



NEW ORLEANS

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CESE 8304 Leadership in the Local Church

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Church Ministry Division

ETCH Conference

October 5-7, 2026

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

Students will increase their personal awareness and enhance professional skills for leading local church ministry through a special event. The seminar is held with a special church leadership conference. Students will choose from a comprehensive selection of workshops. Students can choose one specific course of study or sample a variety of training experiences. In addition to attending these conference sessions, students will complete designated course requirements.

ETCH Conference Information

- **General Conference Information:** Lifeway's ETCH NextGen Ministry Conference 2026, will help equip and inspire kid's ministry, student ministry, family ministry, and nextgen ministry leaders. The conference must be attended in person. Conference information may be found at <https://etchconference.lifeway.com/#info>
- **Conference Fee:** In addition to registering and paying for the seminar, you must register and pay for the conference. A student rate is available.
- **Housing and Meals:** All travel, food, and room costs are your responsibility.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this seminar, you should be able to demonstrate an understanding of:

1. current issues of leadership responsibilities in the local church.
2. ways to enhance specific ministries in the local church.
3. how to develop leaders in the local church.
4. concepts of leadership in the local church.

Textbooks

The following three texts are required:

Dean, Jody & Hal Stewart eds. *Together We Equip*. Bloomington, IN: Westbow Press. 2018. ISBN-13: 978-1973619635. Kindle edition available.

Gieger, Eric and Kevin Peck, *Designed to Lead: The Church and Leadership Development*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing, 2016. ISBN-13: 978-1433690242. Kindle edition available.

Witt, Lance. *High Impact Teams: Where Healthy Meets High Performance*. 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0801075681. Kindle edition available.

Select one of the following:

Alford, Tim. *Leadership 101: Your Go-to Guide for Leading Youth and Children's Ministries into a Brighter Future*. London, UK: SPCK Publishing, 2021. ISBN: 978-0281086078. Kindle edition available.

Baddy, Ken. *Breathing Life into Sunday School*. Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2019. ISBN-978-1535967211.

Olson, David. *Discovering Your Leadership Style: The Power of Chemistry, Strategy, and Spirituality*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014. ISBN: 978-0830841134.

Parr, Steve, and Dan Kassis. *The Coffee Shop that Changed a Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2014. ISBN-13: 978-1940269078. Kindle edition available.

Secondary Text

Select a text written or recommended by a conference leader /speaker to use in a post-seminar assignment (See Post-Seminar Requirements).

Course Teaching Methodology

This course is designed as a conference-centered learning experience that combines active participation, reflective learning, and applied engagement. You are expected to attend the conference in its entirety and actively participate in all plenary sessions, breakout sessions, and other scheduled conference activities. Learning will occur through exposure to expert presentations, interaction with practitioners and peers, guided reflection, and critical analysis of conference content.

To enhance learning beyond conference attendance, you will complete individual learning assignments that require you to synthesize conference presentations, evaluate key concepts, connect learning to course objectives, and apply insights to your ministry, educational, or professional context. These assignments are intended to promote critical thinking, personal reflection, and practical application of knowledge gained through the conference experience. Successful completion of the course requires full participation in conference activities, thoughtful engagement with presented content, and satisfactory completion of all assigned learning projects and reflections. The conference serves as the primary instructional environment, while the assignments provide opportunities for deeper processing, integration, and demonstration of learning outcomes.

Format

This course requires attendance at the ETCH conference.

Course Requirements

Pre-Conference Requirement

QQTP - Questions, Quotations & Talking Points (20%)

Due: October 5

The purpose of this assignment is to foster critical engagement with key texts on leadership in the local church. Through reflection on the readings, you will analyze contemporary leadership challenges and opportunities, evaluate their implications for ministry, and connect leadership principles to biblical, theological, and practical ministry frameworks. This assignment is designed to strengthen your ability to think critically about church leadership and apply leadership concepts in ways that are both biblically faithful and ministry effective. *This assignment is related to Student Learning Outcomes #1 and #2.*

Write a one-page response to each text (4), including each of the following:

- **Question:**
 - Write one thoughtful, open-ended question that invites analysis, synthesis, or evaluation of reading.
 - The question should connect the text to broader issues in church leadership or previous readings.
 - Avoid yes/no or factual questions.
- **Quotation:**
 - Select one significant quotation from the text – ideally 2-6 lines.
 - Provide Turabian citation
 - Choose a quotation that captures a key idea or theme relevant to leadership concerns.
- **Talking Points:**
 - Develop at least five detailed talking points that reflect critical engagement with the reading.
 - Cover multiple aspects of the text (theoretical insights, practical implications, theological connections.)
 - You may reference your question here but do not answer it fully.

Submission Requirements:

- Submit all in one Word document or PDF to Canvas before the start of the conference.

Evaluation Criteria

- Depth and originality of the question.
- Relevance and significance of the quotation.
- Quality and critical thinking demonstrated in talking points.
- Formatting and adherence to Turabian.

Conference Requirement

Attendance (30%)

Due: October 5-7

Attendance at all conference breakouts and main sessions is required. You should attend breakout sessions related to leadership/leadership training and take thorough notes for use in post-seminar assignments.

Post-Conference Requirements

Leadership Assessment Paper (20%)

Due: November 20

This assignment provides an opportunity for you to critically evaluate both your personal leadership practices and the ministry context in which you serve. Drawing upon the course readings, conference presentations, discussions, and your own ministry experience, you will reflect on how leadership influences personal effectiveness, organizational health, and future ministry development. The paper should demonstrate thoughtful analysis, self-awareness, and practical application of leadership principles.

Section One: Personal Leadership Assessment (Approximately 3 pages)

Provide an honest assessment of your leadership style and approach to ministry leadership. Drawing upon leadership theories, concepts, and insights gained from the course and conference, identify and discuss your primary leadership strengths. Explain how these strengths contribute to your effectiveness in ministry, including examples from your current or previous ministry experiences.

Identify specific areas where growth and development are needed. Reflect on challenges, limitations, blind spots, or leadership skills that require further attention. Consider how your personality, experiences, spiritual formation, and leadership practices shape the way you lead others. Conclude this section by discussing specific steps you can take to strengthen your leadership effectiveness and continue your professional and spiritual development as a ministry leader.

Section Two: Ministry Assessment and Leadership Implications (Approximately 3–4 pages)

Evaluate your current ministry setting by examining its strengths, opportunities, challenges, and areas of concern. Consider factors such as mission effectiveness, organizational culture, leadership structure, volunteer engagement, disciple-making effectiveness, team development, strategic planning, and ministry outcomes. Identify ministry strengths that should be celebrated and sustained, as well as weaknesses or challenges that may hinder future growth and effectiveness.

Attention should be given to how leadership influences the current health and future direction of the ministry. Discuss areas where leadership practices, leadership development initiatives, team-building efforts, or organizational change could positively impact the ministry. Drawing from the course readings and conference insights, provide recommendations for strengthening the ministry through intentional leadership strategies. Support your recommendations with appropriate rationale and examples.

Submission Requirements:

- Submit a Word document or PDF to Canvas.

Evaluation Criteria

- Depth of self-assessment and reflection
- Integration of course readings and conference learning
- Analysis of ministry strengths and weaknesses
- Application of leadership principles to ministry contexts
- Quality and feasibility of recommendations
- Organization, clarity, and academic writing quality
- Proper use of sources and citations

Contemporary Topical Issues Reflection Paper (20%)

Due: November 20

This assignment is designed to help you critically engage with the content presented at the conference and apply key insights to your current ministry context. *This assignment supports Student Learning Outcomes #1 and #2.*

Write a 6–8-page paper that analyzes selected topical issues addressed during the conference. In your paper, identify and discuss the significance of these issues and evaluate their implications for your present ministry setting. Additionally, describe *at least three key ideas, strategies, or practices* presented at the conference that could be implemented within your ministry context. Explain how each strategy addresses the issues discussed and provide a rationale for its potential effectiveness. Consider both the opportunities and challenges associated with implementation. Your paper should demonstrate thoughtful interaction with conference presentations and relevant literature. Support your discussion with appropriate scholarly sources and include proper citations and a bibliography in the required format.

Submission Requirements:

- Submit a Word document or PDF to Canvas.

Evaluation Criteria

- Analysis of Conference Issues
- Application to Current Ministry Context
- Implementation of Key Strategies
- Integration of Conference Learning and Scholarly Sources
- Organization, Writing Quality, and Critical Reflection
- Proper use of sources and citations

Secondary Textbook Summary (10%)

Due: November 20

The purpose of this assignment is to help students engage critically with a selected ministry or leadership resource and apply its insights to their current ministry context. Through summarizing the author's key ideas and evaluating their practical implications, students will strengthen their

ability to integrate leadership and ministry principles into effective ministry practice. *This assignment supports Student Learning Outcome #2.*

Select one book recommended at the conference and prepare a summary that demonstrates your understanding of the author's major themes, arguments, and contributions to ministry leadership.

1. Read the selected text thoroughly.
2. Prepare a concise summary of the book that:
 - Identifies the author's primary thesis or purpose.
 - Summarizes the major concepts, themes, and arguments.
 - Highlights significant insights related to leadership and ministry.
 - Demonstrates understanding rather than chapter-by-chapter description.
3. Application Section (minimum one page):
 - Identify key principles from the book that can be applied within your ministry setting.
 - Discuss specific ways these concepts could strengthen leadership, organizational effectiveness, discipleship, staff development, volunteer engagement, or ministry impact.
 - Explain why these applications are relevant and beneficial in your context.
4. Use appropriate scholarly writing and documentation practices.

Submission Requirements:

- Submit a Word document or PDF to Discussion Board and Assignments in Canvas.

Evaluation Criteria

- Understanding and summary of the text
- Analysis and critical engagement
- Application to ministry context
- Organization and Writing Quality
- Formatting

Seminar Evaluation

QQTP (4)	20%
Conference Attendance	30%
Leadership Assessment Paper	20%
Contemporary Topical Issues Reflection Paper	20%
Secondary Book Summary	10%

Course Policies

The following policies will govern the student and professor for this course.

Academic Honesty Policy: All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty.

This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Assignment Formatting: Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are to be created in Turabian format. All written assignments must be Word documents, written in third person unless otherwise instructed, and created in 12 pt. Times New Roman font. PDFs are acceptable.

Assignment Submission: All assignments are to be submitted to Canvas by 11:59 p.m. of the due date unless otherwise indicated. Do not send files as attachments via email to the professor.

Attendance Policy: For this course, you must attend each session of the conference.

Disabilities and Accommodations: New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary does not discriminate against applicants/ students based on personal disabilities. The Seminary, in voluntary compliance with the American Disabilities Act, will provide reasonable institutional accommodations, modifications, and adjustments to enable and empower students with disabilities to fully participate in Seminary programs and activities. However, NOBTS cannot support accommodations that place undue hardship on the Seminary or its resources or which alter the essential requirements of the curriculum and academic progress. While the seminary does not provide direct assistance to students in the form of equipment or personnel, accommodation may be made by individual professors at their discretion. This accommodation usually includes timely access to lecture materials in electronic format and additional time to complete tests and assignments. The most efficient way to pursue such accommodations is to provide the Director of Testing and Counseling (Dr. Jeff Nave, jnave@nobts.edu, 504-282-4455 ext. 8004) with documentation of the condition for which you seek accommodation, an explanation of helpful accommodations received in the past, and a description of the specific accommodations you desire. The Director of Testing and Counseling will document your request and communicate on your behalf with the professors who teach the course(s) for which you are registered. The seminary reserves the right to consider each request for “special” accommodations on a case-by-case basis pursuant to the criteria enumerated above.

Grading Scale: Your final grade will be based on your total accumulation of points as indicated under the *Assignments and Evaluation Criteria* section of this syllabus according to the grading scale in the current NOBTS catalog.

Netiquette: Appropriate Online Behavior: Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is always expected in the online environment.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments: NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Syllabus Amendments: The course syllabus is not a legal contract. The information in this syllabus is subject to change in extenuating circumstances and may be modified at any time by the professor. Any syllabus amendment will be preceded by reasonable notice to students. Notice of such changes will be made by announcement in class or by email notice.

Withdrawal from the Course: The administration has set deadlines for withdrawal. These dates and times are published in the academic calendar. Administration procedures must be followed. You are responsible for handling withdrawal requirements. I cannot issue a withdrawal. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in the course if you choose not to attend once you are enrolled.

Additional Information

Canvas and CampusNexus Student (CNS): You are responsible for maintaining current information regarding contact information on Canvas and CNS. Assignment grades will be posted to Canvas.

Correspondence with the Professor: Every effort is made to respond to emails and phone calls within 24-48 hours (about 2 days), excluding weekends. Feel free to contact me with any questions you have about this course.

NOBTS Emergency Text Messaging Service: Sign up for the NOBTS emergency text messaging service at <http://nobts.edu/NOBTSEmergencyTextMessage.html>

Student Wellness: Take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep, and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your academic and ministry goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. Helpful resources are available on campus and an important part of the seminary experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is always helpful. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. The Dean of Students office is here to help and may be contacted at 282-4455, ext.3283, or deansec@nobts.edu. The Leeke Magee Christian Counseling Center may be contacted at 504-816-8004 or lmccc@nobts.edu. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty, or family member you trust for assistance in getting connected to the support that can help.

Technical Assistance Here is the contact information for the ITC support team, who are to help you with your NOBTS/LC technical questions/issues/support requests:

1. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email general technical questions/support requests. If you are not sure who to contact, use this email address!
2. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu or My.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
3. Canvas@nobts.edu - Email technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Canvas Learning Management System, Canvas.nobts.edu site, / nobts.instructure.com.
4. VCHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email technical questions/support requests with NOBTS Microsoft Teams (Flex & Live classes)
5. [504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon, Tues & Thurs 7:30am-7:00pm, Wed 7:30am-6:00pm & Fri 7:30-12:00pm Central Time)
6. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Writing Style Guide

A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Canvas shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center's page on the seminary website at:

<https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>