

Whole and Holy: The Person of the Minister
Doctor of Ministry Course (SP810)
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Bethel Seminary, St. Paul

Steven J. Sandage, Ph.D.
(651) 638-6170
s-sandage@bethel.edu

SYLLABUS

Course Description

The ability of a person to minister to others in a way that encourages them to realize their capacity in Jesus Christ is strongly related to that minister's own personal, spiritual, emotional, and relational well-being and maturity. This course will focus on the personal and spiritual health and formation of those who minister to and care for others. An integrative perspective will be employed in order to engage spiritual, theological, and social science paradigms regarding personal and spiritual well-being and maturity. This will involve the complex integration of wholeness and holiness. A working assumption of the instructor is that an integrative epistemology will involve drawing on diverse sources of knowledge, including special revelation (God's word), general revelation (e.g., social science), and personal revelation (personal self-reflection on our lives and spiritual journeys). The interface of emotional, spiritual, relational, and systemic dynamics will be considered through didactic and dialogical formats during the on-campus intensive.

A secondary objective of the course is to invite students to reflect on their theoretical understandings of spiritual formation, psychosocial development and well-being, and relational maturity as these topics apply to ministry. This involves engaging contemporary literatures in spiritual formation and the social sciences. On-campus discussions will consider both personal and ministry applications.

Classroom Schedule

The daily schedule will be 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m. each day (with breaks around 10:00 a.m. and 2:15 p.m.). Attendance and participation at all sessions is expected.

Required Textbooks

Note: The required readings reflect a diversity of disciplines, spiritual and theological orientations, and faith traditions. I do not expect students to necessarily agree with nor embrace the perspectives of the authors. We can discuss those perspectives critically in class. Some of the readings are devotional, some are scholarly, and some are practical/professional. Feel free to engage them in the order that seems to fit your learning style.

- Allender, D. B., & Longman, T., III. (1994). *Cry of the Soul: How our emotions reveal our deepest questions about God*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress.
- Bonhoeffer, D. (1938/1954). *Life Together*. (J. W. Doberstein, Trans.). San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco. (Original work published 1938).
- Cooper-White, P. (2004). *Shared wisdom: Use of self in pastoral care and counseling*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

- Ellison, C. (2003). *From stress to well-being: Contemporary Christian Counseling*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.
- Gutierrez, G. (2003). *We drink from our own wells: The spiritual journey of a people* (20th anniversary ed.). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis. (Trans. M.J. O'Connell). (First published 1983).
- Jones, A. (1985). *Soul making: The desert way of spirituality*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). *Authentic happiness*. New York: Free Press.
- Shults, F. L., & Sandage, S. J. (2006). *Transforming spirituality: Integrating theology and psychology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Pre-Course Assignments

1. **Reading and Reflection**: Please read each of the assigned texts in any order you choose before the course begins. Write a one-page, single-spaced typed reflection on each text evaluating its contribution to your life to be submitted the first day of class. I am not looking for a critical book review. Rather, I am inviting you to reflectively listen to God for any sense of application to your own life and ministry. The reading is intended to provide a pathway to deeper self-awareness and spiritual reflection and to track themes that are emerging for you. Please write autobiographically by including specific experiences or areas of your life in your reflections.
2. **Self-Assessment**: After reflecting on the readings, please write a self-assessment of your own personal and spiritual well-being (strengths, growing edges, and limitations). I welcome you to organize the assessment in a way that works for you but would like to see the following areas addressed in some fashion: (a) Spiritual development and formation; (b) The influence of family-of-origin dynamics; (c) Emotional well-being and ways of coping with stress; (d) Physical well-being and coping; (e) Relational style, boundaries, and sense of community; (f) Capacity to relate to the opposite gender and cultural diverse others. Also, indicate which areas of personal and spiritual well-being you are most eager to attend to and which ones you most resist facing. A good initial self-assessment paper would seem to require at least 6 pages (double-spaced). Please submit this paper at the beginning of the first day of class, also, and the papers will be kept confidential.

Late Penalty Note: Reading and reflection and self-assessment papers turned in after the first day of class will receive a 10% late penalty each day (after 4:00 pm) and for each paper.

Post-Course Project

Utilizing the material presented and discussed in class each student will complete a project that demonstrates an understanding of the concepts presented in the course and integrates them in a practical ministry context. This will be done in conjunction with the student's advisor.

Personal Processes Related to the Course

Any course which involves exploring our personal spiritual experiences and assumptions about the world can be difficult and unsettling. It can feel disturbing to take an honest, and sometimes painful, look at ourselves and our lives. Our ability to learn and grow wiser through such a course depends on several things, which I also consider necessary for successful ministry and therapy: our ability to tolerate ambiguity; our willingness to dialogue honestly and respectfully with fellow students; our willingness to consider alternative views and interpretations; our willingness to acknowledge the limits of our own understanding and the world we live in; and our ongoing effort to integrate new information with our worldview. If you find you are having personal difficulty in the material in this course, you might consider seeking counseling, therapy, or spiritual direction depending upon the issues that are being raised in your life.