

## **FLDC 5300 Vocational Excellence**

### **Purpose:**

This course is designed to explore the meaning of credentialed and endorsed ministry in The Evangelical Covenant Church and the responsibilities and competencies of those called to these positions. *Those affiliated with other denominations will be invited to explore their credentialing process and ethics expectations as well.* Attention will be given to enhancing self-awareness as well as ways to assist participants to become more healthy in ministry. The course centers around the themes of character, constancy and competency for those called to ministry.

### **Objectives:**

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

1. Articulate clearly a Biblical and theological understanding of vocational life and ministry.
2. Participate fully in personal and vocational assessments as they relate to the practice of ministry
3. Know the Rules for the Ordered Ministry and the Ethical Principles for Covenant Ministers as they apply to one's life and ministry. Become familiar with one's own denominational documents.
4. Describe and commit to ongoing development of the pastor/minister as leader.
5. Identify patterns and spiritual formation disciplines within the ministerial journey that contribute to health and excellence.
6. Create a "Life Rule", including a self-care plan, which embraces a spiritual and behavioral code that sustains ministerial health. (Note specifics in Reader distributed in class but outlined below.)

### **Requirements:**

#### **Work due before class:**

1. One of the keys to successful ministry is a deep understanding of one's self, including one's strengths and vulnerabilities. This knowledge can only increase the pastor's capacity for healthy ministry. Inventories, conversations and times for reflection comprise this process, which is designed to enhance self-understanding and identify practical steps for further growth as a pastor and person. These instruments are not an assessment of your call to ministry, rather an opportunity to explore who you are as you live into your call, being aware of the uniqueness of your personality and giftedness.

To this end we require completion of the following Midwest Ministries Assessments: MMPI-2, Sentence Stem Completion, Golden Personality Test, Wagner Enneagram Personality Styles Scales, Style Matters Conflict Inventory, and Autobiographical Questionnaire. They will be sent to you by Midwest Ministry Development Network. *They will take approximately 6-8 hours to complete.*

Individuals may not attend the class unless all requirements are submitted to Midwest Ministries by the deadline given. A report from Midwest Ministries will be sent to you after the class. *We ask that you release a copy of the report to Dean of Students, Deb Auger.*

2. Required Readings: Reading and viewing all learning materials is to be completed in advance of the first session. Learning materials will provide general background for the experiences and will be referenced periodically during the sessions.

The required texts are available at amazon.com

- *Calling and Character* by William Willimon, Abingdon Press, 2000
- *Rest in the Storm* by Kirk Byron Jones, Judson Press, 2001
- *Sacred Rhythms*, Ruth Haley Barton, 2006
- [Vocational Excellence Reader](#)  (linked here!)

### **Attendance and Participation:**

Full attendance and participation throughout the entire class time is expected.

Each person will spend an hour with a Midwest therapist analyzing and debriefing the results of the tests taken ahead of time. This hour will happen via video conference and needs to be scheduled with Midwest. The process is not complete without participation in this meeting. A report from Midwest Ministries will be sent to you after your meeting. We ask that you release a copy of the report to the Dean of Students. During your final year in seminary, if you are affiliated with the Evangelical Covenant Church and in the call process, you may choose to release a copy of the report to Ordered Ministry in Develop Leaders of the ECC.

### **Work after the class:**

1. Spiritual Direction:

One of the many gifts of your education at NPTS is the ability to participate in spiritual direction. The seminary has made the inner life of the leader a distinctive of our educational model for over thirty years.

Spiritual direction begins during Vocational Excellence with an introduction to the ministry and your first direction session. You will continue to do spiritual direction in conjunction with the SPFM courses.

Sue Braun will provide details and instructions during class, but you will be responsible for doing one session of spiritual direction after the intensive week.

2. Write 8-12 page "Life Rule" including the following two portions:

a) Introduction to Life Rule, responding to the following:

- How are your practices of ministry going to be changed because of this course?
- What have you learned about yourself in this class: what are your potential concerns/vulnerabilities and benefits?

b) "Life Rule" incorporating all elements of the class (see template in Reader for instructions).

**All assignments should be uploaded to Canvass.**

**Please do NOT send your assignment as a PDF. Send it as a Word document.** Please submit assignment with student name and assignment title.