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# MS 630 Ministry and Evangelism in the Small Church

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Asbury Theological Seminary  
Summer I Term, June 12-18 2006  
M-F 8:30 to 3:30, Sat & Sun Tour  
Professors: Crandall and McPhee  
Credit: Three Hours Room:  
Office Hours: By arrangement

Prospectus for the Course  
MS 630 / ME 760  
MINISTRY AND 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 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 regular class sessions meeting Monday through Friday and a “bus tour” of “Turnaround Churches” on Saturday and Sunday. Instruction will include lectures, guest speakers, videos, discussion, reading and analytical reflection.

A. READING REQUIREMENTS (25%)

MS630 students must read 1200 pages for the course; ME760 students, 1500 pages including at least one of the texts marked with an asterisk\*. The required texts account for about 880 pages. The remaining pages should be selected from the recommended texts or material approved by the professor. The reading and the **Reading Reports** constitute 25% of the grade. Failure to complete the reading assigned (see **Completed Reading Form**) and the five **Reading Reports** will affect the final grade.

Required texts:

1. Lyle Schaller, Small Congregation, Big Potential, Abingdon (2003)—190 pages
2. Anthony Pappas, ed. Inside the Small Church, Alban (2002)—230 pages.
3. Steve Bierly, How to Thrive as a Small Church Pastor, Zondervan (1998)—190 pages.
4. Ron Crandall, Turnaround Strategies for the Small Church, Abingdon (1995)—160 pages.
5. Peter Steinke, Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach, Alban (1996)—110 pages.

Reading reports:

Each of the above texts will require a 1 & 1/2 to 2 page single-spaced reading report (5 points each) using the format attached to your syllabus. **PLAN AND READ AHEAD.** Reading reports will be due at the start of class on the following days. There will be a loss of 1 point per day for all late submissions.

- First (Schaller) due on **June 12th.**
- Second (Pappas) due on **June 13th.**
- Third (Bierly) due on **June 14th.**
- Fourth (Crandall) due on **June 15th.**
- Fifth (Steinke) due on **June 16th.**

Additional texts recommended include:

1. John Benton, The Big Picture for Small Churches . . . ., Evangelical Press, 2005.
2. Steve Bierly, Help for the Small Church Pastor, Zondervan, 1995.
3. Steven Burt, Hazel Roper, The Little Church That Could, Judson Press, 2000.
4. Steven Burt, Activating Leadership in the Small Church, Judson, 1988.
5. Kennon Callahan, Small, Strong Congregations, Jossey-Bass, 2000.
6. David Canada, Spiritual Leadership in the Small-membership Church, Abingdon, 2005.
7. Rick Chromey, Youth Ministry in Small Churches, Group, 1990.
8. Cosgrove and Hatfield, Church Conflict, Abingdon, 1994.
9. Robert Coote, ed., Mustard-Seed Churches, Fortress Press, 1990.
10. R. Robert Cueni, What Ministers Can't Learn in Seminary, Abingdon, 1988.
11. Glenn Daman, Shepherding the Small Church, Kregel Publications, 2002.
12. \*Carl Dudley, Effective Small Churches in the Twenty-first Century, Abingdon, 2003.
13. \*Carl Dudley and Nancy Ammerman, Congregations in Transition, Jossey-Bass, 2002.
14. C. Dudley and D. Walrath, Developing Your Small Church's Potential, Judson, 1988.
15. Gary Exman, Get Ready, Get Set, Grow, C.C.S. Publishing Co., 1987.
16. N. Foltz, Caring for the Small Church: Insights from Women in Ministry, Judson, 1994.
17. Nancy Foltz, ed., Religious Education in the Small Membership Church, R.E.P., 1990.
18. \*Beth Ann Gaede, ed., Size Transitions in Congregations, Alban, 2001.
19. Rich Grassel, Help! I'm a Small Church Youth Worker!, Zondervan, 2002.
20. Kent Hunter, The Lord's Harvest and the Rural Church, Beacon Hill, 1993.
21. \*Jung et.al., Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come, Abingdon, 1998.
22. Bill Kemp, The Church Transition Workbook: Getting Your Church in Gear, DR, 2004.
23. Bill Kemp, Holy Places, Small Spaces, Discipleship Resources, 2005.
24. Ron Klassen & John Koessler, No Little Place, Baker, 1996.
25. Craig Brian Larson, Pastoral Grit: The Strength to Stand and Stay, Bethany House, 1998.
26. \*Alice Mann, The In-Between Church: Navigating Size Transitions, Alban, 1998.
27. James L Killen, Jr., Pastoral Care In The Small Membership Church, Abingdon, 2005.
28. Wayne Oats, The Care of Troublesome People, Alban, 1994.
29. Anthony Pappas, Money, Motivation and Mission in The Small Church, Judson, 1989.
30. Anthony Pappas, Entering the World of the Small Church, Judson, 2000.
31. Jeff Patton, If It Could Happen Here, Abingdon, 2002.
32. David Ray, Wonderful Worship in Smaller Churches, Pilgrim Press, 2000.
33. \*David Ray, The Indispensable Guide for Smaller Churches, Pilgrim Press, 2003.
34. John Rowell, Magnify your vision for the Small Church, ACW Press, 1999.
35. \*Lyle Schaller, The Small Membership Church: Scenarios for Tomorrow, Abingdon, 1994.
36. Marshall Shelley, Leading your Church through Conflict, Bethany, 1997.
37. Rose Sims, The Dream Lives On or It Can Happen Anywhere, Bristol, 1989.
38. \*Peter L. Steinke, Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach, Alban, 1996.
39. \*R. Trebilcock, The Small Church at Large: Thinking Local in a Global Context, Abingdon, 03.
40. Laurence Wagley, Preaching With the Small Congregation, Abingdon, 1989.
41. E. Glenn Wagner, Escape from CHURCH, Inc, Zondervan, 1999.
42. \*Gene Williams, In the Shadow of the Steeple: The Vital Role of the Smaller Church in a Megachurch World, Beacon Hill, 2005.

B. CLASS PROJECTS (50%)

Each student will be responsible for two research papers.

1. **DUE June 12<sup>th</sup> (First day of class)** a 5-8 page double-spaced personal reflection paper answering three questions: (1) What is the greatest challenge facing smaller churches today? (2) Why? (3) What can be done about it? **(15% of Grade)**
2. **DUE June 29<sup>th</sup>** a 15-20 page double-spaced research paper from the readings and your own experience addressing some area of ministry related to smaller congregations that particularly interests you. Follow normal standards for good writing, title page, pagination, punctuation, headings/subheadings, referencing of resources (either MLA, APA or Chicago), and include either an appropriate Works Cited or Bibliography. Check with the Library for Carol Slade's *Form and Style* if you are unfamiliar with formal academic writing expectations. **(35% of Grade)**

C. CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE (25%)

Each MA/MDiv student will be graded additionally on active engagement in class conversations and discussions (10%) and full attendance for all sessions including the weekend (15%).

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

For advanced degree students 25% of the final grade will instead be based on: (1) a critical book review of 750 words following a guide provided (10%, **due June 23<sup>rd</sup>**), (2) an annotated bibliography of texts on the small church of at least 40 entries (5%, **due June 29<sup>th</sup>**), and 30 minutes of class teaching on a 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 Transition

## Course Grading

The unit of credit is a semester hour, which is defined as one hour of classroom work per week for one semester, or its equivalent. The 4.00 point system is used to compute grade point standing. The grading system is:

A	4.00	Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives.
B	3.00	Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives.
C	2.00	Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives.
D	1.00	Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives.
F	0	Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives.

## Incomplete Work

The official end of each term is 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the examination schedule. This hour is the deadline for handing in all course work. Each instructor may set an earlier deadline for submission of any or all course work. The student must petition the faculty person involved and the student's advisor for permission to receive an "I" at the end of the semester.

A grade of "I" denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as "F."

Incomplete grades shall be removed one calendar month prior to the close of the following semester unless an earlier date is designated by the Office of the Chief Academic Officer on the individual petition. If the work is not completed by the time designated, the "I" shall be changed to an "F" unless a passing grade can be given based on work already completed or unless special permission is granted by the Chief Academic Officer.

Professors are required to give either a grade or an "I," if approved, to each student registered for credit in a course. Students with Incompletes in two or more classes will not be allowed to enroll in a new semester or term without permission from their Dean.

## Course Icon

Each registered student should have on his or her First Class Desktop an icon for the course. Materials related to assignments, subjects addressed, and Powerpoint slides will be posted on the site. If you have questions about accessing the site please notify me.

MS630/ME 760

READING REPORT FORM  
SAMPLE

Summer I 2006