Formation 2a  
PT511a DA-h-D  
UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Fall, 2015-2016  

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
This course will continue the covenantal group learning by offering a ministry reflection tool and a  
theological grounding for ministry. Ministry Reflection Reports will be taught and practiced during the  
course as a means by which students can learn to determine appropriate responses to critical issues  
in ministry contexts. Students will also develop a biblical, theological understanding of grace with  
careful attention to how grace is practiced in community and ministry.  

Meeting Times:  
Face-to-Face: Formation Retreat,  
Monday, Sept. 14-Thursday, Sept. 17, 8:30-5:30  
Online: 9 Weeks:  
September 20 – November 21  

II. TEXTBOOKS:  
Required Reading:  
Augsburger, David. Caring Enough to Confront: How to Understand and Express Your Deepest  
Feelings Toward Others. ISBN: 978-0800724603  

Suggested Reading:  
Floding, Matthew, ed. Welcome to Theological Field Education. ISBN: 978-1566994071  
Kincaid, William B. Finding Voice: How Theological Field Education Shapes Pastoral Identity. ISBN: 978- 
1610976947  
Kondrath, William M. God’s Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences. ISBN: 978- 
1566993630  
Kula, Irwin, with Linda Loewenthal. Yearnings: Embracing the Sacred Messiness of Life. ISBN: 978- 
1401309138  
1892005038  

III. GOALS:  
This is a core course that provides content and culture to continue shaping one’s pastoral identity. It  
is designed to root students in deep spiritual formation, covenantal community, skill training and  
thological discernment so that a student would show an awareness of their own spiritual  
development characterized by mature self-acceptance and self-direction as well as demonstrate  
competence in the skills and perspectives necessary for leadership in the formation of disciples. We  
will study conflict resolution strategies through the theological lens of grace. We will also practice a  
supervisory conversation and a “theological case study” as a skill for both personal discernment and  
a tool in the supervision of others.  

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:  
Upon completion of the course, a student will be able to:
1. Apply a model of ministry reflection and conversation to determine a response to a critical issue in one’s ministry context.
2. Describe how one’s theology of grace impacts one’s treatment of others and practice of ministry.
3. Identify how one’s spiritual journey and sense of call have been impacted during one’s time in Formation.
4. Analyze what it means to live in covenantal community in the context of one’s ministry placement.

V. LEARNING/TEACHING STRATEGIES:
This semester of ministry formation integrates a variety of teaching/learning strategies:

1. Attendance/participation at a Formation Retreat and online group sessions
2. Establishment of a ministry group covenant
3. Submission of written assignments
4. Leading and participating in worship (online)
5. Readings with corresponding papers and/or group presentations
6. Participation with members of the MIngroup in a mid-year evaluation

Field Education:
7. Creation of a Site Covenant with United, mentor and site placement
8. Service in an approved contextual ministry site during the school year for 10-14 hrs/week for 30 weeks (See the Field Education Overview document for detailed information).
9. Meeting with Site Mentor at least 4 hrs/month to reflect on ministry and learning
10. Meeting with facilitator and mentor near the end of the fall semester to review the student’s ministry experience and learning and to revise/update the student’s goals

VI. CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND READINGS:
(all times EST)

Pre-Work
Each student is expected to complete all of the following reading and written assignments prior to the Formation Retreat.

Reading:
Read Transforming the Rough Places, Introduction, Chapters 1, 4-6 (pgs. 1-22, 107-175)
Read Meditations of the Heart, pgs. 17-39

Written Work:
1. Theological Statement on Grace – You will choose a text online after August 17. Complete this 4-5 page paper prior to the Formation Retreat. You will share with the MIngroup at the Retreat.
2. Ministry Reflection Report - Each student must write one Ministry Reflection Report (this is NOT the same as a Weekly Report). You will share this with your MIngroup at the Retreat.

Bring enough copies of both written assignments for each group member and leader.

Formation Retreat (Sept 14-17)
All students must attend all of the Formation Retreat on September 14-17 (8:30 am-5:30 pm) at Christ UMC in Kettering Ohio. Arriving late or leaving early warrants failure of the course.

Week One (Sept 20-26)
Tasks:
1. Visit your Rule of Life from Formation 1. Edit it for this season of life and post it in the Rule of Life forum by Thursday, 11:59 pm. Comment on 2 others by Saturday, 5 pm.
2. Submit your Statement on Grace by Monday, 11:59 pm.
4. Read and engage with Meditations of the Heart as per the group covenant.
5. Read Caring Enough to Confront, Chapters 1-3

Week Two (Sept 27-Oct 3)
Tasks:
1. Watch the video on The Church and Confrontation. Post as the video directs in Church Confrontation by Thursday at 11:59 pm. Respond to two others by Saturday 5 pm.
2. Read Caring Enough to Confront, Chapters 4-6.
3. Read and engage with Meditations of the Heart as per the group covenant.
4. 2-3 page Weekly Reflection Report (WRR)1 Due. Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.

Week Three (Oct 4-10)
Tasks:
1. Read Caring Enough to Confront, Chapters 7-10.
2. Read and engage with Meditations of the Heart as per the group covenant.
3. Post in the Public Confrontation forum either a description of or a link to a public confrontation. Exegete the confrontation in light of your reading. What issues do you think are behind the confrontation? What allowed the persons to effectively or ineffectively work through it? Offer a scripture or Biblical story that illumines the problem or would be effective advice for the conflicting parties. Post by Thursday at 11:59 and respond to 2 others by Saturday at 5 pm.
4. 2-3 page WRR 2 Due. Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.
5. Site Covenant is due Saturday, October 10, 5 pm if doing Field Education this fall.

Week Four (Oct 11-17)
Tasks:
1. Share a Google Hangout together in order to:
   a. Touch base on the semester’s progress, field education, life and whatever is needed.
   b. Offer reflection on Thurman’s book.
   c. Share a recent conflict story and relate it back to your statement on grace.
2. 2-3 page WRR 3 Due. Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.
3. Read and engage with Meditations of the Heart as per the group covenant.
4. SMART Goals Due. Submit to drop-box by Saturday, 5 pm.

Week Five (Oct 18-24)
Tasks:
1. The next 3 weeks, you will begin creating a Conflict Manifesto of sorts that summarizes how you want to handle conflict throughout your ministry based on Scripture, the Augsburger readings and the group discussions. This week’s focus is on what happens when you, the Pastor, have been wronged by another. Read the Case Study and post in the I’m Hurting forum your response. Post by Thursday at 11:59 pm and respond to 2 others by Saturday 5 pm.
2. Read and engage with Meditations of the Heart as per the group covenant.
3. 2-3 page WRR 4 Due. Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.

Week Six (Oct 25-31)
Tasks:
1. This week’s contribution toward your Conflict Manifesto is when the leader or pastor has wronged another (knowingly or not). Read through the case study and post in the Confront Me forum your response as guided by the case study. Post by Thursday at 11:59 pm and respond to 2 others by Saturday 5 pm.
2. **Read** and engage with *Meditations of the Heart* as per the group covenant.
3. 2-3 page **WRR 5 Due.** Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.

**Week Seven (Nov 1-7)**

**Tasks:**
1. This week’s contribution toward your Conflict Manifesto is when you need to confront a person in your church – not because you’ve been hurt – but because something needs to come into the light. How will you handle these opportunities? Does it differ based on the person’s ‘status’ in the church (leader, member, youth, etc.)? Post in the *Church Health* forum at least 7 bullet points of what you will do or principles you’ll embody whenever situations like this arise. Post by Thursday at 11:59 pm and respond to 2 others by Saturday 5 pm.
2. **Read** and engage with *Meditations of the Heart* as per the group covenant.
3. 2-3 page **WRR 6 Due.** Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.

**Week Eight (Nov 8-14)**

**Tasks:**
1. Post by Thursday 11:59 pm in the *Confrontation Manifesto* forum answers to the following. Respond to two others by Saturday, 5 pm:
   a. A 100-word statement on the role of conflict and grace in the church, specific to your call. What does God invite you (in your role) to model as it relates to conflict resolution?
   b. A summary, bullet-point list of effective, Godly conflict resolution in each area described in the last few week’s forums. This will be your cheat sheet for ministry.
2. 2-3 page **WRR 7 Due.** Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.

**Week Nine (Nov 15-21)**

**Tasks:**
1. Share a Google Hangout together in order to:
   a. Share how Thurman’s work both impacted you and offers a voice to the group.
   b. Offer reflection on each one’s contribution to the group and covenant.
   c. Prepare for next semester’s work.
2. 2-3 page **WRR 8 Due.** Submit to drop-box by Friday 11:59 pm.
3. **Site Covenant is due if you begin a new Field Education placement in January or February.**

**VII: SEMINARY STANDARDS:**

**A. Inclusive Language:** United Theological Seminary has an official policy regarding the use of Inclusive Language. The policy may 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.

**C. Online Confidentiality:** One of the highlights of the online classroom is that students can draw from the experiences shared during class discussions and in written work. However, it is imperative that students do not share information that is confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature. In addition, students are expected to honor the privacy and confidentiality of their classmates by not disclosing online conversations with those outside of the classroom.

**D. Statement on Disability:** Any student who may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Registrar’s office.
VIII: USING ONLINE RESOURCES:
For information about how to access Online United and where to find help if you need it may be found on the seminary website at http://online.united.edu. Live support and help guides are available once you have logged into the United Online site in the upper right corner.

To get online help with the Student Portal, United mail, or any other system on campus, email: onlinehelp@united.edu.

IX. EVALUATION

A. Assignments

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT EXPECTATIONS:

All papers will be written by the following guidelines: Double spaced, 12 pt. font, 1” margins, Times New Roman font. Grading Rubrics are provided for each written assignment.

1. Weekly Reflection Reports

Description: Each student will submit a weekly reflection report to the group facilitator. The report will comprise a reflection on their personal, professional and spiritual journey for the week as per the document, Weekly Reflection Report Guide. Each report must be 2-3 pages. The student may also share these reflections with the site mentor if desired.

Due Date(s): Reports are due each Friday at 11:59 pm starting with week two. There will be eight reports submitted.

2. SMART Goals

Description: All students are asked to set goals for learning and serving in their contextual ministry placements for the 2015-2016 academic year. The creation of SMART goals begins with the setting of goals for personal, spiritual and professional growth. Students will be given examples of these goals and a form within the first two weeks of the course. These goals will be talked about in your MINgroup but must be shared with your Site Mentor and Facilitator and reviewed during a site visit this fall (arranged by your facilitator).

Due Date(s): October 17, 5 pm.

3. Theological Statement on Grace

Description: Each student will submit a 4-5 page paper that covers the following:

- Each MINgroup will be given a list of Scripture passages August 17. Select a scripture passage from the list of assigned texts that speak to issues arising within communities of faith (No more than one student selects any one text).
- Referencing no fewer than two scholarly commentaries write at least one page (double-spaced) on what the text says.
- Based on your conclusions about the message of the text write a one-page theological statement on grace (Limit your statement on grace to what is found in the text).
- Describe in a half to full page a practical theological statement on how your statement on grace could guide you in your response to some issue you face in your place of ministry.
- Describe in a half to full page the behavior and practice of your Integration group when it embodies your theological statement on grace. Describe specifically the behavior and practice
of a group engaged in theological conversation, particularly when members of the group have strong differences of belief they cannot or will not deny, dilute or compromise.

• As you reflect on how you want your ministry group to embody in practice your theological statement on grace, state what you want to include in your MiNGroup covenant.
• As you meditate on what you have written thus far write the prayer you will pray with your MiNGroup on the day of your presentation.
• Present your paper to your MiNGroup and invite feedback and discussion.
• Invite your group to consider and act upon your proposed amendment to the group covenant.
• Conclude the presentation and discussion with the prayer you have written.

Due Date(s): The day you present to the group. Bring with you enough copies for each group member to the Formation Retreat. After reading it together, you will be given back the copies. A final copy must be submitted by Monday, September 21.

4. Ministry Reflection Report

Description: Each student must write and share one Ministry Reflection Report based on Dr. Pohly’s book, pages 116-117, with the MiNGroup at the Formation Retreat.

Preparation
1. Choosing the event or situation
   a. Think about the many events and situations which have had a significant impact on your ministry.
   b. From the many, select one that has current concern for you and in which you have a strong investment of emotional, mental, and/or spiritual energy.
   c. Both positive and negative experiences in ministry make appropriate cases.
2. Preparing to write
   a. Recall as much as you can of the details involved in the event or situation; “feel” your way into it as fully as possible.
   b. Make some notes or write a reasonably full account of the event or situation, which you can later reduce to a brief narrative, in order to make sure you have it accurately in mind.
   c. Analyze the event or situation, utilizing the outline for writing; make some notes for the five categories.

Writing the Report
1. Information.
Describe the event or situation in a way that a reader can get a mental picture of it. What happened? Who was involved? What was your role? How did you and others respond? What was the result?

2. Evaluation.
Relate the effects of the event or situation on you and other persons involved. What emotions did you experience? How did the other people react? How has it affected you personally? How has it affected you professionally? What are the key issues for you?

3. Analysis.
Sketch your interpretation of the event or situation as an occasion for ministry. What made it “ministry”? What made it positive or negative? What factor or forces were at work to influence it? What personal knowledge or experience does it challenge? What options are possible as a continuing ministering response?
4. Theological Reflection.
State the theological meaning found in the event or situation and in your response to it. What personal beliefs and/or convictions are evidenced in or challenged by it? How did or could your religious experience shape your ministering response? What biblical, historical/or cultural insights relate to it? What “truth” informs you? What ultimate concerns do you have concerning it?

5. Commitment.
Set forth the implications growing out of the event or situation for your future ministry. How is this like what you might experience in the future? What have you learned from it? How can its benefits be continued or its hazards be avoided? What ministering response do you intend to make?

**Due Date[s]: The day you present to the group.** Bring with you enough copies for each group member to the Formation Retreat. After reading it together, you will be given back the copies. **A final copy must be submitted by Monday, September 21.**

**OTHER EXPECTATIONS**

**Online Participation:** Each student will be assigned a grade based on his or her participation. Each student must participate in the weekly common meal, chapel and group time. Students who are absent for more than 1/6 of the course may be unable to complete the course with a passing grade. Requests for exceptions must be made directly to the facilitator prior to absences. Since PT511a and PT511b together total 3 credits, **a student may not miss more than 3 academic hours (1 week online) each semester.** Online participation is measured by participating in the group discussions, whether that requires posting in the forums as directed each week or being fully present in a Google Hangout. Only submitting written work for grading does not constitute weekly, online participation.

**B. Method of Assigning Grades:**

**PT511a (Formation 2a) and PT511b (Formation 2b) are together a 3-credit hour course.** Therefore, each student will be assigned one of the following grades for this semester, with a final grade awarded at the conclusion of PT511b:

- IC – Incomplete Continuing – This grade will be awarded for students who earn a C or better
- F – The student did not earn a passing grade

In addition, each student will be given his/her estimated letter grade within 2 weeks of the course completion.

Grades will be assigned by the MiNgroup facilitator in consultation with the contextual ministries directors in accord with the standardized evaluation sheet. The various assignments will be weighted in terms of their value in relation to the whole of the work assigned.

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X. **COURSE EVALUATIONS:**
It is very important for students to submit course evaluations toward the end of the semester. Instructors do not see the student evaluations until they have submitted the students' final, official grades. Students should feel free to evaluate the course without any negative ramifications.