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## IR 700 Senior Reflection Seminar

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## **IR700XL SYLLABUS**

### **SENIOR REFLECTION SEMINAR**

Spring Semester – 2004

Seminar Leader: Fred Van Tatenhove, Ph.D.

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After March 31 (859) 885-7659

Office Hours: TBA

### **WELCOME!**

Welcome to your Senior Reflection Seminar. I am looking forward to participating with you this semester. I assume that most of you have become skilled with the Exl format. I must confess, though this will be my fourth Exl course, I really miss being with each of you in a face-to-face setting. One of the blessings I have received over the years at ATS from this seminar is the sharing of our personal stories and vision for ministry.

Since all of you will be asked to share some personal history, let me begin with a few bits of information about myself. I came to Asbury in 1975 and taught in the Department of Pastoral Ministry for 25 years. Prior to my faculty position I served as a mental health Chaplain and a pastor for 10 years. While at ATS I also developed the MA program in counseling, directed the counseling service, and chaired the Area of Counseling and Pastoral Ministry. Since 2000 I have been leading only SM seminars. In the fall, 2002 I was the Acting Director of Supervised Ministry. The SM seminars have always been some of my favorite assignments.

My spiritual journey was rooted in my parent's faith and prayers for me through a life threatening accident at the age of three. My commitment to Christ and call to the ministry came in my eighteenth year. As you too can testify, I could have never guessed what God was going to do with my life. As we say on campus, "God is Good! All the Time!"

My years at Asbury were a time of learning about and experiencing God's wonderful grace. That continues today! I believe this seminar will provide you that experience as well.

### **A PERSONAL REQUEST**

Since all of you in this seminar are close to graduation, I want us to covet to prayer "one for another." You will receive a roster of members who are in the seminar and their emails. In addition, you will be provided a list of your sub-group. These sub-groups are set up to function like collegial sharing and consulting group. Later in this syllabus you will learn more about the use of these sub-groups. Though we may not be able to see

each other, that doesn't mean we can't be supportive for each other. So learn with me how across the electronic channels of our life we can share with each other the grace and love of God that abounds in our lives. Let's share our celebrations and concerns.

## **SEMINAR DESCRIPTION**

This seminar is designated to be taken your final semester at Asbury Theological Seminary. It seeks to integrate your seminary experiences of spiritual, intellectual and vocational formation with your personal views of ministry and your life experiences. This integration will be done through a series of discussion papers on assigned topics. This seminar is also designed to share your spiritual journey and to celebrate with your colleagues their journey. One goal of this seminar is to help bring closure to your academic development and personal experiences while at seminary.

## **SEMINAR EVALUATION:**

This two-hour credit only seminar is part of the Supervised Ministry grading policy. There are two possible final grades – Credit (CR) or Credit/No Credit (CR/NC). A CR/NC would only be given when a student has not completed the assignments. For those graduating in May 2004, a CR/NC could mean a delay in their graduation. I do not expect any member of this seminar to be given a CR/NC grade. However, unexpected circumstances do arise. A CR/NC results in a growth plan to fulfill the incomplete aspects or other concerns. A growth plan is to be developed two weeks after the semester and completed before the fall semester begins. If you find that happening, please contact me immediately and I will work with you to help you meet the requirements of this seminar. Completion of the requirements on time, as describe later, fulfills the assigned two-hour credit.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Two personal reflection papers will be prepared and shared with members in this seminar. These papers will be reflections of your spiritual journey and other related personal experiences. One will be prepared at the beginning and the other near the close of this seminar.

**The FIRST one is due February 13** and is to cover your spiritual journey before enrolling at Asbury. It is to be a two -page (maximum) summary, single-spaced with double space between paragraphs. Prepare it in a first person conversational style of writing. You will then send it to other members in your sharing group (group to be assigned the first week) for their reading and response. Since I have access to all of the sub-groups you need not send a separate copy to me.

The following is provided to help you prepare this reflection paper:

*REFLECTIONS ON MY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY*  
*A Witness to God's Grace*

*Before Asbury*

*Often persons come to seminary and leave with few opportunities to share their spiritual journey with others or to hear others share theirs. Sharing our spiritual story is one way we honor God for His love and to give witness to His grace and forgiveness. Using the following suggestions prepare a two-page summary of your faith journey before arriving at Asbury.*

- note significant events, persons and experiences*
- reflect upon important scriptures, worship experiences, preaching, witnesses of other persons, etc.*
- revisit any struggles that were significant turning points in your life of faith*
- identify when, where and/or what ways you have experienced God's grace*

Send your reflections to your group members by **February 13**. Read those you receive and respond with your thoughts and observations to each other. These responses need not be more than a ½ page long. Respond by **February 20**.

**The SECOND reflection paper** is due at the close of this seminar – **April 23**. This is to be a two page reflection on your time at Asbury. Review your experiences while studying at seminary and write about those important experiences. Follow the style of the first reflection paper. Here are some suggestions:

*REFLECTIONS ON MY SEMINARY EXPERIENCE*  
*A Witness to God's Preparation and Leading*

*During Asbury*

*Seminary preparation is a significant part of your faith journey and preparation for future ministry. As you think about your years at Asbury identify some of the important experiences, insights, etc. that you take with you.*

- may want to describe a chapel or an incident that you will often remember*
- may be there was something you learned or an insight that you gained*
- perhaps some skill was developed*
- some important change or growth that you experienced*

Send your reflections to your group members by **April 23**. Read those you receive and respond with your thoughts and observations to each other. These responses need not be more than a ½ page long. Respond by **April 30**.

## A SERIES OF DISCUSSION PAPERS

1. **A series of discussion papers will be prepared.** Each of these papers will be sent to your group members for their responses. The purpose of these discussion papers is to help you consolidate and integrate your experiences and your seminary learning as related to your present and future ministries.

The schedule provided later will give times for the preparation of these discussion papers and for consulting with one another as a means to enhance your perspectives and integrations. These discussion papers are to represent your theological understanding and personal thinking about ministry. What informs your views of ministry? What are the theological foundations that will shape how you approach ministry? What are the practical applications of your views about ministry? What experiences have you had that will inform and shape your ministry?

To guide you in this application endeavor you are to focus on four dimensions of ministry. Each will be assigned to a different week, an assigned date that each will

be due for discussion with you group. These areas are:

- Socio-political-cultural aspects of ministry
- Pastoral care principles for ministry
- Educational objectives of ministry
- Leadership principles in ministry

2. **Suggested format for each discussion paper.** Since these are not formal papers, but prepared to be read and discussed by others, they can be written in a conversational style. However, it is expected that each will be appropriate in language and style. Footnotes and references are not required, but may be included to support your thinking and to demonstrate the use of your courses and materials you have read. These discussion papers will only be sent to those in your discussion group.

Each person in your discussion group will read and respond to these papers providing feedback to each other. The purpose of this peer consulting is to provide you the opportunity to learn from others, to draw from their thinking, and to gain additional ideas related to ministry and the topics being discussed.

3. **The overall purpose of these discussion papers and this seminar.** It is the intent of this seminar to provide you an opportunity: 1) to reflect upon your past and present experiences related to “ministry”, 2) to review your seminary learning and training, and 3) to articulate your theological and practical understanding about key

areas of ministry. As you prepare your thoughts for each topic, visualize yourself in your present or a future ministry setting. Ask the questions about each topic that fits that ministry setting. For example: In thinking about the leadership aspects of ministry, what are the principles of leadership that you want to bring to that ministry setting? What leadership guidelines do you want to use? Are there certain leadership styles that need to be used for different tasks? How do you describe your leadership style? What are some of your leadership strengths? What leadership areas do you need to develop and how might you do that?

Thus, the intent of this seminar is to encourage you to reflect upon your life experiences and especially your seminary training and to articulate a theological and practical position on key areas of ministry. Again for example: What do you think and believe about leadership? Tell you colleagues what you think are the important principles and aspects that will help you to be an effective leader in your ministry setting. Your thoughts and theirs then becomes the “grist” for the group discussion. This format can help you gain a clearer understanding what you want to apply in these areas of ministry and to objectify what you think and believe about these areas. These discussion papers are not graded. It is not like a final test of your knowledge in these areas. Think of each as an opportunity to meet with a group of your colleagues and friends and say, “Here are some of my opinions and thoughts about these areas of ministry. What are some of yours? Let’s talk about them.”

### **WORKING WITH THE ELECTRONIC PROCESS:**

1. Send messages to my email address: [Fred.Van.Tatenhove@ATS.Wilmore.Ky.US](mailto:Fred.Van.Tatenhove@ATS.Wilmore.Ky.US)  
You can also reach me by phone. From January 1 to March 31 my number is (941) 480-1084. After March 31 my number will be (859) 885-7659. I will always have my computer with me for email messages.
2. You will also use email to communicate with your colleagues. Send your reflection and discussion papers to each other as “attached files.” Your shorter responses to each other’s materials may be included in email messages.
3. My plan is to check my emails on a regular basis, like every other day. I will respond to them in the order they were sent. If you are facing a problem with a deadline let me know immediately. Meeting the due dates is the primary requirement for credit. In addition your material is needed as part of the collegial sharing process of this seminar.

### **EXL SUPPORT TEAM**

The following persons are the ExL experts. When I am in trouble with the mechanics, they are the ones I go to. You will find them to be most helpful.

For **general questions regarding the ExL program**, contact Kevin Osborn at [ExL\\_Director@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Director@asburyseminary.edu) or [Extended\\_Learning@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Extended_Learning@asburyseminary.edu).

For **technical support**, contact Jared Porter at [ExL\\_Support@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Support@asburyseminary.edu).

For **library reference support**, contact Hannah Kirsch at [Hannah\\_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Hannah_Kirsch@asburyseminary.edu).

For **interlibrary loans**, contact Dot James at [Dot\\_James@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Dot_James@asburyseminary.edu).

### **Obtaining Library Materials and Reference Assistance**

**Email:** [Ats\\_Reference@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Ats_Reference@asburyseminary.edu)

**Toll-Free Reference Help Line: 1-866-454-2733**

ExL students are encouraged to make use of local libraries, if possible. However, library services are always available to students through Asbury's B. L. Fisher Library. All requests for books and journal articles should be e-mailed to the Reference Desk ([ATS\\_Reference@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ATS_Reference@asburyseminary.edu)). The Reference workers (Hannah, Robbie, and Nina) will also assist ExL students with reference requests, using various online databases, or doing research on a specific topic.

To request material from the B.L. Fisher Library, begin by searching the library catalog (for books available in the library) or one of the restricted journal databases available on the library's website ([www.asburyseminary.edu/library](http://www.asburyseminary.edu/library) - choose "library catalog" or "restricted databases"). Then send an email to the reference desk citing the sources that you would like to request. If you need help searching the databases, do not hesitate to call (1-866-454-2733) or email the reference desk. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Wilmore campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

Please allow 5-10 business days for all requests to be filled. ExL students are billed for the cost of photocopies (5 cents per page); however, shipping via media rate is free. (Media rate normally takes 5 business days for shipping, but it can take two weeks to addresses in the West). Express mail services (prices vary according to weight) and scanning (10 cents per page in pdf format) are also available. Requests generally require 1-2 business days to be processed. Plan ahead and make your requests early enough to allow for shipping and processing!

### **SEMESTER SCHEDULE AND MODULE OUTLINES:**

The following modules are to be completed as indicated. Details related to each assignment in the modules can be found in previous sections. If you have any questions, email me or call if needed.

**Module 1**

Review the syllabus and submit any questions to me.

Prepare your notes on “Reflections on my Spiritual Journey.”(See syllabus) Send them to members in your group for response.

**Due February 13. Respond to others by February 20.**

**Module 2**

Prepare your notes on your theological/theoretical beliefs about Socio-Political-Culture aspects of ministry. Address issues about the role of the church in culture, family, the marginal in society, and ethnic concerns.

Send your notes to members in your group for their review and response.

**Due February 27. Respond to others by March 5.**

**Module 3**

Prepare your notes on your theological/theoretical beliefs about

Pastoral Care aspects of ministry. Address mission of care giving, role of lay care giving, and other aspects like the meaning of incarnation in care giving.

Send your notes to members in your group for their review and response.

**Due March 12. Respond to others by March 19.**

**Module 4**

Prepare your notes on your theological/theoretical beliefs about

Educational aspects of ministry. Address issues related to the over all role of the church’s responsibility to education. Send your notes to members in your group for their review and response.

**Due March 26. Respond to others by April 2**

**Module 5**

Prepare your notes on your theological/theoretical beliefs about

Leadership aspects of ministry. Address the role of leadership from the pastoral and laity perspective. How is administration part of the mission?

Send your notes to members in your group for their review and response.

**Due April 9. Respond to others by April 16.**

**Module 6**

Prepare your notes on “Reflection on my Seminary Experience.”(See syllabus)

Send your notes to members in your group for their response.

**Due April 23. Respond to others by April 30.**

**Congratulations! You have finished all your requirements for credit. For some of you, graduation is next.**