ET500 MINISTERIAL SEXUAL ETHICS
UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Spring, 2015
Friday, February 9, 8:00 – 4:00
Saturday February 10, 8:00 – 4:00

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will provide clarity about appropriate roles and boundaries by
exploring a variety of situations and challenging the student to consider
appropriate behavior. Denominational policies will be explored. Resources for
clergy and laity will be provided.

II. TEXTBOOKS
Required Reading:
Poling, Nancy Werking, ed. Victim to Survivor: Women Recovering
Fortune, Marie M. Love Does No Harm: Sexual Ethics for the Rest

Recommended: (none required reading-all good resources)
Benyei, Candace R. Understanding Clergy Misconduct in Religious
ISBN 9 780789 004512.
Flynn, Kathryn A. The Sexual Abuse of Women by the Clergy.
Fortune, Marie M. Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Invades the
Pastoral Relationship. ISBN 9 780060 626839.
Gaede, Beth Ann. When a Congregation Is Betrayed: Responding
to Clergy Misconduct.
Grentz, Stanley J. and Roy D. Bell. Betrayal of Trust: Sexual
Misconduct in the Pastorate. ISBN 9 780830 818570.
Justes, Emma J. Please Don’t Tell: What to Do with the Secrets People
Lebacqz, Karen and Ronald G. Barton. Sex in the Parish.
ISBN 9780664250874.
Rutter, Peter. Sex in the Forbidden Zone: When Men in Power—
Therapists, Doctors, Clergy, Teachers, and Others—Betray
Women’s Trust. ISBN 9 780874 774863.
Rutter, Peter. Sex, Power and Boundaries: Understanding and
Preventing Sexual Harassment. ISBN 9780553099546.
Stroup, Herbert W. Jr. and Norma Schweitzer Wood. Sexuality and
the Counseling Pastor.ISBN 0 8006 0264 1.
III. GOALS:
1. This course is required for those doing a concentration in care giving.
2. Student shows an awareness of their own spiritual development characterized by mature self-acceptance and self-direction.
3. Student demonstrates competence in the skills and perspectives necessary for leadership in the formation of disciples.

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
- The students will be familiar with their denominational/congregational ethical statements through research and written responses.
- The students will be able to identify appropriate boundaries of intimacy in working with parishioners/counselees through class discussions and written assignments.

V. TEACHING STRATEGIES
The design of this course is based on the conviction that class members learn from their experiences and from one another and not only from the instructor and the assignments given. The instructor believes that she also will be learning in the process of this course. The course will make use of lectures, discussions, case studies and roleplaying as parts of the learning process.

VI. CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND READINGS

February 9  Introductions to the Course and Participants
Establishing Our Covenant
Understanding Intimacy in Ministry
Human Sexuality and Ministry: Yours and Theirs
The Role of Self-Defense in Ministry (WWJD)

February 10  Boundaries in Ministry
Commitments and Betrayals
Power Functioning in Ministerial Behavior and Ethics
Pastoral Authority: Through their Eyes or Ours?
Conclusions and Evaluations

VII. SEMINARY STANDARDS

A. Inclusive Language
United Theological Seminary has an official policy regarding the use of Inclusive Language. The policy can be found in the Seminary Catalog and further explained in the Student Handbook. If you have specific questions, please see the instructor.
B. Academic Integrity
Student integrity regarding all work assigned in this class is a basic expectation of the Seminary community. A detailed policy regarding what constitutes a violation of academic integrity can be found in the Student Handbook.

VIII. USING ONLINE RESOURCES:
Information about how to access United Online and where to find help if you need it may be found on the seminary website at http://www.online.united.edu. Help guides are also in the student computer lab and in the Student Handbook. For online help, please email onlinehelp@united.edu.

IX. EVALUATION
A. Assignments
1. Required Reading: Completed Prior to Class Meetings
2. Self-Evaluation and Feedback
During the last five minutes of every class session each participant will write a paragraph evaluating their own participation in that day's class session and saying whatever else they want to say to the instructor at that time. These papers will be handed in at the end of the class session and returned at the next class with comments from the instructor. You are encouraged to leave some margins on the paper for the instructor's responses.
3. Participation
Class members are expected to be on time and active participants in the course. Participation in class will be evaluated in terms of quality and not quantity. Adherence to the agreed upon course covenant will be part of this evaluation.
4. Pre-Course Assignment:
Denominational Statements of Ministerial Sexual Ethics
Class Members will locate and thoroughly acquaint themselves with their denomination’s ethical statements (in whatever form they are found. Note: not every denomination has a Book of Discipline). Non-denominational class members are not off the hook. Your local church should have such a statement of its own, so you will need to research that. Following your familiarizing yourself with the statement(s), you will write a 3-5 page paper evaluating the statement—highlighting what you think is good about it and making specific suggestions that would make it stronger or more user friendly. Should you be unable to find such an ethical statement for your church, or you are told there is none, you then will need to write one yourself of such quality that you could take it to the pastor or appropriate board and suggest the church adopt it. This final possibility is most likely applicable only to class members who are related to
independent congregations. **It is not meant for denominationally related settings where you may find it difficult to find the information.**

**Purpose for this Assignment:** To be certain each student knows their denominational positions and expectations and is able to read them with a critical eye.  
**Due:** First day of Class at the opening of class.

5. **Pastoral Situation Involving Ministerial Sexual Ethics**  
The final paper for the course will involve grappling with an issue of ministerial sexual ethics. You will need 1) to **describe the situation** with care, 2) **establish a theological foundation** in relation to the situation or issue, and then 3) discuss your response to the situation. You are expected to make use of resources appropriate to the issue you address. **Do some additional study in relation to the issue** and demonstrate what you have found. **Make use of, but do not limit yourself to the required readings for the course.**  
**Purpose for this Assignment:** To give each student the opportunity to grapple in a safe place with a serious issue related to Ministerial Sexual Ethics.  
**Due:** Last day of Class (Or negotiable—trying to help you get finished before other classes take over)

6. **Method of Determining Grade**  
Class Participation 20%  
Denominational Ethics Paper 30%  
Pastoral Situation Paper 50%

**X. STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS**

It is very important that students submit a course evaluation toward the end of the semester. Instructors do not see the student evaluations at all until after the instructors have submitted the students’ final official grades. Students should feel free to evaluate the course without fearing any negative ramifications.