



**PATH8304 Critical Issues in Church Revitalization**  
**A Professional Doctoral Seminar**  
**September 23-25, 2019**

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**NOBTS Mission Statement**

The mission of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

**NOBTS Core Values and Core Value Focus**

The Seminary's core values are: (1) Doctrinal Integrity, (2) Spiritual Vitality, (3) Mission Focus, (4) Characteristic Excellence, and (5) Servant Leadership. The 2019-2020 core value focus is **Spiritual Vitality**.

**Course Description**

The purpose of this seminar is to explore and examine critical issues of churches experiencing plateau and decline. The seminar will identify common factors, specific implications, and strategic solutions involving church revitalization, utilizing case studies, reading assignments, demographic evaluations, and research applications.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will become familiar with significant church revitalization resources.
2. Students will analyze their ministry context in order to select appropriate church revitalization strategies.
3. Students will develop essential leadership skills necessary for revitalizing churches experiencing plateau and decline.
4. Students will develop specific action plans for revitalizing churches experiencing plateau and decline.
5. Students will explore biblical and theological foundations for church revitalization.

**Required Textbooks**

Croft, Brian. *Biblical Church Revitalization: Solutions for Dying and Divided Churches*. Scotland, UK: Christian Focus Publications, 2016.

Malphurs, Aubrey and Gordon E. Penfold. *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2014.

Gary L. McIntosh. *There's Hope For Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012.

## **Pre-Seminar Assignments**

1. Each student will read *Biblical Church Revitalization* by Croft and compose a **Reading Response**. The Reading Responses should be single-spaced, informal style and format, no first person allowed, involving the following components:
  - (a) a one-page summary of the book's contents, to include a discussion of the author's purpose and the extent to which the purpose was realized.
  - (b) a one-page discussion of two strengths and two weaknesses of the book.
  - (c) the book contains 13 chapters. For EACH chapter, select two significant insights or takeaways, and give a one-paragraph discussion of the value of the insight or takeaway for church revitalization (why is this important).

**Note:** Although the form and style for this assignment is informal, submit a Turabian 8<sup>th</sup> edition title page. Use endnotes instead of footnotes when referencing direct quotes.
2. Each student will read *Re:Vision: The Key to Transforming Your Church*, by Malphurs and Penfold. In addition to the contents of the book, complete the Audits/Indicators/Surveys in Appendixes A – I. After reading the textbook and completing the Audits/Indicators/Surveys, write a personal **Leadership Assessment**, to include the following components:
  - (a) the book is divided into three parts. Write a two-page reaction to EACH Part, discussing four key insights and four challenges from EACH Part.
  - (b) utilizing a synthesis of Appendixes A – I, write a two-page assessment of your strengths and weaknesses as a revitalization leader. The Leadership Assessment is to be single-spaced, 8 pages total, informal writing style, first person allowed.
3. Each student will read *There's Hope For Your Church: First Steps to Restoring Health and Growth*. Develop a **Congregational Case Study** of your current church context, utilizing Chapter 13 of the textbook and the Stages in Church Revitalization Chart (Figure 18, page 164). The Case Study should contain the following components:
  - (a) a one-page assessment of the church's current context (location, community profile, and a five-year average of worship attendance, budget receipts, baptisms, and other additions.
  - (b) a two-page discussion of the church's current stage of revitalization (Investigation, Development, Introduction, or Implementation).
  - (c) of the 12 components (book chapters), discuss the three components most challenging to accomplish in the current church context (one page each). The Congregational Case Study can be written in informal style, first person allowed; length not to exceed six pages, single-spaced.
4. Each student will read ONE (1) of the textbooks listed below, and compose an **Annotated Analysis**, to involve the following components:
  - (a) a one-page summary of the contents of the book, including strengths and weaknesses,
  - (b) a two-page discussion of five [5] key insights and issues addressed in the book related to church revitalization,
  - (c) a two-page synthesis of five [5] implications of the book for 21<sup>st</sup> century church revitalization. The Annotated Analysis is to be single-spaced, and must utilize formal style according to Turabian 8<sup>th</sup>, regarding cover page, margins, pagination, headings/subheadings, etc. Instead of footnotes, quotations can be referenced with end notes. No first person allowed.

**NOTE: Students are to email Dr. Ogea ([rogea@nobts.edu](mailto:rogea@nobts.edu)) their first choice, second choice, and third choice. Dr. Ogea will make the assignments, in the order the emails received. During the seminar, book groups will work to compose a 15-minute presentation to the class regarding the annotated analysis of the book assigned, utilizing a list of talking points or a PowerPoint presentation.**

Clifton, Mark and Kenneth Priest. *Rubicons of Revitalization: Overcoming 8 Common Barriers to Church Renewal*. Littleton, CO: Acoma Press, 2018.

Henard, Bill. *ReClaimed Church: How Churches Grow, Decline, and Experience Revitalization*. Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2018.

Kritcher, Lee. *For a New Generation: A Practical Guide for Revitalizing Your Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016.

Nall, Brian. *An Uphill Journey: One Small Church's Journey to Revitalization*. Orlando: Renovate, 2017.

**Note: Assignments are to be posted on BLACKBOARD no later than midnight, Sunday, September 22, 2019.**

### **During the Seminar Assignment:**

Each student should be prepared to be involved in class discussion and dialogue regarding the pre-seminar assignments.

### **Post-Seminar Assignment:**

Each student will develop a **Church Revitalization Strategy** for their church. The Strategy must utilize all of the seminar textbooks and class discussions. Specific instructions regarding the format, structure, and components of the Strategy will be given by the professors prior to the end of the seminar. **The Church Revitalization Strategy paper is to be posted in Blackboard no later than October 31, 2019.**

### **Directed Study Requirements:**

1. Directed Study Students will complete **Pre-Seminar Assignments 1-3** and post in Blackboard by the due date listed above.
2. Directed Study Students will complete **Pre-Seminar Assignment 4** by completing an Annotated Analysis of all **Four** of the textbooks listed, posting in Blackboard no later October 31, 2019.
3. Directed Study Students will complete the **Post Seminar Assignment – Church Revitalization Strategy** and post in Blackboard no later than **October 31, 2019**.
4. Directed Study Students will **Interview** the Pastor of a church that experienced a turnaround following a period of plateau and decline, and write a five page, double-spaced **Interview Report**. The Report is to provide a brief summary of the church's situation before and after the turnaround and a summary/synthesis of the Interview. This Report is not to be a verbatim of the Interview. A copy of the Interview Questions should be attached to the Interview Report as a separate page. Post in Blackboard on or before October 31, 2019.

## **Course Evaluation**

### **In Residence Seminar Students:**

Reading Response	15%
Leadership Assessment	20%

Annotated Analysis	15%
Congregational Case Study	20%
Church Revitalization Strategy	30%

**Directed Study Seminar Students:**

Reading Response	10%
Leadership Assessment	15%
Annotated Analyses (4)	20%
Congregational Case Study	15%
Church Revitalization Strategy	20%
Interview	20%

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