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Teaching Parish Manual

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Teaching Parish Manual Candler School of Theology

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EMORY

CANDLER
SCHOOL OF
THEOLOGY

Office of Contextual Education

Dear Teaching Parish Student,

Welcome to the Teaching Parish Program at Candler School of Theology! Every student at Candler participates in Contextual Education as we believe that the way you become a theologian is by serving while your study. As a student pastor, your congregation or campus ministry will serve as your Contextual Educational site. Through your Reflection Groups which meet throughout the year, you will find opportunities to integrate what you are learning in class with what you are experiencing in the parish. I am positive that you will find your ministry filled with rich experiences and your academic studies filled with new insights and revelations.

In the following pages, you will find information about the history, purpose, and requirements of the Teaching Parish Program. Your supervising pastor will guide you through the curriculum in your Reflection Group, and I will be meeting with you on campus.

Please know that I am available should you have any questions. Please email me at thomas.elliott@emory.edu to set up an appointment or meet by Zoom.

I pray God's blessings upon you as you study and serve God, growing in knowledge and vital piety.

In Christ,

Dr. Thomas Elliott, Jr., DMin
Professor in the Practice of Practical Theology and Methodist Studies
Director of Contextual Education II, Teaching Parish, and Internships

History

The Teaching Parish Program at Candler School of Theology began in the mid-1970s out of a pilot project jointly undertaken by Candler and the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church. The project was initially conceived to provide an additional measure of supervision for Candler student pastors serving in the conference. During the pilot year, Conference and Seminary personnel met with student pastors out in the field to observe and evaluate their work in the parish. This program, held in the Gainesville District, was deemed such a success that it was thereafter implemented throughout the Conference. As it transitioned out of the project phase into an ongoing program, it embraced two additional purposes, the integration of experiential and theoretical learnings and the provision of a support structure for the student pastors.

Candler eventually assumed administrative responsibility for the program. It was not until 1985, however, that the program blossomed into maturity as the result of a very generous grant from Candler benefactor, Mr. Wayne Rollins. With his gift, Candler has been able to establish an endowment fund for the program, provide student scholarships, pay the program's operating costs, and hire a full-time director. Dr. John Freeman, a United Methodist minister from the South Carolina Annual Conference, became the first Teaching Parish Director in 1985. Upon Dr. Freeman's retirement in 2002, Dr. P. Alice Rogers, an elder in the North Georgia Conference, directed the program from 2002 until 2013. Dr. Rogers is now serving as the Director of the Center for Clergy Excellence, North Georgia Conference UMC. Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Elliott Jr., an elder in the North Georgia Conference UMC assumed the position of Director in 2013.

While the program began in North Georgia, in 1987-88, the Teaching Parish program expanded into surrounding annual conferences to accommodate student-pastors serving appointments within their bounds. At one time or another, Teaching Parish groups have operated in the following conferences: South Georgia, Western North Carolina, Alabama/West Florida and North Alabama, in addition to North Georgia.

In 2002-03, Candler faculty approved a proposal that allows participation in the Teaching Parish Program to fulfill the Contextual Education requirement that is mandatory for all Candler students. The parishes served by student pastors are rich fields of experience and learning, and the Teaching Parish program enables students to integrate what they learn in the classroom with what they experience in the parish.

In recent years, United Methodist students have been the largest group in the Teaching Parish program due to the UM licensing and pastoral appointment system. Students from other denominations and non-denominational churches have also been enrolled in the program. For United Methodist students, normally only those students who are certified candidates for ordained United Methodist ministry are considered for appointment. For other denominational and non-denominational churches, students will need to already have a negotiated church position/placement and the appropriate approval and support from their judicatories or boards for enrollment.

Beginning in fall semester 2021, Candler began its first remote Contextual Education program when it launched the Hybrid Teaching Parish program as the first prototype of the Hybrid MDiv.

Program Objectives

While the Teaching Parish Program originated as a means to provide supervision for Student Pastors, other objectives have emerged out of the strength of the program. The following objectives define what the Teaching Parish program seeks to provide:

Supervision: Student pastors receive supervision through Teaching Parish groups which are led by experienced United Methodist elders, providing a structured framework for careful critique and appreciation of the student's work. This setting is intended to be supportive and clarifying where questions can be asked and answered, problems discussed, suggestions made, directions clarified, and affirmations given.

Integration: Serving a parish while attending theology school creates a demanding workload; however, a student pastorate does provide a great opportunity to integrate immediately theoretical learnings from the classroom with experiential learnings from the parish setting. A course in biblical exegesis becomes all the more meaningful when its principles are employed in sermon preparation for a congregation yearning to hear the Word preached with clarity and power. Exposure to pastoral care comes alive when it provides guidance in helping a parishioner work through a time of crisis. Knowledge of Church history pays off when one must deal with a member perplexed about the practice of infant baptism. Because the student pastor can see the direct (and indirect) applicability of the academic disciplines to actual ministry, the student is in a position to develop a high degree of integration of theory and practice. Teaching Parish facilitates this integrating process.

Support: Teaching Parish alums and students alike will attest that one of the most valuable aspects of the program is the support its participants gain from one another. Working on a regular basis in small groups, tackling common tasks, sharing burdens and joys, car-pooling together; these activities form the common bonds that strengthen relationships among student pastors. Also, student pastors experience many of the same stresses that arise within their work, and these groups enable the student pastors to overcome feelings of isolation that often accompany parish work.

Congruity: It is the desire of Candler School of Theology that all students have a somewhat similar contextual education experience through areas of service and theological reflection. While those serving in Teaching Parish experience an intensive and extended time in a contextual setting, the requirements of the program parallel that of the Contextual Education I and II Program in that the first year requires reflection upon ministry experience in both social and ecclesial settings where pastors serve.

Program Requirements: First Year

- 1. Each student will participate in a Teaching Parish reflection group that meets in a geographical area (residential mode) or is online (hybrid mode).** Each group is led by a United Methodist Elder and meets for a total of twenty hours per semester. Each group agrees upon the times and places it will meet.
- 2. Students will make visits to parishioners and in the community for two hours a week (for a total of 24 hours per semester) keeping a log of visits to persons in homes, hospitals, nursing facilities, funeral homes, and social service settings each semester.** The log will be submitted to the Supervising Pastor at the end of each semester. **(Appendix A)**
- 3. During the first semester, students will present a case study of theological reflection based on an experience at a social/clinical ministry setting (i.e., hospitals, nursing facility, food pantry, etc).** **(Appendix B)**
- 4. In the second semester, students will present a pastoral verbatim from an encounter with a parishioner in their church.** **(Appendix C)**
- 5. In the first or second semester, each student will present a Church and Community Analysis, and make an oral presentation to the group.** This presentation is not to be a simple reading of the written analysis. Rather, it is to be a creative summary of the analysis which highlights findings and invites dialogue about their church and community. Students will make copies of their summary available to all group members when the oral presentation is made. **(Appendix D)**
- 6. Each student will write and preach one sermon each semester. This sermon can be original or a recently preached sermon.** **(Appendix E)**
- 7. Each semester students will read and reflect upon William H. Willimon's *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry*.** **(Appendix F)**
- 8. In keeping with the Contextual Education requirements, all first year students will complete a series of four required plenary sessions. In the fall semester, these plenaries will cover the following skills: 1) Community Resiliency Model (CRM) Training; 2) Professional Ethics; 3) Pastoral Care Basics & Pastoral Care Triage; and 4) Mental Health First Aid. Plenaries will be offered in an online format on four Thursday nights during the semester. Spring plenaries will cover Conflict Transformation.**

Program Requirements: Second Year

1. Each student will participate in a Teaching Parish reflection group that meets in a geographical area (residential mode) or is online (hybrid mode) . Each group is led by a United Methodist Elder and meets for a total of twenty hours per semester. Each group agrees upon the times and places it will meet.

2. In the first semester, each student will present a systems analysis on their congregation. Each student will make an oral presentation to the group. This presentation is not to be a simple reading of the written analysis. Rather, it is to be a summary of the analysis which highlights findings and invites dialogue about the congregation. Students will make copies of their summary available to all group members when the oral presentation is made. **(Appendix G)**

3. In the first semester, each student will create and present a 10-minute Bible study to the group from a scripture he/she selects. (Appendix H)

4. In the first semester, each student will view *Faith and Finance Year 2: Money and Ministry* video. (Appendix I)

a. Early in the first semester, and after consultation with their Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor, students will have a discussion with their financial secretary, treasurer, or lay financial leadership to understand how finances work in their churches or campus ministry.

b. Later in the semester, students lead a discussion in their reflection group regarding issues raised from the conversation with their lay financial leadership.

c. Early in the second semester, each student will lead a discussion in their reflection group on the topics of “annual financial review” and “robust oversight” addressed in the *Faith and Finance Year 2* video.

d. Later in the semester, students will lead a discussion in their reflection group on best practices related to stewardship of resources in mission and outreach.

5. In the second semester, each student will write one Consolidating Report. This paper will be a thorough reflection on the systems analysis of the congregation completed in the first semester with an attention to the growing opportunities for the local church’s mission in the community. **(Appendix J)**

6. In the second semester, each student will write and preach one sermon. This sermon should grow out of the whole year’s work. You are to preach a sermon that addresses a biblical image for the church you serve. **(Appendix E)**

7. Each semester students will read and reflect upon Thomas E. Frank’s *The Soul of the Congregation: An Invitation to Congregational Reflection*. (Appendix F)

Program Requirements: Third Year

1. Each student will participate in a Teaching Parish reflection group that meets in a geographical area (residential mode) or is online (hybrid mode). Each group is led by a United Methodist Elder and meets for a total of twenty hours per semester. Each group agrees upon the times and places it will meet.

2. In the first semester, each student will present an Act of Ministry Report. The purpose of the Act of Ministry paper is to help to structure and reflect upon an intentional ministry effort. In this paper you will identify a particular need, emerging out of the systems analysis of your congregation presented in the spring of your second semester, that you believe your congregation should attempt to address in its ministry. **(Appendix K)**

3. In the second semester, each student will present a Teaching Lesson. Because third year students naturally serve as mentors for those beginning the Teaching Parish program, and since most have been preaching, leading worship, conducting funerals and weddings and managing charge conferences, it is only natural that they use their experience and education to teach and provide leadership for first year students. Each student may choose to teach a lesson from the following topics: **(Appendix L)**

- The Charge Conference
- Funerals
- Weddings
- Baptism
- Holy Communion
- Nominating Committee

4. In the second semester, each student will preach a “Farewell to Congregation” sermon. Unlike other sermons, this should be a fresh sermon written for your last Sunday in your local church. **(Appendix E)**

Specifications and Procedures

Academic Credit: Students receive three hours credit per semester for the first year and three hours credit for the second year for their reflection group participation which fulfills the Contextual Education requirement of all Candler MDiv students. Third year students may receive one hour credit per semester, or they may opt to participate for no credit. In order to receive academic credit, students must register at the beginning of each semester, following Candler's standard procedures for class registration.

Grades: For each semester, grades are assigned by the Supervising Pastor. The Supervising Pastor evaluates the student's work throughout the semester, culminating in a final evaluation and grade for the semester. Appendix M includes a copy of the evaluation presently used for this purpose. Grades for all Teaching Parish reflection groupwork are graded as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

Costs: Aside from normal semester-hour tuition fees, there are no financial charges to the student-pastor taking part in Teaching Parish.

Schedule: Candler requires a minimum of twenty contact hours per semester between the student-pastor and their Supervising Pastor. This requirement is met in the Teaching Parish meetings that take place throughout the academic year. All first year students meet on campus an additional three hours during their first semester with the faculty member assigned as their academic advisor.

Each group has the flexibility to configure its schedule as it wishes, provided the minimum total of twenty hours is fulfilled. These meetings almost always take place on Mondays. Actual time and location of each group's meeting is set by the group's Supervising Pastor in consultation with the group members.

Curriculum: All students follow the requirements determined in the Program Requirements. In each Teaching Parish group meeting, student pastors are scheduled to make presentations, after which they will receive critique and appreciation from their peers and the Supervising Pastor. The Supervising Pastor guides the process. Thus, the learning tends to be more experiential than didactic. This means everybody assumes responsibility for mutual up-building. The more collegial the atmosphere, the more insightful the interactions become, increasing the potential for growth.

Upon the group's request and providing time allows, the Supervising Pastor may occasionally make a presentation on some aspect of the student pastor's work which is of special interest. The Supervising Pastor is also available to group members for counsel outside the group. But the Supervising Pastor does not assume sole responsibility for the group's learning; that is an exercise in mutual responsibility and commitment.

Leadership

Several parties assume leadership responsibilities within Teaching Parish:

Director: A faculty member of Candler School of Theology, this person devotes full attention to every aspect of the program, from its daily operation to its long-range design. He/she interprets the program for interested persons (e.g. student pastors, prospective student pastors, annual conference officials, seminary faculty and administrative staff, congregations, benefactors, and the media.) He/she trains and supervises the work of the program's Supervising Pastors. He/she assumes administrative responsibility for all forms relating to participation in Teaching Parish. He/she provides orientation to the program for the student pastors. He/she works to develop and maintain the relationships between the student appointments and the seminary. In short, the Teaching Parish Director is responsible for all operational matters related to the program.

Conference Liaisons: Each annual conference that participates in Teaching Parish designates someone, usually a member of that conference's cabinet, to serve as its Teaching Parish Liaison person. The various aspects of this relationship involve keeping the channels of communication open between annual conferences and seminary, engaging in program design and evaluation, dealing with student concerns and providing a sounding board for the Director.

Teaching Parish Supervising Pastors: Teaching Parish reflection groups are comprised of student pastors and are constituted on a geographical basis. Each group is led by a United Methodist Supervising Pastor. He/she is nominated for this role by the local district superintendent (or bishop and cabinet) and is confirmed upon consultation with the Teaching Parish Director. By virtue of this assignment, he/she becomes related to the faculty of Candler School of Theology.

The "Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor's Profile" (Appendix M) details the many aspects of this person's contribution to the program. He/she is involved in everything from student evaluation to program design to small group leadership. It is no exaggeration to say that the program's success is directly proportionate to the dedication and skill of these leaders; accordingly, great care is taken in their selection. As in most other responsibilities within the United Methodist Church, Teaching Parish Supervising Pastors serve in that role a year at a time, subject to mutual evaluation and annual availability.

Course Evaluations

In order to maintain the highest caliber program possible, evaluation is an essential part of the Teaching Parish Program. Three evaluations are conducted each semester:

1. Teaching Parish Student Self-Evaluation (Appendix N)
2. Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor Evaluation of Student (Appendix O)
3. Teaching Parish Course Evaluation completed by student (Appendix P)

These evaluations are deployed in an on-line format. At the conclusion of each semester, all parties will receive instructions and links in order to complete the evaluations by their respective due dates.

Appendix A

Visitation Log (2 hours per week) Use this log to record visits

Week	Location	Nature of Visit(s)
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		

Appendix B

Case Study for Theological Reflection

1. The Ministry Event

Write a report of an event in which you were involved as pastor with some responsibility for the outcome. Provide background information (i.e. context; when and how you became aware of or involved in the event; what pressures and persons precipitated and shaped the event.)

2. Central Issue

What is the issue upon which you want to reflect? (i.e. leadership, conflict resolution, grief, pastoral care, etc.)

3. Theological Reflection

- a. **Scripture:** How has this issue been addressed directly or indirectly by Scripture? Does the life of Jesus offer insights through his words, actions or attitudes?
- b. **Christian Tradition:** How has this issue been addressed directly or indirectly through the experience of other Christians in the previous two thousand years? By your denomination? By your particular congregation/ministry site?
- c. **Experience:**
 - i. **Personal:** How have you experienced this issue before? What was the outcome? What were your feelings during the event? When have you felt this way before? What is your bias or predisposition concerning this issue?
 - ii. **Contextual:** How has your congregation/ministry site experienced this issue before? What is the bias of your community? What is the source of that bias?
- d. **Reason:** What cultural data is available to inform you on this issue? How can other disciplines enlighten this issue?

4. Discernment Process

- a. What insights did you gain from the above reflection? How will these insights impact your pastoral decision on this issue?
- b. Do any of the insights gained in each of the four sections conflict? In what ways are they in agreement?
- c. In light of the above process, what is your decision about the issue? What do you hope to accomplish? What course of action will you take?

Note: The above guidelines in part follow James and Evelyn Whitehead's approach to theological reflection as found in *Experiencing Ministry Supervision: A Field-Based Approach*, eds. William T. Pyle and Mary Alice Seals, Nashville, pp. 109-124.

Appendix C

Pastoral Verbatim

A verbatim is primarily your best recollection of an act of ministry. Recall the give and take of your dialogue and actions with parishioners. Your inner dialogue is welcomed as well. The verbatim is meant to raise questions and issues for you and your colleagues, not necessarily to demonstrate good work.

Background Information: “What is happening here?” – During this step, the student presents the critical incident. This is an opportunity for the presenting student to share their reflections on the experience. What are the basic facts of the situation? Who is involved? What was the larger context of the situation? What other perspectives were involved? What are the basic needs/wants of those involved? What are your questions or concerns you wish to address in presenting this incident? What was happening with you?

Verbatim- The dialogue is a written record of the conversation and acts of persons present. Report your best recollection of the conversation. You will not remember all the conversation so focus on the sections that were most interesting, troubling, curious, etc. You can share parenthetically your inner conversation and the acts of parishioners and yourself. For long conversations you may summarize to focus on the particular exchanges.

Example:

Pastor: Hello, I’m John Doe, pastor at UMC. How is it going with you today?

Parishioner: I’m terrible to be honest and the food is awful. I am ready to go home!

Son: Dad, this is the minister. Tone it down.

Parishioner: You tone it down. He asked me.

Pastor: You’re right Mr. P, I asked and you answered. You sound like you are frustrated...

Step 1: After recording your verbatim, reflect in writing upon the following questions:

“**Why is this happening?**” – This step analyzes the systems and structures behind the given situation and how they influence the persons involved. The analysis moves beyond the accepted and stated purposes to the unconscious powers and hidden principles at work. What are the currents acting upon the various people in spite of their choices? Why do people continue to make choices despite the obviously negative

Appendix C, continued

consequences? Are there readings or classes that may provide added insight? Cite where in the verbatim you see “Why is it happening?” addressed.

“What meaning do we derive from this?” - At this step we borrow from our intuitive/imaginative responses and from the wisdom of our sacred story and faith tradition. What theological themes, bible stories, metaphors or faith practice can help make sense of the situation? What is the gospel for the people in this incident? What god or gods are followed by the various participants? Reference where in the verbatim you see these images or biblical allusions evidenced.

“What is our response?” – Based upon the discussions of the previous steps evaluate your response to this incident. How could you improve your response? Knowing what you know now how could you best bring care and yet respect the person? Offer care without judgment? What simple acts or ritual would give solace? How might we use the words and images of the person to fashion a gospel for that moment? Where in the verbatim would we use proposed words and/or acts of care?

Step 2: Share a printed copy of your verbatim with your reflection group and discuss your reflections with them. What have you learned?

Verbatim adapted from “Verbatim Guidelines,” Gwinnett Medical Hospital Systems.

Appendix D

Church and Community Analysis

Complete the following exercises and reflections:

1. Compile and study your congregation's history including written documents such as histories, photos of unique events, old directories of members, and old minutes; interviews from some of the longest term members; and old records. Identify key transition points in the history of both the congregation and community in which it is located, such as but not limited to when economics shifted (e.g. plant closings), natural disasters affecting the church, social disasters, when major controversies erupted, when dramatic increases or decreases in attendance took place, and when key members died or moved away.
2. Seek out and read a history of your community/county/city. Create a time line of your church that charts both changes in the community and changes in the congregation.
3. Compile and study a map of your community and its county. How has it changed over the years? Is there a "Master Plan" for your area? You may have to go to the local library or county records in order to explore the development of your community.
4. Compile and study the following statistics of your county (town or city) over the past 50 years (10 year intervals) using the federal census and/or chamber of commerce and/or other statistics:
 - a. Population and growth and/or decline
 - b. Changes in patters of racial and ethnic diversity of your population
 - c. Changes in the ages of your area's population
 - d. Changes or shifts in the population density
 - e. Changes in economic levels
 - f. Changes in educational levels or systems
 - g. Any other categories that appear to be relevant to your particular area
5. Compile and study the following statistics of your congregation, using church and Conference journal records:
 - a. Number of members, baptized and professed
 - b. Average worship attendance
 - c. Numbers during different periods
 - d. Numbers of each racial/ethnic group
 - e. Identify (estimate) the socio-economic levels present in the congregation
 - f. Identify (estimate) the educational levels present in the congregation
6. Prepare a three page (double-spaced, 12 point font) report on your discoveries. Be ready to share these in a verbal report with your group.

Assignment taken form Burkholder, Anne, "ACOS: The Church and Social Change."

Appendix E

Preaching - Instructions for Student Sermons

1. Sermon must be submitted to the Supervising Pastor in full manuscript form, typed, one week prior to preaching it to the Teaching Parish group.
2. Accompanying the sermon manuscript must be a brief synopsis which includes the following:
 - a. A brief description of the context in which this sermon will be preached, i.e., identify what particular place, event, occasion, or set of circumstances call this sermon into being
 - b. One-sentence statement of purpose of this sermon
 - c. Scripture text(s), including which version is being used
 - d. Brief self-evaluation of the sermon answering, in turn, what is this sermon's major strength and what is this sermon's major weakness?
3. Seniors' final sermons are to be developed as the final sermon they will preach in their student appointment.
4. Sermons may be recent sermons that were preached in your congregation.
5. Sermons should be approximately fifteen minutes in length.

Appendix F

Reading and Reflection Paper

After reading the assigned book in its entirety, please reflect on:

1. Insights you gained from the reading (list in bullet points).
2. Any challenges you might offer to the ideas presented.
3. Any ways in which the reading caused you to think about your current ministry or your own formation.

These reflection suggestions are designed to jump-start your thinking, reflecting and writing. They are by no means exhaustive, and you are encouraged to be creative in your reflection presentations.

In a 2-page paper, pick one point from your reading and compare and contrast this point with your church. Turn this paper in to your Supervising Pastor at the end of the semester.

Appendix G

Systems Analysis

Systems Theory Overview

This material aims to guide the student-pastor toward accomplishing the Contextual Education goals by providing a particular method of institutional analysis to be used in the interpretation of the student-pastor's parish: their local church. Because it is a relatively objective method for understanding institutional dynamics, the model offers the student-pastor a disciplined way to learn about their local church and its surrounding community institutions (e.g. the local industry, the school system, the store at the crossroads, the law enforcement agency, etc.). It is hoped that these learnings will benefit the ministry of the student-pastor's local church by making him/her more aware of the realities, the needs, and the opportunities, which exist in the parish context.

The particular method of institutional analysis to be used is the systems-theory scheme taught in *Management for Your Church* (Lindgren and Shawchuck, Abingdon Press, 1977). Systems theory conveys a sense of organic wholeness which it conveys (cf. the Church as the body of Christ) as well as sensitivity to the interrelatedness of all systems. This particular systems theory scheme commends itself because of its relative simplicity.

Student-pastors will apply the method by analyzing their local church according to the systems theory scheme. Specifically this means they will identify and describe every systems theory component as it is found in their church (e.g. what is the missional purpose? organizational structure? Etc.). These definitions will be created by means of personal interviews, observations, and research the student-pastors conduct within their church and community. By the time the student-pastors finish their analysis, much will have been learned about the local church. With this knowledge, the student-pastor should be in a better position to guide the shaping of their congregation's ministry to the community.

Appendix G, continued

1. What is systems theory, generally speaking?

There are numerous theories concerning the nature of institutions, for example: the classical theory, the human relations theory, and the charismatic theory. Each theory has its own distinctive features.

Systems theory is a perspective on institutions which conceives of an institution as a set of parts that work together to fulfill a mission. Of all the parts of any given system, the "boundary" is the most distinctive, as it defines the system in terms of its uniqueness, differentiating it from all other systems.

Systems theory emphasizes the relationships of all the parts within a system. Another significant point is the relationship of the system as a whole to other systems in its environment. The better the relationships of the parts within a system, the more successful that system can be in having its desired effect on surrounding systems.

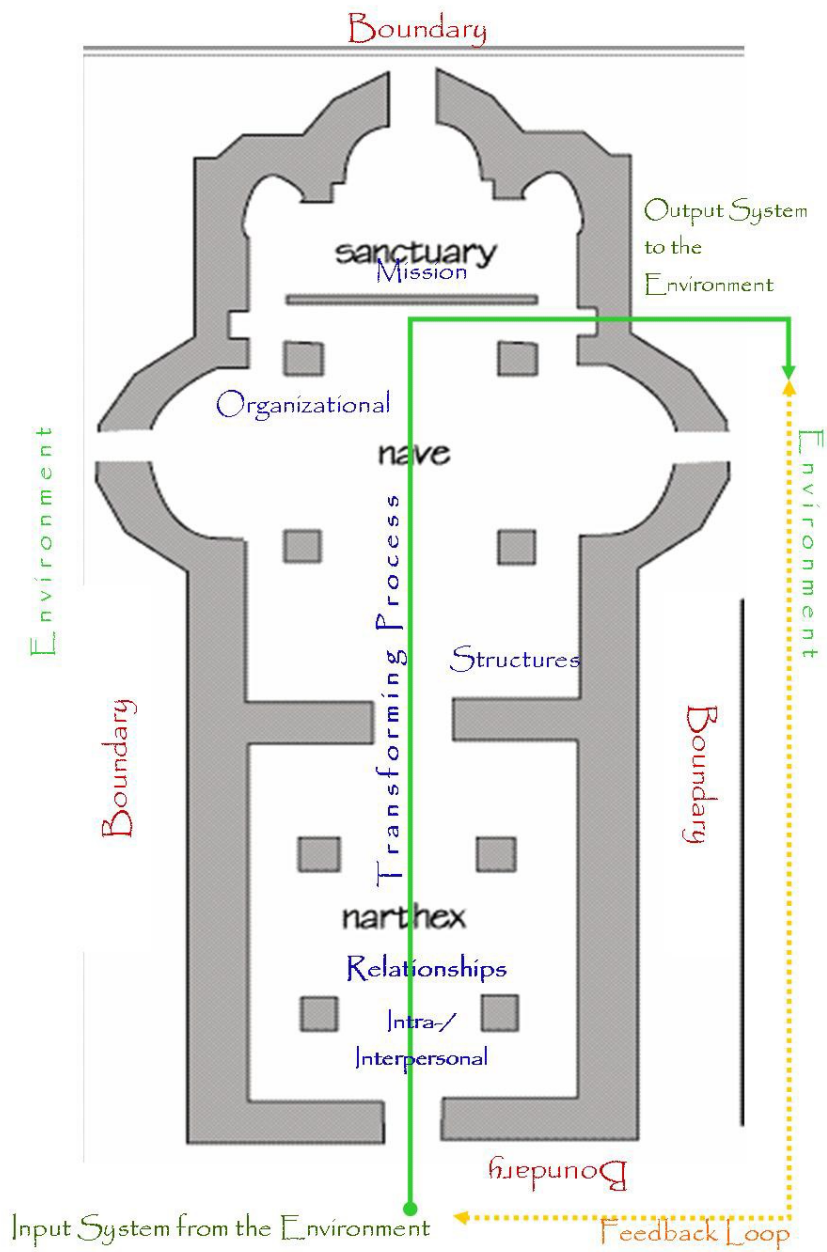
Systems theory emphasizes "purposiveness," i.e. an institution's intentional movement toward fulfilling its reason-for-being. Unlike other highly purposive organizational theories, systems theory promotes the pursuit of the individual goals of the system's members as well as the corporate goals of the system itself. Its operating ideal is that these two sets of goals, those of the system's individual members on the one hand and the "official" goals of the system on the other, should be in harmony. It theoretically requires no sacrifice of personal goals for the sake of the system's goals.

Because systems theory is purposive or goal-oriented, it emphasizes evaluation. This is what the "feedback loop" is for. What the system actually accomplishes (its "real output") is measured against what it intended to accomplish (its "intended output").

Whatever is learned by that comparison constitutes evaluation, which is fed back into the system's process so as to provide encouragement and/or corrective for the system's future work. Evaluation is an essential part of the systems theory life cycle.

Systems theory is both a model and a diagnostic tool. It is a model in the sense that it can be used as a pattern by which to order or re-order institutional life. It is a diagnostic tool in the sense that it can be used to analyze any institution regardless of its particular theoretical orientation. In our work we will use it primarily in the latter sense, as a diagnostic tool; however, as we apply it to the study of our church, we ought to feel free to incorporate any of its features that strike us as potentially helpful for our situation.

Systems Theory Model



Based on Lindgren & Shawchuck's
Management for Your Church Model

2. What specific systems theory scheme will be used?

The previous diagram gives a picture of the systems theory we will be using in our work. As you can see, it shows the various parts of a system. In order to use this scheme as a tool to analyze the church and its surrounding institutions, we must know what each of the parts is. The definitions of all the respective parts of the systems theory scheme follow.

A) Mission: This is the system's reason for being, stated in the most basic, simple, and brief terms possible. It is not a list of objectives the system is trying to accomplish; rather it is the ultimate goal toward which the system is striving to move. For the system to have integrity, every concrete objective it sets for itself must be in harmony with and in the service of its mission.

To say it another way, the mission is an expression of the system's highest value(s). The system exists to live up to its value(s), or to come as close to doing so as possible.

Some systems are very clear about their mission, others very vague. Some systems express their mission in formal, explicit ways. Others do not. But every system has a mission, consciously or unconsciously. Discovering a system's mission is an important step.

B) Organizational Structures: These are the "mechanical parts" of the system, the machinery with which the system does its work. These structures may be groups, both official (e.g. the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee) and unofficial (e.g. the dominant family in the church); they may be individuals (e.g. the "patriarch" of the dominant family); they may be procedures/ritual/customs, both official (e.g. the ritual of confirmation and reception into the church) and unofficial (e.g. the "pounding" of the new parsonage family); they may be rules and regulations, both official (e.g. The Book of Discipline) and unofficial (e.g. no women ever permitted to serve on the Board of Trustees).

Several questions ought to be raised of a system's organizational structures. Do they tend to be mostly formal or informal? What kind of effect do they tend to have on the input (i.e. the people, the money, the new ideas, "the raw material") which the system takes into itself? Are they closed (i.e. rigid; inhospitable to that which is new) or open (i.e. flexible; welcoming to that which is new)? Are they efficient (i.e. facilitate the accomplishments of the system's goals) or inefficient? Probing these and related questions can reveal much about a system

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C) Intra/Interpersonal Relationships: This refers to the relationships of the individuals within the system. Intrapersonal relationships have to do with how the individuals themselves feel about being part of a given system. This is what is meant by the term "mind-set." Does being part of a given system tend to create a particular mind-set which is generally characteristic of its members? In some systems the intrapersonal relationships scream out such a mind-set (e.g., a declining inner-city church on its last leg), whereas in other systems it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine such (e.g. a church in a resort area with "a different congregation" every Sunday).

The term "interpersonal relationships" is concerned with how the individuals who inhabit the system interact with one another. The investigation at this point does not aim to study in depth all the transactions among system members, as the web of interrelationships is likely to be far too intricate for that. Instead, one is curious about the general tone of the interrelationships within the system. How might the tone be described? Does it tend to be helpful or hurtful *vis a vis* the system's mission? Who/What sets the tone? How does the tone get changed, if it does? To what degree is the system conscious of the tone set by its interrelationships?

The quality of human relationships within a system speaks volumes about the system itself.

D) Boundary: The boundary of a system is its uniqueness, those characteristics which set it apart from every other system. The boundary consists of a system's particular tradition, including the history, beliefs, values, rituals, symbols, etc. which it perpetuates in the living out of its existence. The boundary of a system locates that system not only geographically, but also historically (its place in "the grand scheme of things"), culturally (its place within the spectrum of contemporary orientations to society), and institutionally (its place within the pecking order of similar systems which together comprise "a family").

A system's boundary reveals two important things about it. First, it tells the system's identity. Second, it indicates a system's style of operating. With respect to the second point, a system's boundary acts as a filter, checking and processing everything that approaches the system. That which is deemed unsuitable by the filtering process is either rejected or radically modified so as to make it acceptable; that which is deemed suitable is processed into the system, with perhaps a little "refining" taking place in the induction process.

The individuals within a system may have a formal conception of their system's boundary. Their real sense of the system's boundary is on display, however, in the way they handle input, the raw material that comes into the system. A critical question to raise is how close or how far apart the system's formal concept of boundary and its operational concept of boundary happen to be.

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Boundary is the most "researchable" part of a system. It should be investigated thoroughly enough to provide one with substantial insight into a system's unique personality and judiciously enough to avoid being buried beneath an avalanche of minutia.

E) Input System: Like any living organism, a system must acquire the raw materials necessary to survive and to move toward fulfillment of its mission. As a natural system (e.g. a plant) takes in water and nutrients in order to live, so also does an institutional system (e.g. a church) take in new members, money equipment, and many other raw materials in order to survive and thrive. These necessary raw materials are known in systems theory as input, and the point(s) of access whereby the raw material is introduced, filtered, and injected into the system is known as the input system.

In analyzing an institution's input system you would want to ask several questions. What kinds of input does this system require? What does it seem to need most? Where/How does it find its input? How does its input system operate, formally or informally? Is the input system simple or complex? What kind of filtering does the input system perform on incoming raw material? Generally speaking, what would constitute acceptable input?

Like people, systems are what they eat to a considerable extent. Thus, we learn about a system as we study its ingestion process.

F) Transforming Process: The similarity between a natural system and an institutional system continue to pertain here. Just like a plant converts the raw materials it takes into forms suitable to its purpose, so also a church (or any other kind of institutional system) converts the input it receives into forms suitable to its purpose. In systems theory this conversion is called the transforming process. Money that comes into a church, for example, is transformed into a new organ, a percentage of a missionary's support, or a pot of spaghetti for a fellowship supper. A man who joins the Lion's Club may be transformed into a broom salesman, a baseball coach, or a statistic. A new idea that is accepted by an advertising agency may be transformed into a picture in a magazine, a new face on television, or a rebate for car buyers. A system takes in the raw material that is available then transforms it into a form that sustains the system's life in some way.

The three basic parts within the system's boundary, the mission, the organizational structures, and the intra/interpersonal relationships do the actual transforming. In both observable and mystical ways, these parts create a chemistry which changes whoever/whatever comes into the system. The converse may also be true, namely that the internal parts of a system are subject to being transformed by new input into the system, as the example of a new manager hired to run a baseball team illustrates. In fact, Systems Theory as a model (not just as a diagnostic tool, as we are using it here)

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would assert that the healthier a system, the more open its existing parts are to being transformed by new input.

As it is being transformed by the system, which it has entered, input is being channeled to where the system needs it. In oversimplified terms it is assigned primarily to one of two essential system functions, maintenance or mission. Maintenance functions are those things a system must do to survive; mission functions are those things a system must do to be true to its reason for being. The two functions are interrelated. A system cannot fulfill its mission unless it survives; but if all a system does is survive, it loses its missional vision and, thus, its reason for being. The critical question, then, is one of equilibrium between maintenance and mission, which comes down largely to a matter of allocation of input. Does so much of the money that comes into the church go for sanctuary refurbishing that there is little left for service to the poor? Does the mayor spend so much time out in the community among the people that the city council is in chaos? How input is allocated within the system says a great deal about the well-being of the system.

In studying a system's transforming process you want to get a sense of the chemistry that takes place in the system. What happens to the people, money, ideas, etc. that enter the system in question? To what extent is the system open to change when it receives fresh input? Do all the changes that occur tend to be stereotyped and programmed or spontaneous? Why? Where does most of the raw material the system receives wind up being allocated; to maintenance or to mission functions? Based on this allocation process, how would you assess the health of the system in question?

How a system changes, and is changed by the input it receives, is a measure of its well-being.

G) Output System: The parallelism between natural systems and institutional systems runs on. A plant takes in raw materials, converts them into usable form, and employs them to produce something (e.g. fruit, timber, oxygen). Likewise a church (or other institutional system) receives input, converts it, and winds up producing something(s) (e.g. a redeemed and redeeming congregation, a transformed neighborhood, an ingrown social club).

The output, therefore, is what the system produces by working its input through its transforming process. The output system is the means whereby the system exports what it produces to the surrounding world. The assumption here is that a system does seek to output, which means it wants to generate ideas, symbols, actions, etc. that aim to influence the surrounding world.

A system that is functioning well at this point is one that conceives of its output in terms of concrete goals, statements of future outcomes the system intends to bring about which are in harmony with the system's mission, realistic with respect to the system's

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available resources and energy, and potent in terms of having the desired impact upon external systems. A system is judged to a large extent by the work of its output system, or the lack thereof. "You shall know them by their fruits. . ."

When you study a system, therefore, you want to examine its fruits, including the process whereby its fruits are born. Exactly what output, if any, does the system produce? Does that output tend to be intentionally created (i.e. does the system operate with explicit goals), or are things basically spontaneous and fortuitous ("whatever happens, happens")? Is the system's output generally in harmony with its mission? Does the system strain to generate its output, or does it seem to produce in accordance with its available energy and resources? According to its output, what kind of influence is the system seeking to wield? What other systems does it target with respect to its influencing power? How would you judge its success/failure in this respect?

Whereas you might have difficulty getting a clear fix on the internal workings of a system, you should be able to observe its output without too much trouble. This becomes a key point for you, therefore, as you seek to analyze a system.

H) Feedback Loop: We conclude the parallel between natural systems and institutional systems by observing that the existence of both is characterized by a life cycle. Most plants renew their life each spring, growing leaves, lengthening roots, repairing damage, etc. As the active season unfolds, the plants produce their fruits. After the fruits mature, the plants slip gradually into a period of dormancy, at the conclusion of which the cycle starts again.

A healthy institutional system lives cyclically, too, though it may or may not do so in as regimented a way as a natural system. This is most apparent in the functioning of a system's feedback loop. The feedback loop is the system's evaluation mechanism.

As stated before, a healthy system's output system is characterized by goals, statements of intended outcomes the system is committed to achieving. Output (i.e. goals) is projected early in the system's life cycle. Through the middle of the cycle the system allocates its resources and energies in order to turn the goals into realities. At the end of the cycle is a time of comparing the intended outcomes (i.e. the goals) with the actual outcomes (i.e. what really happened) in order to determine whether the system's performance fell short, was right on target, or exceeded what was originally planned.

Whatever the results, the question, "What does this teach us?," is asked for the sake of learning from both failure and success. For example, a church sets as a goal to establish three new Sunday School classes by the end of the year but winds up getting only one started. If it is a healthy system, it won't deny or ignore this reality; rather it will ask, "Why?," so as to learn what factors caused things to turn out the way they did. Was

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the goal unrealistically high? Is there not really a need for three classes? Does work need to be done in the area of recruiting, training, and supporting teachers?

Here's where the feedback loop comes in. Evaluation, which is carried out by comparing intended output with actual output and analyzing the surplus or deficit, produces learnings. These learnings in turn are fed back into the system so as to inform and correct the system's total process at the beginning of a new life-cycle. For example, the church discovers that it couldn't establish all the new classes it intended because it had a hard time securing new teachers. In the next cycle, therefore, a new goal is developed aiming to do a better job at identifying, training, and supporting new teachers. Had there been no evaluation, this need might never have been discovered; had there been no taking into account the evaluation learnings, the corrective might never have been applied. If these operations don't occur, output is stunted and people are frustrated.

That's why the feedback loop is important. It is the system's evaluation and recycling mechanism. You get an important pulse reading on a system by examining its feedback loop.

The critical question is, does it have one? Does the system do any evaluation of its efforts? How does it do so, formally or informally? If it does evaluate, what does it do with the learnings it gains? Does it feed them back into itself? How? Does the feedback tend to be stored away and forgotten, or does it inform the system's subsequent work?

The language may sound a little intimidating here, but the reality it stands for is quite simple. Does a system do what it intends to do or not? How does it know? What does it do with its self-knowledge? That's what the feedback loop is about.

I) Environment: A system's environment is the world around it, including everything from its local neighborhood to its setting within the global context.

When you look at a given system's environment, you are especially interested in discovering what other significant systems are located there. A significant system is one which has, or seeks to have, an influence on the system in question, or one which the system in question seeks to influence. It may be both.

Part of your analysis of a system raises questions about its environment. What significant systems surround it? How are they trying to influence the system in question?

How is the system in question trying to influence them? Who is having the greater impact on whom? Do the inter-system relationships tend to be adversarial or mutually supportive?

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No system exists apart from an environment. In other words, no system is a world unto itself, completely sealed off from the rest of reality, though some systems act as if this were the case. Systems have a bearing on each other, intentionally or haphazardly, for better or worse. They cannot be fully understood, therefore, without some consideration of the environmental baggage they inevitably carry with them.

3. How will this systems theory scheme be used in the analysis of the church and its surrounding significant systems?

This assignment requires the student-pastor to analyze their church during the first semester. In the analysis the student-pastor will identify and define all nine parts of the systems theory scheme (including "environment") as those parts actually manifest themselves in the system, respectively. This means that the student-pastor analyzes, identifies and defines as fully as possible its mission, organizational structures, intra/interpersonal relationships, boundaries, input system, transformation process, output systems, feedback loop, and environment. Students will identify and define the parts of each system in the order given here, starting with the mission, then moving to the organizational structures, the intra/interpersonal relationships, and so forth, finishing with that system's environment.

It is important to understand that what you are doing here is attempting to see the system as it is, not as you think it ought to be. You want to discover, for example, what concept of mission the system operates with and learn all you can about that, whether you agree with it or not. You're not trying to change things at this stage of the game; you simply want to discern the way things are. This will take discipline, especially when you do the analytical work on your church. You want to analyze as objectively as possible. Once you've learned the way things are, you're in position to begin to work intelligently toward necessary changes, an attempt at which you will report on during your senior year.

4. How will you gain the information necessary for your analysis of each system? You will do so by means of three activities: research, observation, and interview.

A) Research: Some systems will have available written material which reveals pertinent information. For example, in analyzing your church, you might discover that it has a written history, which would help you understand much about it, especially concerning its boundary. Published statistical tables, budgets, organizational charts, rules and regulations, newspaper articles and census data are examples of other written resources you might find access to. If the system you're analyzing has anything written about it, formal or informal, check it out.

B) Observation: Since the systems you're analyzing is your local church, you likely will have some personal experience with them. Build on that by doing some careful observation of the system. What kind of input do you see that system taking in? What can you tell about its transforming process? What kind of

Appendix G, continued

output does it produce? These kinds of observations may generate more soft data (impressions) than hard data (facts), but even that can contribute to your attempt to understand the system. When possible, confirm your observations by checking them against some source of first-hand knowledge of the system. When that's not possible, don't discard your observations; just keep them in perspective by remembering that they're impressions that may only approximate the system's reality.

C) Interview: Much of what you learn about the system you analyze should come through interviews you conduct with those who are participants in the systems and with those outsiders who are knowledgeable about them. It is not expected that you conduct these interviews with clinical objectivity; rather your approach should be conversational and friendly, never hostile. At the outset of an interview you will need to explain your purpose. This can be done by telling the interviewee that church and community analysis is part of the work the seminary requires you to do (use your own judgment about how detailed a description of the academic requirement you might offer). The ultimate aim is to enable your church to develop an enhanced ministry to the community. This explanation, in addition to the fact that you are likely to be known, at least by virtue of your position as the local United Methodist pastor, should open the way for the interview to proceed. Should you still encounter resistance from an individual, don't press your request. Make note of the resistance, for that tells you something important about that system; then seek out others who might be willing to talk.

Don't mention "systems theory" in your interview. That kind of jargon often puts people off. Instead, use your interpretive skills to ask people, in language they understand, questions that will yield answers that inform you about their system's mission, boundary, feedback loop, etc. The questions about each of a system's parts in the preceding section should be suggestive at this point. As you listen, be sure you accurately hear what they're saying. Do this by feeding back to them their communication from time to time just to make sure you're hearing them correctly; (e.g. "What I hear you saying is...Is that correct?"). Also, ask for clarification when you don't understand something the interviewee tells you. That person must be confident in your interest to hear them accurately and interpret them fairly. Of course when the interview is finished, you will want to express thanks for their time and trouble. Likely they will appreciate someone taking such an interest in what is an important part of their life.

5. What form will the work take?

Your system analyses must be typewritten. There is no prescribed length. The analysis should be long enough to describe the system thoroughly, yet lean enough to keep the essence of the system from being obscured by superfluous detail. It is expected that the analysis of your church will be more exhaustive than that of the other systems.

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Each analysis will contain three sections.

1. In the first section you will offer a brief general introduction of the system being analyzed, taking care to locate this system both geographically and symbolically within the community. In this section you will also identify the various sources you consulted in your research/observation/interview process. This is where you "document" your findings.
2. The second section of the analysis for the system will be your definition of each of the nine systems theory components. This may be done in outline form. Be sure to define each component as thoroughly as your investigation enables.
3. In the third section you will draw generalizations about the system based on what your systems theory analysis has taught you about it. Specifically, you will want to record your generalizations about the strength(s) of this system; its weakness(es); its effectiveness or ineffectiveness vis a vis its mission; its values; its impact on other systems in the community, especially on your church. While these generalizations fall in the category of impressions, they will be educated impressions, inasmuch as they are based on the analytical work you've done.

In the spring semester, you will write a final consolidating report, the specifications of which are in Appendix J. This assignment is meant to be transitional. The work leading up to it, for the most part, has been analytical; you've been attempting in it to learn about your church, without making judgments about it. In this paper you begin to try some interpretation of the data you've gathered, including identification of a particular need your analysis invites you to lead the congregation to address in its ministry. The "Act of Ministry" specifications in Appendix K will guide you in this process, which you will report on in both semesters of your senior year.

Appendix H Bible Study

Prepare and lead your reflection group in a Bible study on a scripture text which you choose. The lesson should be no more than 10 minutes in length in order to leave time for discussion and feedback. Use handouts and other media as necessary.

Appendix I

Faith and Finance-Year 2

Faith and Finance Curricular Outline

Program goals:

1. Create a culture of financial awareness at Candler
2. Enhance students' financial literacy
3. Increase students' understanding of financial administration within the local church
4. Decrease students' educational debt

Program learning outcomes – Students will be able to:

1. Engage financial management as a dimension of personal spirituality (including the impact of vocational decisions on lifestyle)
2. Speak about money in a theologically informed manner
3. Talk about debt as a choice over which they have control (including reading a financial aid package, understanding credit card debt, etc.)
4. Describe the impact of loans on their future ministry (monthly repayments v. likely compensation, impact on standard of living)
5. Describe best practices for financial management within the local congregation
6. Formulate an ongoing strategy for work/life balance

Appendix I, continued

Program structure:

Faith and Finance Year 2 <i>Money and Ministry in the Church</i>	
Pedagogical context: Contextual Education II Reflection Groups Theological theme: sharing possessions Financial themes: church finances, stewardship	
Fall Semester	Spring Semester
<p>Con Ed II Students: After viewing the <i>Faith and Finance Year 2: Ministry and Money in the Church</i>, discuss with your Site Mentor how finances work in your church.</p> <p>Second Year Teaching Parish Students: View the video and <u>after consultation with your Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor</u>, have a discussion with your lay financial leadership to understand how finances work in your church.</p>	<p>Con Ed II Students: Discuss of best practices relating to annual financial review and robust oversight in the “Administration” module</p> <p>Second Year Teaching Parish Students: Lead a discussion in your reflection group on the topics of “annual financial review” and “robust oversight” addressed in the video.</p>
<p>Con Ed II Students: Discuss issues raised in site mentor conversations with teaching supervisor and colleagues in the “Congregational Context” module.</p> <p>Second Year Teaching Parish Students: Lead a discussion in your reflection group of issues raised from the conversation with your lay financial leadership.</p>	<p>Con Ed II Students: Discuss best practices related to stewardship in the “Mission and Outreach” module.</p> <p>Second Year Teaching Parish Students: Lead a discussion in your reflection group on best practices related to stewardship in mission and outreach.</p>

Appendix J Consolidating Report

Introduction

Having completed the analyses, you are now in the position to reflect critically in this consolidation report, you will move beyond the first semester's analytical concern with discovering "how things are" toward a prescriptive idea of "how things ought to be." This is done in the form of a critical reflection on the first semester's congregational system(s) analysis. **This paper is to contain the following sections:**

1. **Present strengths:** Based on the information yielded by the first semester congregational analysis, identify and elaborate on present congregational strengths. Do this in terms of the component parts of the system they model, e.g., what's good about this congregation's sense of mission, about its organizational structures, etc.
2. **Areas for Growth:** Having identified strengths, now go back through the analysis and highlight areas where the congregation needs to grow, in your opinion, in order to conform better to the ideal of the body of Christ.
3. **Future Ministry:** Given these strengths and weaknesses, what shape ought the congregation's future ministry take? Reflect on this generally at first by briefly addressing the following questions: How can it build on its strengths? How can it begin to address its growth areas? What resistance might you expect to encounter in leading the congregation to look at this? What might be done to overcome that resistance? Then identify one particular need emerging out of this general reflection that you will attempt to move the congregation to address in the immediate future. Note: you will be reporting on this effort during both semesters of the your senior year in Teaching Parish, so consult "Act of Ministry" guidelines now as you prepare to carry out this task.
4. **General Insights:** Finally, identify the general learnings you have gleaned from the total process of congregational systems(s) analysis and critical reflection for building ministry.

This paper is to be 3-5 pages, double-spaced typescript. It is to be scheduled for presentation to the group during the first half of the second semester. As with the first semester's systems analyses, the oral presentation of this paper is to be done from an outline, as opposed to be a verbatim reading of the paper. On presentation day turn the paper in to your Supervising Pastor and distribute outlines of your oral presentation to your classmates.

Appendix K

Act of Ministry - Instructions and Formats for Student Presentations

In the consolidating paper you wrote during the previous semester, you identified a particular need, emerging out of the systems analysis of your congregation, that you felt the congregation ought to attempt to address in its ministry. The purpose of the Act of Ministry exercises is to help you structure and reflect upon this intentional ministry effort. ***Act of Ministry I is the first assignment done in the first semester of the senior year. Act of Ministry II is the first assignment done in the last semester of the senior year.*** Their specifications are as follows:

1. Act of Ministry I (First semester)

Prepare a report on the Act of Ministry you have chosen to lead your congregation in based on what you learned in your systems analysis work the previous year. The report consists of three parts:

- a. Identification of the need, including:
 - i. Description of the need, i.e. why is it a need?
 - ii. Account of how it came out of the analysis of the congregation
 - iii. Evidence of congregational concern about this need
- b. Ministry goal to address this need, i.e. brief statement of the intended outcome toward which the congregation is working, including the following:
 - i. What (specific change) is being attempted?
 - ii. To/for/with whom?
 - iii. By whom?
 - iv. By when?
 - v. To what extent? (degree of change being attempted)
- c. Progress report: brief statement as to where things are at this point, with the understanding that work on the goal will continue into the next semester.

This report is to be 2-3 pages, typed, double-spaced, with copies prepared for all group members. It is due on the student's presentation day. Process it like a case study.

2. Act of Ministry II (Second semester)

The first assignment for the second semester senior, this is a follow-up on the first semester's Act of Ministry report. It essentially amounts to an evaluation of the Act of Ministry. It consists of the following parts:

- a. Repeat the need (briefly) and the goal statement, as reported in Act of Ministry I.
- b. Describe what has happened in the congregation's effort to carry out its ministry goal.
 - i. What was the goal statement's intended outcome?
 - ii. What has been the actual outcome, i.e. as a result of the congregation's efforts, how was the need impacted?
 - iii. At this point, has the congregation met, exceeded, or fallen short of its goal?

- iv. Whatever the case in "c," what is it learning (both about the need and itself) in this evaluation process?
- c. What are the implications of this Act of Ministry for the congregation's future ministries?

This report is to be 3-5 pages, typed, double-spaced, with copies prepared for all group members. It is due on the student's presentation day. Process as usual.

Appendix L

Teaching Lesson - Instructions for Student Presentations

1. Each student-pastor is required to present one lesson to the group during the second semester of their senior year.
2. The topic for this lesson is to be chosen from the following list:
 - a. The Charge Conference
 - b. Funerals
 - c. Weddings
 - d. Baptism
 - e. Holy Communion
 - f. Nominating Committee
3. The lesson is to be prepared for the Teaching Parish group, i.e. for other ministers. It is not to be an example of a Bible study or confirmation lesson or something similar usually geared towards laity. It is to be a lesson about some aspect of ministry, taught by a minister to ministers.
4. The lesson should be at least thirty minutes in length.
5. The teacher is to prepare typed copies of their lesson outline for the entire group. They are to be distributed to the group just prior to the actual teaching of the lesson itself, i.e. they are not due a week in advance, as are sermon manuscripts.
6. The teacher is encouraged to use a variety of teaching strategies to communicate the lesson, such as: lecture, multi-media, simulations, role-play, etc.
7. The group is to offer the teacher feedback both on content and teaching style.

Appendix M

Teaching Parish Supervising Pastors' Profile

1. Status

- a. Ordained member of the Annual Conference
- b. Preferably an effective member (elder), though a retired member possessing the desirable characteristics listed below might be utilized
- c. An adjunct faculty member of Candler School of Theology by virtue of this assignment

2. Desirable Characteristics

- a. Established gifts for and experience in parish ministry (a good role model for ministry)
- b. Commitment to theological education
- c. Disposition and ability to work with small groups
- d. A collegial working style
- e. Sensitivity to personal needs of individual student-pastors
- f. Self-confidence
- g. Responsibility

3. Responsibilities

- a. To work with the Teaching Parish Director in the maintenance, evaluation, and ongoing design of the program. This work is done in regular meetings throughout the year.
- b. To make arrangements for the group's meeting time and place.
- c. To assign, supervise and evaluate (i.e. providing written evaluation of students' work, including mid-semester grades for all students.)
- d. To provide input to their group relevant to their ministries.
- e. To be available to their group members for individual counsel.

Appendix M, continued

- f. To work with their District Superintendent in a consultative way concerning the strengths/needs of their district's student-pastors.
- g. To work with the Director in planning and carrying out the annual Teaching Parish Orientation which begins the academic year.
- h. To be a liaison between the Teaching Parish program and the annual conference.

4. Annual Routine

- a. Mid-summer (and holidays): to convene their student-pastor group, including spouses, for a "get to know you" occasion in which new members would begin to be welcomed into the group. (Recommended, but not required)
- b. Late summer: Teaching Parish Orientation (The North Georgia Teaching Parish typically does this at the end of the summer. Satellite Teaching Parish groups may schedule this event any time in the summer that suits them, subject to the Teaching Parish Director's availability to attend).
- c. Fall and Spring semesters: regular meetings totaling 20 hours per semester; ten 2-hour meetings/semester or five 4-hour meetings/semester; Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor meetings also occur during both semesters.

Appendix N

Teaching Parish Student Self-Evaluation

Teaching Parish

Student:

Student Email

Church:

Teaching Supervising Pastor

Recent studies have found that in order for a minister to lead effectively in her or his role as pastor, teacher, administrator, preacher, advocate, etc., certain competencies must be developed. This range of roles requires a minister to be proficient not only in teaching and preaching, but also in intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. This evaluation is intended to provide a clearer picture of the student's progress towards becoming more competent in these critical dimensions of ministry.

This evaluation is to be completed at the conclusion of each Contextual Education II semester. Your evaluation provides an important means of assessment and another opportunity for growth. Please use the following evaluation to identify where you believe you have grown in your gifts for ministry as well areas where you would like to see continued growth.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Evaluation

Teaching Parish fulfills several learning outcomes of the Master of Divinity curriculum. Students who complete the program will be able to:

- Exercise reflective practices of leadership and ministry;
- Articulate an informed understanding of their vocation as practitioners, leaders, and public theologians;
- Articulate an informed understanding of their own religious identity and ongoing spiritual growth and development.¹

In addition, students are evaluated in the areas of administration, preaching, and pastoral care.

Evaluation Scale

Use the following scale to evaluate the student's current level of performance and growth in each area:

1. **Poor.** I failed to develop in this area of ministry; serious concern.
2. **Fair.** I resisted growth or avoided this area of ministry and learning, but have promise with clear, strong encouragement.
3. **Average.** I displayed growth at various times, show promise, and still have room for improvement.
4. **Good.** I showed consistent growth throughout the semester.
5. **Excellent.** I exemplified exceptional growth throughout the semester; display skills and gifts in this area sufficient for leadership.

N/A -Not applicable. Practice was not available or I did not have experience at this site.

¹ Catalog and Handbook 2014/2015, Candler School of Theology

Appendix N, continued

Evaluation Questions

A. Reflective Practices of Leadership

Examples include:

- I reflect theologically on the roles, functions, dimensions, and practices of ministry in communities of faith.
- I demonstrate awareness of their own theological commitments and practices of ministry in relation to others.
- I reflect critically on site work in light of classroom discussion and written assignments, and integrate site work into reflections on assigned reading.
- I draw on theological insights and ideas from other Candler courses to inform my self-understanding of ministry on-site.
- I welcome feedback from site supervisor, teaching supervisor, and peers in ways that deepens understanding of my practice of ministry.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area:

Please share and reflect on a particular event that illustrates your self-evaluation: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix N, continued

B. Vocational Formation and Public Leadership

Examples include:

- I articulate vocational identity and clarity of calling with coherent theology and mature self-awareness.
- I identify central themes of my own religious heritage.
- I recognize my gifts/skills/abilities for ministry and leadership, as well as areas of growth.
- I practice spiritual disciplines that enhance discernment and growth.
- I express a personal faith and witness to the Gospel.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check a box)

What vocational goals were you able to articulate? (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix N, continued

C. Contextual Analysis (Ecclesial/Communal)

Examples include:

- I conduct social analysis of the site and surrounding neighborhood through demographic data, trends, and walk-thru.
- I explore the ecclesial history, images of the church, and the congregation's self-understanding.
- I listen to the stories of people.
- I analyze communal/social practices and congregational religious practices (including rites, rituals, creeds etc.) for the purposes of ministry.
- I integrate knowledge from analysis of congregational and communal practices into social context for ministry (i.e., economic, political, social, demographic data).

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check a box)

Give an example of how you have used congregational analysis to better articulate your understanding and practice of ministry: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix N, continued

D. Participation in the life of the group

Examples include:

- I have the ability to express myself.
- I come prepared and am a thoughtful contributor to the weekly Reflection Group.
- I listen to others.
- I engage others in a respectful manner.
- I exhibit group leadership as appropriate.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check a box)

Please share and reflect on a particular event that illustrates your evaluation: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix N, continued

AREAS OF MINISTRY

1. Leadership and Administration

Examples include:

- I organize responsibilities well.
- I mediate conflict effectively.
- I understand stewardship and budget management adequately.
- I delegate ministerial tasks as appropriate.
- I work well with leadership and laity.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check a box)

Give an example of how you engaged the administrative process. (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix N, continued

2. Gathering, Proclamation, and Engagement

Examples include:

- I prepare sermons firmly based on biblical text which are expressive of sound theology.
- I structure sermons logically, with movement and effective transitions, which are able to be followed by listeners.
- I preach relevant sermons which are appropriately illustrated and articulate clear, meaningful messages for the current context.
- I deliver sermons with audibility, proper voicing, eye contact, gestures, and body language.
- I express authentic, personal faith and commitment to the gospel in sermons.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check a box)

Give an example of how you have grown in your ability as a preacher: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix N, continued

3. Pastoral Care and Community Care

Examples include:

- I work with the pastor and congregation to identify spiritual needs.
- I listen attentively to others.
- I offer empathy, care, and respect in pastoral encounters and visitation.
- I utilize congregational resources and laity to deliver effective care, based on a pastoral assessment and an appropriate plan of care.
- I respect personal and professional boundaries, and has begun to develop patterns of self-care.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check a box)

Give an example of how you have offered pastoral care: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

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Appendix O

Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor Evaluation of Student

Teaching Supervisor Pastor:

Church Name:

Student:

Student Emory Email:

Recent studies have found that in order for a minister to lead effectively in her or his role as pastor, teacher, administrator, preacher, advocate, etc., certain competencies must be developed. This range of roles requires a minister to be proficient not only in teaching and preaching, but also in intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. This evaluation is intended to provide a clearer picture of the student's progress towards becoming more competent in these critical dimensions of ministry.

This evaluation is to be completed at the conclusion of each Teaching Parish semester. Your evaluation provides an important means of assessment and another opportunity of growth for the student. Please use the following evaluation to identify where you believe the student is most gifted for ministry as well as where the student's gifts for ministry are less well-developed.

Learning Outcomes and Performance Evaluation

Teaching Parish fulfills several learning outcomes of the Master of Divinity curriculum. Students who complete the program will be able to:

- Exercise reflective practices of leadership and ministry;
- Articulate an informed understanding of their vocation as practitioners, leaders, and public theologians;
- Articulate an informed understanding of their own religious identity and ongoing spiritual growth and development.

In addition, students are evaluated in the areas of administration, preaching, and pastoral care.

Evaluation Scale

Use the following scale to evaluate the student's current level of performance and growth in each area:

1. **Poor.** Failed to develop in this area of ministry; serious concern.
2. **Fair.** Resisted growth or avoided this area of ministry and learning, but has promise with clear, strong encouragement.
3. **Average.** Displayed growth at various times, shows promise, and still has room for improvement.
4. **Good.** Showed consistent growth throughout the semester.
5. **Excellent.** Exemplified exceptional growth throughout the semester; displays skills and gifts in this area sufficient for leadership.

N/A -Not applicable. Practice was not available or student did not have experience at this site.

As you write this evaluation, please keep in mind that upon the request of the student, this will be made available to Boards of Ordained Ministry and other judicatories. Thus, the more specific information you provide, the better.

Upon completion of the evaluation, please discuss with your student.

After discussing the evaluation with your student, both you and the student will sign on the signature page and turn it in to the Contextual Education Office at Candler School of Theology. Please give a copy of the completed, signed evaluation to your student for their records.

Evaluation Questions

A. Reflective Practices of Leadership

Examples include:

- Reflects theologically on the roles, functions, dimensions, and practices of ministry in communities of faith.
- Demonstrates awareness of their own theological commitments and practices of ministry in relation to others.
- Reflects critically on site work in light of classroom discussion and written assignments, and integrates site work into reflections on assigned reading.
- Draws on theological insights and ideas from other Candler courses to inform theirself-understanding of ministry on-site.
- Welcomes feedback from site supervisor, teaching supervisor, and peers in ways that deepens understanding of their practice of ministry.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

Please share and reflect on a particular event that illustrates your evaluation: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area are that you have witnessed: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have seen: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

B. Vocational Formation and Public Leadership

Examples include:

- Articulates vocational identity and clarity of calling with coherent theology and mature self-awareness.
- Identifies central themes of their own religious heritage.
- Recognizes their gifts/skills/abilities for ministry and leadership, as well as areas of growth.
- Practices spiritual disciplines that enhance discernment and growth.
- Expresses a personal faith and witness to the Gospel.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

What vocational goals or clarity did this student articulate? (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area you have witnessed: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenge you have seen: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

C. Contextual Analysis (Ecclesial/Communal)

Examples include:

- Conducts social analysis of the site and surrounding neighborhood through demographic data, trends, and walk-thru.
- Explores the ecclesial history, images of the church, and the congregation's self-understanding.
- Listens to the stories of people.
- Analyzes communal/social practices and congregational religious practices (including rites, rituals, creeds etc.) for the purposes of ministry.
- Integrates knowledge from analysis of congregational and communal practices into social context for ministry (i.e., economic, political, social, demographic data).

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

Give an example of how the student used congregational analysis to better articulate their understanding and practice of ministry: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area are that you have witnessed: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenge you have seen: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

D. Participation in the Life of the Group

Examples include:

- Has the ability to express their self.
- Comes prepared and is a thoughtful contributor to the weekly Reflection Group.
- Listens to others.
- Engages others in a respectful manner.
- Exhibits group leadership as appropriate.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

Please share and reflect on a particular event that illustrates your evaluation: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area are that you have witnessed: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenge you have seen: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

AREAS OF MINISTRY

1. Leadership and Administration

Examples include:

- Organizes duties well.
- Mediates conflict effectively.
- Understands budget management adequately.
- Delegates ministerial duties as appropriate.
- Works with leadership and laity.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

Give an example of how the student engaged in the administrative process: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area are that you have demonstrated, or experienced growth in: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have experienced, and continue to work on: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

2. Gathering, Proclamation, and Engagement

Examples include:

- Prepares sermons firmly based on biblical text which are expressive of sound theology.
- Structures sermons logically, with movement and effective transitions, which are able to be followed by listeners.
- Preaches relevant sermons which are appropriately illustrated and articulate clear, meaningful messages for the current context.
- Delivers sermons with audibility, proper voicing, eye contact, gestures, and body language.
- Expresses authentic, personal faith and commitment to the gospel in sermons.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

Give an example of how the student grew in their ability as a preacher: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area are that you have witnessed: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have seen: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

3. Pastoral Care and Community Care

Examples include:

- Works with the pastor and congregation to identify spiritual needs.
- Listens attentively to others.
- Offers empathy, care, and respect in pastoral encounters and visitation.
- Utilizes congregational resources and laity to deliver effective care, based on a pastoral assessment and an appropriate plan of care.
- Respects personal and professional boundaries, and has begun to develop patterns of self-care.

Rank (1 – 5) performance and growth in this area: (Check one)

Give an example of how the student offered pastoral care: (150 word limit)

List specific gifts/skills/abilities in this area are that you have witnessed: (50 word limit)

List points of struggle/challenges you have seen: (50 word limit)

Appendix O, continued

E. Professional Behavior

Does this student meet the following expectations for professional behavior?

- Conveys an engaged and constructive attitude.
- Demonstrates punctuality, and uses work hours and site resources efficiently.
- Dresses appropriately.
- Communicates well.
- Complies with professional code of ethics.

Please check one:

- Professional behavior was acceptable.
- Professional behavior was not acceptable or raised serious concerns. If so, elaborate on how the student failed to act in a professional manner:

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Appendix P

Teaching Parish Course Evaluation by Student

Student:

Student Email:

Church:

Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor:

Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor Email:

This required Con Ed II course evaluation must be completed by the last day of classes. Students cannot pass Teaching Parish without completing this form. Once grades are posted, the Teaching Supervisor will receive a composite report of the evaluations. Evaluations will remain **anonymous**.

Instructions

The course evaluation focuses on the Teaching Parish program. Your responses are instrumental in evaluating our overall Teaching Parish program. Considering your *site work, teaching supervisor, reflection group, and assignments*, use the below scale to rank this program as a place to learn and train in ministry. Please be candid and specific.

Ranking scale: 1 – Poor; 2 – Fair; 3 – Average; 4 – Good; 5 – Excellent N/A-not applicable

Evaluation

Teaching Parish Supervising Pastor

1. Helped create an environment of mutual respect

Rank (1 – 5) *Check a box*

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

2. Was prepared to discuss assignments

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

3. Expressed insights into practices in light of readings

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

4. Nurtured a creative, lively class dynamic

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Appendix P, continued

5. Handled confrontation constructively

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

6. Modeled small group leadership well

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

7. Integrated personal theology and faith into class

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

8. Responded to written assignments promptly and constructively

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

9. Helped me to better articulate theological insights

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

10. Helped me to recognize my gifts and capacities for ministry

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

11. Helped me to develop leadership skills

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

12. Helped me to identify areas for professional growth

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

13. Helped me to clarify my vocational calling and direction

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

14. The Teaching Supervisor had a good understanding and appreciation of my ecclesial setting (Yes/No Comments)

15. What would you identify as particular strengths and gifts of your teaching supervisor?

16. Other comments or concerns about your teaching supervisor's work with you.

Appendix P, continued

REFECTION GROUP

My reflection group helped me in the following areas:

17. Administration

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

18. Preaching

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

19. Pastoral Care (Visitation and Congregational Ministry)

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

My Reflection Group:

20. Encouraged accountability to process (including attendance, assignments, discussion, group time, etc.)

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

21. Helped to facilitate growth in theological reflection

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

22. Promoted collegiality and support

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

23. Addressed the content of books and readings

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

24. Allowed for discussion of site work and issues

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

25. Did your Teaching Parish experience meet or exceed your expectations? How?

26. How can Teaching Parish be improved as a program for ministry training and growth?

Appendix P, continued

27. Additional comments:

ASSIGNMENTS (Rank according to your Contextual Education year)

First Year Teaching Parish

Work in Social Setting for two hours a week per semester

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Present Case Study each semester

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Write and preach one sermon per semester

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Second Year Teaching Parish

Present Secular Systems and Congregational Analysis

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Write a Consolidating Report

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Write and preach one sermon

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Third Year Teaching Parish

Present part one of an Act of Ministry Report

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Present a teaching lesson

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Present part two of an Act of Ministry Report

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

Present "Farewell to Congregation" sermon

N/A	1-Lowest	2	3	4	5-Highest

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