

Course Syllabus

Negotiating Boundaries in Ministerial Relationships: Promoting Sexual Health, Preventing Misconduct

Remember to register for NB as part of your semester course registration!

Course Description:

The primary goal of the course is to help each student develop critically reflective understandings of "professional ethics" as it applies to *maintaining boundaries in the practice of* Christian ministry. This subject will be explored through the analysis of aspects of spiritual care and ministerial behavior, including sexuality, power, boundaries, and the personhood or character of the minister. The workshop, required of all M.Div. students, is a prerequisite for the Part-Time Internship with Practicum and the Summer Ministry Intensive programs.

Course Objectives:

- To become aware of my **power** as a professional ministerial leader, and to understand its potential for both healing and abuse;
- To be able to recognize and maintain personal and professional **boundaries**, and to be conscious of the consequences of not doing so;
- To become familiar with current **policies** and resources of my tradition as they relate to professional ethics and human sexuality;
- To gain an appreciation of the need to personally grow so that I am a **healthy leader** in the holistic sense, and to be able to help others do the same;
- To develop a beginning understanding of **pastoral care** strategies for those I serve.

Class Topics:

- Personal/Professional Needs and Boundaries
- Dual Relationships in Ministry
- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Defining Sexuality and Sexual Health
- Sexual Ethics
- Sexual Misconduct / Abuse Prevention and Policies
- Fiduciary Duty and Sacred Trust

NOTE: Lunch is provided by the Office of Supervised Ministry (pizza & salad). Feel free to bring your own snacks and lunch. There are multiple breaks and an interactive pedagogical format is used throughout the day.

Required Reading: Professional Sexual Ethics: A Holistic Ministry Approach, eds. Jung and Stephens (2013) *purchase in YDS bookstore online as e-book

There are also a few chapters uploaded to the course site **which are to be read PRIOR to class**. These texts provide various approaches to professional ethics more generally, and often sexual ethics more specifically.

From **Professional Sexual Ethics**, read:

Part I: Ethical Landscape of Ministry

1. Sexuality, Health, and Integrity - Kate M. Ott
3. Sexing the Ministry – Stanley Hauerwas
4. Erotic Attunement: Rethinking Love across Pastoral Power Gradients - Christina L.H. Traina

Part II: Sources of Wisdom

5. Sexual Ethics in Church History - Rosemary Radford Ruether

Part III: Practices of Ministry

9. Pastoral Care and Sexual Ethics - Joretta Marshall

Part IV: Pastoral Leadership

18. When Leaders Fall - Adam Hamilton
20. Sex and the Pastoral Life - Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore

***** Other parts of the text can be skimmed.

In addition, read:

Chapter 6, "Confidentiality" in *Gentle Shepherding* by Bush

Chapter 2, "Ministry as Profession" and a short section from Chapter 5, "Dynamics of Power" (p 134-137), titled "The Lure of Friendship" both by Richard Gula in *Just Ministry*

If you have no background in sexual ethics, we suggest reading Chapter 6, "A Framework for a Sexual Ethic," from ***Just Love*** by Margaret Farley.

Course Instructor:

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