Prospectus for the Course

MS 630 / ME 760

EVANGELISM IN THE SMALL CHURCH

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An intensive examination of the historical, theological, sociological and pragmatic dynamics of smaller congregations with attention to the special challenges and opportunities for evangelism effectiveness in such settings.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Smaller congregations and the pastors who serve them frequently find it difficult to function effectively in evangelism using models and strategies most commonly publicized. An abundance of recent research and literature brings encouragement and new challenges. It will be the purpose of this course to acquaint the student both with the heart of this literature and with a field experience in order that a confident, new perspective and commitment might be achieved for evangelistic ministry in the context of smaller congregations.

III. PROCEDURE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course consists of thirteen class sessions meeting Tuesdays from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Instruction will include lectures, guest pastors, videos, discussion, field work, reading and analytical reflection. The required texts (450 pages) and 750 additional pages are considered part of the curriculum and a reading report must be turned in at the end of the semester. The reading, a course project, and a notebook will constitute the grade for the course.

A. READING REQUIREMENTS (25%)

A total of 1200 pages is required and constitutes 25% of the course grade. Failure to complete the reading assigned will affect the final grade.

Required texts:
2. Steve Bierly, How to Thrive as a Small Church Pastor (1998)

Students who have read # 1 above for ME501 must substitute a text from those listed below.

Additional texts recommended include: (newer and basic texts in bold)


7. Steve Bierly, *Help for the Small Church Pastor*.


9. Rick Chromey, *Youth Ministry in Small Churches*

10. Cosgrove and Hatfield, *Church Conflict: The Hidden Systems Behind the Fights*.


13. **Carl Dudley**, *Making the Small Church Effective*.


15. Dudley and Walwrath, *Developing Your Small Church's Potential*.


17. Nancy Foltz, *Caring for the Small Church: Insights from Women in Ministry*.

18. Donald Griggs, *Christian Education in the Small Church*.


22. Doran McCarty, *Leading the Small Church*.

23. Wayne Oats, *The Care of Troublesome People*.


25. Lyle Schaller, *The Small Church Is Different*.

26. Lyle Schaller, *The Middle Sized Church*.


30. Laurence Wagley, *Preaching With the Small Congregation*.


32. Will Willimon & Robert Wilson, *Preaching and Worship in the Small Church*.


34. David Young, *A New Heart and a New Spirit*.

35. Wayne Zunkel, *Growing The Small Church*.

**B. CLASS PROJECT (50%)**

Each student will participate in a class project constituting 50% of the final grade: 35% from the group report and 15% from a personal reflection paper.

1. Participate as part of a team (3-5 persons) interviewing a minimum of 8 members (4 long-term, 4 new) and the pastor of a smaller congregation in the area. The preference is for a church showing greater than 10% growth (or decline) in the last 3 years. Using an interview guide provided (adjustments welcome), consolidate your information, observations, insights and recommendations into a "Report" (35% of grade) to be sent to the pastor (copied to the instructor) with an appropriate cover letter. In addition each student will separately submit to the professor a 5 page personal reflection paper (15% of grade) of additional observations, lessons, difficulties and values of the team-interview.
experience. Students may work alone on this project only if geographical isolation prohibits cooperation.

2. Under very special circumstances alternative projects may be approved.

C. MS630--MA and M.Div STUDENTS: NOTEBOOK (25%)
Each student will be required to keep a notebook including class notes, reading notes (following the outline of a form included) on all texts and articles read, articles copied, additional research or correspondence, and an annotated bibliography (1-3 sentences describing the contribution of the book, article, report, etc.) on the Small Church of at least 30 entries beyond the required texts.

D. ME760--TH.M., D.MISS, or Ph.D. STUDENTS: ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENTS (25%)
Advanced degree students will not be required to prepare the notebook. Instead, 25% of the final grade will be based on: an annotated bibliography of at least 40 entries (10%), a critical book review of 750 words following a guide provided (10%), and 15-20 minutes of class leadership examining some critical issue raised by the text reviewed (5%). Schedule this with the instructor.

IV. PROPOSED TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Although we may vary slightly from the plan below, our intended course outline is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biblical and Theological Issues</td>
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<td>Smaller Churches Through History</td>
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<td>The Sociology of Smaller Churches</td>
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<td>Pastors and Small Church Revitalization</td>
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<td>Rekindling the Spirit</td>
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<td>Overcoming Obstacles</td>
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<td>Mission and Evangelism</td>
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<td>Developing Leaders and Disciples</td>
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<td>Churches in Changing Communities</td>
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<td>Guest speakers as they are available and group reports near the end of the semester will round out our schedule.</td>
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V. DUE DATES

The Group Projects and Personal Reflection Papers are due in class **WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2002**.
All other requirements are due by **4:00 p.m. WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2002**.