among the 6 categories is not explained adequately for consistent understanding of the incident
- Pastoral responsibility or expanded and appropriate theological thinking, or cultural factors have not been demonstrated in their fullness
- The reflection is over-simplified. For example, reflection on the spiritual dimension of the incident presented has been oversimplified into a nod at the practice of prayer without further reflection and spiritual self-examination
- There is no clear link between the conclusions/recommendations and the analysis. Some part is missing (conclusion, recommendation, link to the analysis)

#### **Low Performance Range:**

- Most of the TRP, Model One categories are missing
- The analysis has not followed consistent, rational or adequate theological thinking in supporting the claims made in the reflection. The student has not reflected on the situation with clear ideas as to what contributed to the event, the dynamics of what actually occurred, or what action/behavior might be taken in the future
- Assumptions are made that have not been checked and may be incorrect
- There is no clear link between conclusion/recommendation and analysis or parts are missing

## TFE Reading Critiques

The reading critiques are a vital part of the practice of ministry experience. It is important to sense the tension between one's theology, one's traditions, and the experience of the practice of ministry.

This critique must be:

- Computer generated
- At least three pages and no more than four pages
- Double spaced, 12 pt. font, and have no more than 1-inch margins
- It must include your name and date, name of book, and name of Seminar Leader

The Critique must include/address the following:

- A concise summary of the heart of the author's proposal
- What contributions to the field of ministry does this book bring?
- How does it compare to other books you have read in this area?
- To what audience would you most recommend this book for their edification?
- Your favorite quote. Why? Please include page number.
- Bibliographic Data-when selecting your own book (i.e. TFE 2A & 2B students)

All reading critiques are to be given to your Seminar Leader.

## TFE 1A & 1B Paper, “Professional Identity in Ministry”

### Guidelines

TFE 1A & 1B students will write a paper that reflects their experience in developing or enhancing their professional identity in ministry. The paper is due **the week of March 23**. **Two copies** should be given to your Seminar Leader. One copy will be returned to you and the other copy will remain in Supervised Ministries as part of the permanent Supervised Ministries’ student file (4 years).

Reflect upon your experiences in Theological Field Education as they describe the development of your professional identity. This paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, and 5 to 7 pages in length.

**Include a discussion of the following questions. Answer prompts 1 through 6 (where indicated, you may have a choice of questions)**

The questions indicated by **\*\*\*** may be found particularly meaningful to **TFE 1A & 1B students** with previous ministry experience (i.e. **TFE 1A & 1B students** who are ordained, serving as pastor, student pastor, or are a member of the professional ministry staff of a local congregation or denominational agency.)

1. Briefly summarize your ministry context and reflect on your identity. What are your gifts and what are your growing edges?
2. What experiences have helped you to see yourself as a professional in ministry? **OR\*\*\*** What is changing or evolving in your identity as a person in ministry? What is different about you today than in the past?
3. What experiences have raised questions or concerns for you in coming to terms with your emerging ministerial identity? **OR\*\*\*** Identify your feelings about your ministry at this point in your journey. What do you find life giving? What do you find difficult or painful?
4. What biblical metaphors or images are points of identification for you that help you to understand yourself at this point in your journey? **OR\*\*\*** Where do you see God in your setting? How is your present ministry working to shape your theology at this time? Your understanding of God? How does the ministry in which you serve fit into the larger picture of society, the world, and the worldwide Body of Christ?
5. How has the church/agency changed as a result of your ministry? **OR\*\*\*** How is diversity experienced in your ministry context? How has it impacted your ministry?
6. Where do you feel God calling you to stretch and grow? How will you respond to that call?

## **TFE 2A & 2B Paper, “Professional Identity in Ministry”**

### **Addendum to TFE 1A & 1B**

#### **Guidelines**

TFE 2A & 2B students will be asked to write an Addendum to their TFE 1A & 1B (formerly Middler) paper. Papers are **due the week of March 23**. **Two copies** should be given to your Seminar Leader. One copy will be returned to you and the other copy will remain in Supervised Ministries as part of the permanent Supervised Ministries’ student file (4 years)

This paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. font, and 3 to 4 pages in length. Include a discussion of the following questions:

1. In what ways have you grown since last year or from when you took TFE 1A&1B?
2. Was the continuation in the same ministry setting or the change to a different ministry setting helpful in developing your understanding of your professional identity in ministry?
3. To what vision of ministry do you now feel called?
4. What suggestions would you make to your ministry setting for the future?



## **Section 5**

### **Helpful Tips for Students**

**Considerations for Selecting a Pastor/Mentor**  
**Additional Considerations for Selecting an Off-Site  
Pastor/Mentor**  
**Considerations for Selecting a Ministry Site**  
**Building Effective Internship Relationships**

The following resources are shared with students in preparation for Theological Field Education (A., B., & C.) and with students as they make relational considerations for the TFE Internship year (D.)

## **A. Considerations for Selecting a Pastor/Mentor**

The mentor is a vital component in the TFE program at PTS. Seminarians are receiving hands-on experience in ministry under the loving, careful guidance of a competent professional in ministry, the mentor. Mentors should reflect a dynamic spirituality as well as a strong gift for teaching. The following areas of competence should be considered during your search:

- Does the Pastor/Mentor have a strong Biblical theology of ministry? Does she/she possess the ability to articulate that theology relating it to tradition and practice?
- Is the Pastor/Mentor an effective communicator with strong interpersonal skills?
- Is the Pastor/Mentor a mature, sensitive person? Does she/he have clear growth goals? Can she/he give and receive evaluation?
- Is the Pastor/Mentor a good model of pastoral care?
- Does the Pastor/Mentor possess the ability to discern primary dynamics in small groups?
- Does he/she demonstrate ability in facilitating involvement in task-oriented groups?
- Does the Pastor/Mentor demonstrate good skills in preaching and worship? A good knowledge of hymnology, the Christian year, the services of baptism, marriage, Lord's Supper, and Christian burial?
- Is the Pastor/Mentor an effective preacher demonstrating good skills in exegesis and communication?
- Is the Pastor/Mentor a good administrator with a solid knowledge of denominational polity, formal, and informal power structures and management skills?
- Does the Pastor/Mentor give evidence of a sound knowledge of educational theology and process? Does he/she teach the faith effectively?
- Does the Pastor/Mentor have good skills in community analysis for evangelistic strategies and church/agency growth? Does she/he do the work of an evangelist?
- Is the Pastor/Mentor a good model of clergy self-care?
- Does the Pastor/Mentor show evidence of a strong spiritual life?

## **B. Additional Considerations for Selecting an Off-Site Pastor/Mentor<sup>2</sup>**

Seminarians who are serving as the senior or solo pastor of a church also will need to select a Pastor/Mentor. Most times this person will be a ministry colleague not in their congregation. The Pastor/Mentor of a pastoral intern in the Palmer TFE program, who serves in a ministry site not that of the pastoral intern or is retired, is called an Off-Site Pastor/Mentor.

The process of mentoring with an Off-Site Pastor/Mentor encounters some differences logistically in the supervisory process from that of the On-Site Pastor/Mentor. The following additional criteria need to be considered by the seminarian when selecting an Off-Site Pastor/Mentor. The Off-Site Pastor/Mentor needs to:

- Have the ability and commitment to observe the student Pastor in the practice of ministry
- Have the ability and commitment to communicate with the Site Team of the student Pastor's congregation for the purposes of counsel when needed and for assessment discussions mid-year and at year-end
- Have flexibility to meet with the student Pastor for reflection on supervisory issues both in face to face encounters and through use of current technology
- Have the capacity and willingness to hold the student Pastor accountable to the covenanted learning agreements and to other issues in ministry that might arise
- Be ready to enjoy a deeper collegial relationship with the student Pastor through the TFE experience
- The above list is not intended to be used as an interview schedule with prospective Pastor/Mentors. No Pastor/Mentor will be strong necessarily in all 12 or 17 areas as listed above. Nevertheless, the Pastor/Mentor must possess excellent skills overall in these areas to contribute to the ongoing growth of our seminarians. Your Pastor/Mentor, whether on-site or off-site, must be chosen prayerfully and carefully.

## **C. Considerations for Selecting a Ministry Site**

In selecting a TFE site, consider the following:

- What are my goals for ministry?
- What is the nature of the ministry expected at this site?
- What is the social and cultural context, and how does this context influence how ministry expectations are defined?

<sup>2</sup>The policy on Pastor/Mentor confirmation is found in Section 1 of this TFE Handbook.



- What resources do I bring to this context?
- How will I be challenged to grow in this setting?
- Will I receive valued theological reflection in this setting?

Please note that the TFE site placement is subject to approval by the Seminary, based on covenantal agreement to abide by all program requirements as outlined in this handbook. The TFE components of the Pastor/Mentor and the Site Team must be in place in all ministry sites including the non-traditional.

## **D. Building Effective Internship Relationships**

The fulfillment you derive from your internship will be largely dependent on the effectiveness of the various relationships you are forming: with your Pastor/Mentor, Site Team and other laity, colleagues, community, seminar group and leader, and of course with God. Pastoral internships call for many relational qualities, including the following:

- being able to appropriately disclose yourself
- receiving affirmation and criticism
- demonstrating being a secure person
- knowing and admitting your strengths and limitations
- balancing the responsibilities of your internship with your personal & academic life
- risking overcoming limitations
- compassion and caring
- openness and acceptance
- grace and forgiveness
- reaching out to persons with other beliefs and racial and social backgrounds
- listening with empathy and patience and love
- regarding pastoral conversation as a trust
- resilience in responding to persons in crisis
- accountability
- behaving in a manner consistent with your beliefs
- flexibility in encountering differing situations and persons
- acknowledging and handling anger and conflict
- setting appropriate boundaries
- respecting the heritage and mission of the church/agency
- appreciating the ministry of the laity
- showing commitment to the ministry of the church of Christ
- seeking to minister from a strong theological and biblical understanding
- striving to discern God's calling
- sharing your sense of the presence of God
- growing in your personal understanding and relationship with God
- following appropriate ethical norms

Just as your Pastor/Mentor and Site Team are committed to your learning and effective ministry, you are responsible for working in consultation with the Pastor/Mentor and Site Team, supporting their ministries, and respecting their boundaries, values and traditions. Responsible participation in supervisory and Site Team meetings is expected. There may be times when you may feel frustrated that your internship site fails to live up to your idealized expectations for a church/agency or religious institution. It is important to remember that you are passing through this context for a few months. Members of this community and the Pastor/Mentor may have been there for many years, and will continue to be there; their approach to ministry needs to be understood and accepted. It is your responsibility to observe and to learn, not to judge, or to change the people with whom, and the environment in which, you are working.

