



PATH8301 EXPLORING ISSUES IN EFFECTIVE PASTORAL MINISTRY

A Professional Doctoral Seminar
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Church Ministry Division
Fall 2026
Aug.31-Sep.2, 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

The purpose of this seminar is to examine current issues in pastoral ministry and leadership in order to determine effective means of ministry practice. The course will include challenging students to examine their pastoral theology in light of biblical principles and to engage various contrasting views of pastoral ministry. Seminar participants will examine the unique position of the senior pastor of a local church in his roles as leader, proclaimer, and pastoral care giver. Students will explore the implications of emphasizing the various components of pastoral ministry. Through a heuristic approach, students will confront the challenge of finding the most effective balance among the various components by assessing their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as the church as a whole in the context of its setting.

Student Learning Outcomes

When students have completed the seminar, they will have:

1. Clearly articulated their personal theology of pastoral ministry in the light of biblical principles;
2. Understood key classic and current models of pastoral ministry;
3. Identified and explored major issues of pastoral ministry that relate to their ministry setting;
4. Understood their ministry context as it affects leadership and pastoral ministry;
5. Assessed the strengths and weaknesses of their pastoral ministry;
6. Considered specific heuristic aspects in pastoral ministry in order to improve their personal effectiveness.

Required Textbooks

Akin, Daniel L. and R. Scott Pace. *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2017.

Early, Dave. *Pastoral Leadership Is... How to Shepherd God's People with Passion and Confidence*. Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2012.

Thomas, Scott. *The Gospel Shaped Leader: Leaning in on Jesus to Shepherd His People*. Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2021.

White, James Emery. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2017.

Course Teaching Methodology

The teaching methodology of this seminar will consist of student research and written assignments as well as the sharing and presentation of papers. Brief lectures by the professor and guided discussion will be included.

Course Requirements and Schedule

Before the Seminar:

1. Read the Early textbook and select four (4) chapters from each of the five (5) Parts in the book. Compose a one-half page **Reaction** to each of the selected chapters (5 Parts x 4 chapters per Part for a total of 20 Reactions). The half-page Reactions are to be single-spaced, with the chapter title listed for each, and may be formatted to include two Reactions on one page, for a total of 10 pages of content. First person is allowed for this assignment. The Reactions should include agreements/disagreements (if any) with the author and the importance of this issue in the student's ministry setting/context.
2. Read the White textbook and write a **Personal Reflection** paper, to answer the following: Of the topics covered in Part 1: "The New Reality" reflect on (a) which were the most **surprising** to the student and why, and (b) which were the most **challenging** to the student and why. Of the topics covered in Part 2: "A New Approach" **for each chapter**, reflect on how the assertions of the author (a) are valid and applicable to the local church and (b) how the admonitions of the author could be implemented in your local church setting/context. The Personal Reflection should be approximately 6-8 pages in length. Format: single-spaced, a space between each single-spaced paragraph, with no paragraph indentions. Margins, pagination, and headings/subheadings should be in accordance with Turabian 9th edition. Documentations or quotes from the textbook can be referenced by citing the page number in parentheses. Example: "The heart of secularism is a *functional* atheism. Rather than rejecting the idea of God, our culture simply ignores him." (20). First person is allowed for this assignment also.
3. Read the Akin and Pace textbook and the Thomas textbook and then compose a **Biblical Theology of Pastoral Ministry for the 21st century**. The Biblical Theology should involve biblical and historical insights, principles, and observations from the textbooks and include significant implications for 21st century pastoral ministry. The Biblical Theology should reflect a synthesis of both textbooks. The Biblical Theology should be 10-12 pages, utilizing the following format: double-spaced; margins, pagination, headings/subheadings, and footnotes should be in accordance with Turabian 9th edition. Documentations or quotes from the textbooks and biblical material should be referenced by footnotes. **First person is not allowed in writing this assignment. This assignment will be graded for Turabian form and style in addition to content.**

Assignments 1, 2, & 3 are to be submitted in Canvas no later than 11:59 P.M., Friday, August 28, 2026.

During the Seminar:

Seminar Presentations: Each seminar participant will be involved in seminar presentations and discussions involving all three pre-seminar assignments as per the instructions of the professor.

Seminar Participation: Seminar participants are expected to be active participants in all sessions of the seminar.

After the Seminar:

1. **Interview** a pastor who is considered to be either a mentor or a role model (suggested length of the interview: one hour or less). The interview questions should relate to issues raised in the course. Write a four-page, single-spaced summary and reaction to the interview. A list of the questions asked should be attached as a separate appendix. The assignment may be done in informal style, first person allowed, but is not to be a verbatim of the interview. **Students are advised to secure the person to be interviewed and the time for the interview prior to the beginning of the seminar.**

2. Based on the readings, assignments, and seminar discussions in the seminar, each student will write a **Personal Assessment** of his strengths and weaknesses in pastoral ministry (at least three strengths and three weaknesses). For each strength, discuss an action plan for maintaining the strength. For each weakness, discuss an action plan for improving the weakness. Suggested length of the Personal Assessment: 8-10 pages, single-spaced, utilizing the format described in Pre-seminar assignment #2.

Both post-seminar assignments are to be submitted in Canvas no later than 11:59 P.M., Friday, October 23, 2026.

Course Evaluation

Assignments will be weighted approximately equal (20% each) with room for the professors' discretion in regard to assignments that are particularly outstanding or substandard.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class sessions according to the formats offered. Any student missing more than nine hours, unless amended by a non-traditional class format, may receive an automatic grade of "F" for the course. Three tardies will count as one absence.

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](http://Canvas.nobts.edu). / 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.

Disability Accommodations

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by the Assistant Dean of Students for Student Affairs. If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact Conner Hinton immediately at chinton@nobts.edu or 504-816-8246. Students must complete the Accommodation Request Form and provide documentation of their disability. The Assistant Dean of Students notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations. The seminary reserves the right to consider each request for special accommodations on a case-by- case basis pursuant to the criteria enumerated above.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer. 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>

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.

