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# ME 760 Evangelism in the Small Church

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Prospectus for the Course

MS 630 / ME 760

EVANGELISM IN THE SMALL CHURCH

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course examines historical, theological, sociological and pragmatic dynamics of smaller congregations with special attention to the challenges and opportunities for effective evangelism in such settings.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Smaller congregations and the pastors who serve them frequently find it difficult to function effectively in ministry and outreach using many models and strategies commonly publicized. An abundance of recent research and literature brings encouragement and new challenges. It will be the purpose of this course to acquaint the student both with the heart of this literature and with a field experience in order that a confident, new perspective and commitment might be achieved for evangelistic ministry in the context of smaller congregations.

At the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

1. Articulate important biblical perspectives on “smallness” and smaller congregations;
2. Understand historical and economic developments that have led to the establishment and survival of smaller congregations, particularly in North America;
3. Appreciate and work with the social dynamics inherent in smaller churches;
4. Evaluate and improve their own leadership skills as a pastors of smaller churches;
5. Design effective ministry and evangelism for a small church based on recent research;
6. Experience and better utilize the special tensions that exist between relationships and task accomplishment in smaller churches;
7. Develop a long-term sense of mission and vision owned by the congregation;
8. Anticipate and prepare for conflict over proposed and actual changes;
9. Exercise the basic skills of a consultant for smaller churches using field research; and
10. Prepare a composite consultant’s report addressed to local church leaders.

III. PROCEDURE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course consists of thirteen class sessions meeting Tuesdays from 6:15 to 9:00 p.m. in the Distance Learning Room (BC157) on the Wilmore campus, with additional students located on the Orlando campus and participating via direct video. Instruction will include lectures, guest pastors, videos, discussion, field work, reading and analytical reflection.

A. READING REQUIREMENTS (25%)

MS630 students must read 1200 pages for the course; ME760 students, 1500 pages. The required texts account for about 885 pages. The remaining pages should be selected from the recommended texts or material approved by the professor. The reading together with the **reading reports** constitutes 25% of the grade. Failure to complete the reading assigned and the five **reports** will affect the final grade.

Required texts:

1. Lyle Schaller, Small Congregation, Big Potential (2003)—190 pages
2. Anthony Pappas, ed. Inside the Small Church (2002)—230 pages.
3. Steve Bierly, How to Thrive as a Small Church Pastor (1998)—190 pages.
4. Ron Crandall, Turnaround Strategies for the Small Church (1995)—160 pages.
5. Jeff Patton, If It Could Happen Here (2002)—115 pages.

Reading reports:

Each of the above texts will require a 1-2 page single-spaced reading report (5 points each) using the format attached at the end of this document. Your reports will be due and discussion of each text will take place following the schedule noted below.

First (Schaller) due on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Second (Pappas) due on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

Third (Bierly) due on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Fourth (Crandall) due on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

Fifth (Patton) due on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Additional texts recommended include:

1. Steve Bierly, Help for the Small Church Pastor.
2. Steven Burt, Hazel Roper, The Little Church That Could, Judson Press, 2000.
3. Steven Burt, Activating Leadership in the Small Church.
4. Kennon Callahan, Small, Strong Congregations, Jossey-Bass, 2000.
5. Rick Chromey, Youth Ministry in Small Churches.
6. Cosgrove and Hatfield, Church Conflict: The Hidden Systems Behind the Fights.
7. Robert Coote, ed., Mustard-Seed Churches.
8. R. Robert Cueni, What Ministers Can't Learn in Seminary.
9. Glenn Daman, Shepherding the Small Church, Kregel Publications, 2002.
10. Carl Dudley, Effective Small Churches in the Twenty-first Century, Abingdon, 2003.
12. Carl Dudley, Congregations in Transition.
13. Dudley and Walwrath, Developing Your Small Church's Potential.
14. Gary Exman, Get Ready, Get Set, Grow.
15. Nancy Foltz, Caring for the Small Church: Insights from Women in Ministry.
16. Nancy Foltz, ed., Religious Education in the Small Membership Church, 1990.
17. Donald Griggs, Christian Education in the Small Church.
18. Kent Hunter, The Lord's Harvest and the Rural Church
19. Jung et.al., Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come, Abingdon, 1998.
20. Ron Klassen & John Koessler, No Little Place.
21. Craig Brian Larson, Pastoral Grit: The Strength to Stand and Stay, 1998.
22. Aubrey Malphurs, Pouring New Wine into Old Wineskins.
23. Doran McCarty, Leading the Small Church.
24. Wayne Oats, The Care of Troublesome People.
25. Anthony Pappas, Money, Motivation and Mission in The Small Church.
26. Anthony Pappas, Entering the World of the Small Church, 2000
27. David Ray, Wonderful Worship in Smaller Churches, Pilgrim Press, 2000.
28. Lyle Schaller, The Small Church Is Different.
29. Lyle Schaller, The Small Membership Church: Scenarios for Tomorrow, Abingdon, 1994.
30. Marshall Shelly, Well-Intentioned Dragons.
31. Rose Sims, The Dream Lives On or It Can Happen Anywhere.
32. Bill Sullivan, Ten Steps to Breaking the 200 Barrier.
33. Laurence Wagley, Preaching With the Small Congregation.
34. E. Glenn Wagner, Escape from CHURCH, Inc, Zondervan, 1999.
35. Will Willimon & Robert Wilson, Preaching and Worship in the Small Church.

36. Robert Wilson, The Multi-Church Parish.
37. David Young, A New Heart and a New Spirit.
38. Wayne Zunkel, Growing The Small Church.

B. CLASS PROJECT (50%)

Each student will participate in a class project constituting 50% of the final grade: 35% from the group report and 15% from a personal reflection paper.

1. Participate as part of a team (3-5 persons) interviewing a minimum of 8 members (4 long-term, 4 new) and the pastor of a smaller congregation in the area. The preference is for a church showing greater than 20% growth (or decline) in the last 3 years. Using an interview guide provided (adjustments welcome), consolidate your information, observations, insights and recommendations into a "Report" (35% of grade) to be sent to the pastor (copied to the instructor) with an appropriate cover letter. Samples of such reports will be available on line in the **class icon MS630/ME760**. In addition each student will separately submit to the professor a 5-page personal reflection paper (15% of grade) of additional observations, lessons, difficulties and values of the team-interview experience. Students may work alone on this project only if geographical isolation prohibits cooperation.

2. Under very special circumstances alternative projects may be approved.

C. MS630--MA and M.Div STUDENTS: NOTEBOOK (25%)

Each student will be required to keep a notebook graded on: (1) class notes, (2) reading notes beyond the five required texts, (3) articles copied, (4) additional research, correspondence, and/or websites contacted or internet conversations you participated in, and (5) overall appearance and order. The "notebook" may be turned in on disk if you prefer, and is due no later than May 18<sup>th</sup>.

D. ME760--TH.M., D.MISS, or Ph.D. STUDENTS: ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENTS (25%)

For advanced degree students 25% of the final grade will be based on: an annotated bibliography of at least 40 entries (5%), a critical book review of 750 words following a guide provided (10%), and 15-20 minutes of class leadership examining some critical issue raised by the text reviewed (10%). Schedule this with the instructor.

#### IV. PROPOSED TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Although we may vary slightly from the plan below, our intended course outline is as follows:

TOPIC

Biblical and Theological Issues

Smaller Churches Through History

The Sociology of Smaller Churches

Pastors and Small Church Revitalization

Rekindling the Spirit

Overcoming Obstacles

Mission and Evangelism

Developing Leaders and Disciples

Churches in Changing Communities

Guest speakers as they are available and group reports near the end of the semester will round out our schedule.

V. DUE DATES

The Group Projects and Personal Reflection Papers are due in class **TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2004**.  
All other requirements are due no later than **4:00 p.m. TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2004**.

VI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**To Be Added** according to the needs of a DL class at two locations.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation: 1 (low) – 10 (high) \_\_\_\_ Elaborate, citing strengths & weaknesses:

Summary of the primary contribution of the text:

What new insights have you gained from reading this text? (cite pages or chapters)

1. pp. \_\_\_\_\_

2. pp. \_\_\_\_\_

3. pp. \_\_\_\_\_

4. pp. \_\_\_\_\_

5. pp. \_\_\_\_\_

6. pp. \_\_\_\_\_

Other:

What are some ministry applications of these insights?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

What are some issues, concerns, or questions you would like to see discussed?

**MS 630 / ME 760 COMPLETED READING FORM**

NAME (PRINT) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature below)

I have read all of the following pages for \_\_ MS630, or \_\_ ME760, 2004.

(Sign below at Bottom of Page)

**REQUIRED ASSIGNED READING:**

	Author	Title	Total Pages Read
1.	Lyle Schaller,	<u>Small Congregation, Big Potential</u> (2003)	_____
2.	Anthony Pappas, ed.	<u>Inside the Small Church</u> (2002)	_____
3.	Steve Bierly,	<u>How to Thrive as a Small Church Pastor</u> (1998)	_____
4.	Ron Crandall,	<u>Turnaround Strategies for the Small Church</u> (1995)	_____
5.	Jeff Patton,	<u>If It Could Happen Here</u> (2002)	_____

TOTAL PAGES OF ASSIGNED READING \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL READING:**

	Author	Title	Total Pages Read
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____

TOTAL PAGES OF COLLATERAL READING \_\_\_\_\_

**WEB SITES contacted?**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** / / \_\_\_\_\_