

PT5275 – Leadership and Discipleship

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Campus: RTS Nashville/Atlanta

Dates: Jan. 30-31, Feb. 27-28, Mar. 20-21

Course Description: A study of the principles and practices of leadership in the context of the local church with particular emphasis on developing and executing a comprehensive ministry of discipleship. This class will examine the posture and practices of gospel leadership and the foundations of Christian discipleship, including consideration of the principles, process, and practice of learning across the generations.

A Sampling of Course Topics:

- Union with Christ and the Work of Ministry
- Developing a Leadership Vision
- Leading for Gospel Renewal
- Priorities and Pitfalls in Pastoral Leadership
- Administration: Time Management, Meetings, Budgets, Buildings, Etc.
- Developing a Philosophy of Ministry
- Developing a Strategy for Christian Discipleship
- Receiving Criticism and Handling Conflict
- Establishing Healthy Systems
- Building A Team Model of Ministry
- Equipping Church Officers
- Overseeing and Managing Staff
- Staying Fresh in Ministry and Avoiding Burnout

Course Objectives:

1. The student will learn biblical principles and practices of servant leadership with a special emphasis on pastoral leadership in the context of the local church.
2. The student will be exposed to a variety of best leadership practices gleaned from history and current studies in leadership.
3. The student will learn how to raise up, equip, and deploy others for ministry in the context of the local church.
4. The student will learn how to develop a ministry vision that shapes the ministry priorities for discipleship.
5. The student will learn how to organize ministries for discipleship and chart organizational change for greater discipling effectiveness within the local church.

6. The student will be introduced to various discipleship models and Christian formation methodologies.

7. The student will be trained in how to develop a team model of ministry with an emphasis on building, reviewing, renewing, and multiplying teams within the local church.

8. The student will develop an understanding of how a clear philosophy of ministry grounds and directs the discipleship ministry of a congregation (ministry to adults, children, youth, etc).

Required Texts

Currie, John, *Pastor as Leader: Principles and Practices for Connecting Preaching and Leadership*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2024. (240 pages)

Parrett, Gary A. and S. Steve King. *Teaching the Faith and Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009. (461 pages)

Witmer, Timothy. *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in your Church*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010. (288 pages)

In addition to the required reading above, students will choose one additional text in leadership and/or discipleship. The professor can supply you with recommended resources based on your area of interest. The additional text must be approved by the professor.

*****NOTE:** *If you are not pursuing pastoral ministry proper, the Currie text may be substituted for another equivalent text tailored to your ministry direction. Any changes to required texts must be approved by the professor. Please contact your professor to request a substituted text. Your professor will provide a list of recommended texts tailored to your ministry direction.*

Assignments:

Assignment #1 – Analysis of Discipleship Ministries (25%)

Students will conduct an analysis of the discipleship ministries of their current church. The evaluation might include the following:

- Survey what discipleship/educational ministries are taking place in all age groups from nursery through older adults
- Explore any special or unique educational ministries/initiatives (ministries to special needs, work and faith initiative, Christian school, etc.)
- Analyze what (if any) vision/philosophy is guiding the discipleship ministries
- Study the involvement of the pastor(s) and elders in the work of discipleship
- Identify what you judge to be the strengths and weakness of the discipleship ministries

Based on lectures and your reading of Packer and King, what changes to the church's discipleship vision/philosophy and ministries would you suggest and why? What results would you hope to see from your suggestions? (word length: 1000-1250 words)

Assignment #2 – Analysis of Leadership Structure, Practice, and Culture (25%)

As best as can be ascertained, students will conduct an analysis of the leadership structure, practices, goals, and culture of their current church.

- Explore the general shape of the leadership roles in the church (pastors, elders, deacons, any leading staff, key volunteers)
- Identify the key qualifications, expectations, and competencies of a leader
- Identify the primary tasks, duties, and responsibilities of a leader
- Study the relationships of leaders to one another and those in whom they lead
- Assess the general health of the leadership culture
- Identify what you judge to be strengths and weaknesses of the leadership structure, practice, and culture

Based on lectures and your reading of Currie and Witmer, what changes to the church's leadership structure, practice, and culture would you suggest and why? What results would you hope to see from your suggestions? (word length: 750-1000 words)

Assignment #3 – Write a Philosophy of Ministry and a Discipleship Strategy (25%)

As an exercise of leadership and with view toward submitting your paper to a search committee or a session, students will outline their personal philosophy of ministry and express how their philosophy of ministry grounds and directs their strategy for discipleship in the church (word length: 1000-1250 words)

- Provide a biblical and theological basis for your philosophy of ministry
- Include research and footnotes to show sources and/or quotes that significantly impact, give shape to, or helpfully summarize your philosophy of ministry
- Express what role God's Word, the spiritual disciplines, and relationships in the church will play in your philosophy of ministry and discipleship strategy
- Show how your philosophical convictions in ministry will drive your choices in establishing various discipleship ministries/initiatives in the church (e.g., worship, Sunday school, small groups, gender specific ministries, age-and-stage ministries, multigenerational ministries, etc.)
- Identify what you believe is the goal of a discipleship ministry and show how you oriented the discipleship strategy proposal toward that goal

Assignment #4 – Quiz on WSC 85-90 (10%)

On May 4, 2022, the RTS Quality Enhancement Plan required all professors in PT5275 Leadership and Discipleship to require and test memorization of Westminster Shorter Catechism Questions 85-90. In this quiz, you will demonstrate your knowledge of WSC 85-90 by providing the appropriate response to each question. You may use modern or 17th Century language in your response. Each question is worth 1 pt, graded on a pass/fail basis. Avoid paraphrasing as you try to replicate the WSC answer. A few (2-3) minor errors, especially in punctuation or word order, are allowed. Missing words/clauses, or anything else that obscures/confuses/changes the meaning, will result in a "fail" for that question/response.

Assignment #5 – Reading Report (15%)

Your grade for this assignment will be based on the percentage of reading you've accomplished for the course.

MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes <i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		Rubric ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	Mini-Justification
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	By participation in class and in written evaluations students will demonstrate their understanding and application of biblical principles of leadership and discipleship.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Moderate	Biblical leadership and discipleship principles, alongside exegetical treatment of relevant texts on leadership and discipleship will be covered at some length in the course.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	The Westminster Confession of Faith and central tenants of reformed anthropology and soteriology will be foundational to all that is taught in the course.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Sanctification is the theological category in which the leadership and discipleship function and will be a leading component of the course's content.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Plundering insights from history and secular models of leadership will be an aspect of the course
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Moderate	Learning how to overcome obstacles in leadership and discipleship and charting a course for change organizationally will be covered in the course
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Xns.	Strong	The heart of this course will be a focus on leadership as central to the health and effectiveness of a church's discipleship strategy

Zoom Policy

Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.

Extension Policy

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class. Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed. Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an

Extension Request Form from the Registrar's Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 46 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 18) Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 49)