



APPL 801: Guided Peer Learning for Ministry I

Winter Term 2026 – Jan 5 to Mar 13

Zoom Class Dates: Jan 16, 30; Feb 13, 27; Mar 13

Fridays, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm PST

Instructor: Rev. Dr. R. Dale Dawson

Email: revdd2@gmail.com | **Phone:** 905-904-0595

Credits: 3 Graduate Credits

1. Course Description

APPL 801 is the first of two summative courses designed to fulfill the field education or practicum requirements for degree programs in professional ministry. Participants will engage practical ministry issues in a seminar setting, refining their theological integration skills, augmenting their pool of ministry resources, and cultivating peer relationships that will benefit them beyond graduation. This course focuses on the *formation* of the pastor: calling, character and ethics, relationships, emotional and spiritual maturity and theological identity of the minister of the gospel.

Students will engage in theological reflection on real life ministry issues, drawing upon Scripture, the classical Protestant and Baptist tradition, and historic texts of pastoral theology. An experienced pastoral mentor or faculty member will walk alongside the students in this peer learning journey.

This course prioritizes personal transformation over technical ministry skills, laying the theological and spiritual foundation for pastoral practice explored more fully in APPL 802.

Note: Students must be engaged in active formal Christian ministry (10+ hours/week) that fulfills the program goals. M.Div. and M.P.M. students need to be serving in pastoral ministry, as an intern or staff, in a church setting.

This course includes a Guided Peer Learning component supported by Carey's approved mentorship system.

2. Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

1. Articulate their personal calling to pastoral ministry in light of biblical and theological convictions.

2. Evaluate and grow in emotional and spiritual maturity, integrity, and relational leadership.
3. Integrate historic Christian resources into a contemporary theology of the pastoral vocation.
4. Demonstrate theological discernment through case-based reflection.
5. Cultivate sustainable peer mentoring and pastoral friendships.
6. Compose the first half of a comprehensive Philosophy of Ministry paper focused on calling, formation, and ethics.

3. Required Reading

Approximately 800 pages (40 hrs) of reading is expected for this course. Part of the reading load will come from articles or textbooks selected by the professor. The rest of the reading load will be selected by the student in relation to the biweekly class topics and in preparation for case studies, and the philosophy of ministry paper. Students are encouraged to use both books and journal articles.

Akin, Daniel, and Scott Pace. *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does*. B&H Academic, 2017.

Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor and A Christian Directory*. 1835. (Available online at www.monergism.com).

Billings, J. Todd. *Union with Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. London: SCM Press, 1954.

Webster, John B. *Holiness*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003.

Spurgeon, Charles Haddon. *Lectures to My Students*, Lecture II, "The Call to the Ministry." (Available online at www.monergism.com).

Supplemental Readings or Viewings may be assigned as deemed appropriate by the Professor.

4. Academic Requirements and Time Investment

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment	Due	Weight
Class Participation (Zoom Meetings + Online Discussion)	Ongoing	30%
Ministry Practice and Reflection Journals (x4)	Weeks 3, 5, 7, 9	20%
Theological Case Study & Presentation	Assigned week	25%

Assignment	Due	Weight
Philosophy of Ministry Paper (Part I)	Week 10	25%

Hourly Break Down:

	Hours:
Class Participation (Readings, Zoom, Online Discussion)	52.5
Ministry practice and Reflection Journals	15
Theological Reflection on the Practice of Ministry paper	30
Philosophy of Ministry paper (Part I)	30
Total:	127.5

Faculty Student Interaction:

	Hours:
Live Zoom Meetings	15
Online Discussion	20
Grading and Substantive Feedback	15
Course Communications	3.5
Total:	53.5

5. Course Assignments

1. Class Participation (Readings, Zoom, Online Discussion)

Students are expected to complete all of the assigned readings each week as set out in the course schedule. Students will actively participate in zoom discussions and online forums. Discussions will focus upon readings, student presentations, professor's comments and more. Thoughtful contributions which enhance peer learning and development will be reflected in higher grades. These peer learning activities supplement (but do not replace) the mentorship relationship required under Carey's Mentor Policy.

Online Discussion Forum: Due weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, 9. Students are expected to participate in the online discussion forum during "off" weeks from our scheduled Zoom sessions. Having completed the assigned readings for the week, each student is to identify a **"most intriguing/insightful passage"** which you would like to discuss further. Students must upload **one original engaging post (250+ words)**, indicating: 1) the intriguing topic/issue (including a page reference in the textbook or reading), and 2) a leading question designed to engage the class in further discussion. Students must then **respond (100+ words)** to at least **two other posts** from your classmates. Be prepared to summarize and advance your original post in the in-class discussion. Other in-class discussions may involve Zoom break out groups and/or chat.

Evaluation: Because these posts are meant to be questions designed to get the class discussing the most important theological issues raised in the course texts, the marking will take into account the quality of both the original posts and the response posts of each student in the discussions. The grade for each student will be based upon your contributions as a whole (not necessarily a week-by-week grade) upon the completion of our class meetings. General comments will be offered occasionally by the Professor to the class as a whole to gauge how you are doing.

Due: Ongoing

Weight: 30%

2. Ministry Practice and Reflection Journals

This course is rooted in the students supervised practice of ministry. A key component of this is for students to learn to discuss and reflect on the practice of ministry with an approved Carey mentor (defined below).

Mentor Requirement (Carey Mentor Policy, 2026)

This course includes Guided Peer Learning and therefore requires each student to work with an approved Carey Mentor.

A Mentor is a ministry leader who has been vetted and approved by Carey Theological College in accordance with the Policy on Vetting, Orienting, and Evaluating Mentors.

Students shall normally propose their own mentor, who must:

- Have at least five years of ministry leadership experience;*
- Not be an immediate family member;*
- Demonstrate Christian maturity and alignment with the CBWC Identity Statement or equivalent doctrinal/ethical standard;*
- Complete Carey's Mentor Approval Form and Mentor Agreement Form;*
- Complete Carey's Mentor Orientation prior to the course;*
- Participate in Carey's mid-term and end-of-term evaluation processes.*

Carey has also secured several pre-approved mentors for students who need one assigned.

Students will meet with their mentor four times during the term and submit reflection journals in accordance with the assignment guidelines below.

This assignment will unfold in three interrelated ways:

a. Ministry Practice. Students are expected to be active in Christian ministry in a local church, denominational or chaplaincy context (for M.Div. students) or in a church, parachurch, or marketplace context (for M.A. students) for at least 10 hours per week.

b. Ministry Mentor Meetings (4 times per term at 1 hour each). Accountability and support are important for pastors and leaders in the church. Students will identify a ministry mentor with whom they can have candid conversations and gain feedback on matters of ministry competence and also personal development and growth.

Before the course begins, students must ensure their mentor has been formally approved by Carey and has completed all required orientation materials. Students may not use an unapproved mentor.

In addition to meeting the requirements defined above, the ministry mentor should have significant knowledge and experience in the vocational direction which the student hopes to pursue so as to facilitate meaningful conversations that assist the student to reflect and to grow. The student should set the agenda for each ministry conversation partner meeting.

c. Reflection Journals (4 per term). After each meeting with the ministry conversation partner, the student will write a 500-word reflection on what he/she learned from the dialogue focusing on theological reflection on issues being discussed as well as personal and spiritual development in the context of ministry involvement. Be prepared to discuss key insights of your reflection journal in our Zoom class session.

Here are a few things that you may wish to include in your reflection journal:

- What issues/questions emerged from the conversation?
- What did you learn from the discussion with your conversation partner? (Be sure not just to recap content but to engage in contextual and personal reflection and application)
- Did you agree or disagree with his/her perspective and why?
- How do you feel you have broadened or grown in your perspective as a result of the conversation?

Due: The four journals will be submitted on weeks 3, 5, 7, and 9

Weight: 20%

Length: 500 words per journal (total 2000 words)

3. Theological Reflection on the Practice of Ministry Student Case Study Preparation and Presentation

These will be done during class Zoom Sessions. Each student will prepare one in-depth case study for the purpose of theological reflection in community during the semester. (Topics and dates will be decided during week 1). Students will prepare a brief written summary and discussion questions to be distributed to the class at least three days prior to the Zoom session. The student will present briefly and facilitate discussion on his/her case study during the session.

On weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 the class will meet for a synchronous zoom in-class session applying the peer learning model (approx. 3 hrs/week).

The case study write-ups will be revised in light of the class discussions, and the final case study paper will be submitted one week after the presentation.

Due: As Assigned

Weight: 25%

Length: 2500 words

4. Philosophy of Ministry Paper

Each student will develop a full philosophy of ministry paper over the 2 terms of APPL 801 and 802.

In the first term (APPL 801), you will produce part I of the paper which will focus on (a) reflection and articulation on your personal calling, spiritual journey, giftedness, spiritual and emotional maturity, interpersonal relationships etc.; (b) personal convictions as it relates to ministry—particularly around personal qualities and beliefs and the values and principles one brings to ministry; and (c) your personal code of ethics as it relates to the practice of ministry.

Due: March 14th

Weight: 25%

Length: 2000 words

6. Weekly Schedule

Winter 2026 Focus: Personal formation, calling, character, ethics, emotional and spiritual maturity, and the theological identity of the pastor.

Week	Theme / Focus	Readings & Assignments
1 (Jan 5–9)	Pastoral Vocation and Identity	Akin & Pace , Ch.1 Introduction – Doctrine Ch. 2 Theological: The Pastor and God’s Character (Vocation and Identity). Richard Baxter , <i>The Reformed Pastor</i> , Part 1, “The Oversight of Ourselves,” Chs 1-2. C. H. Spurgeon , <i>Lectures to My Students</i> , Lecture II, “The Call to the Ministry.” Forum: Introductions & Vocational Reflection
2 (Jan 12–16)	Zoom 1: The Pastor’s Call	Zoom: Case Study #1

Week	Theme / Focus and Character	Readings & Assignments
3 (Jan 19–23)	Character and Conscience in Ministry	<p>Meet with Mentor #1</p> <p>Akin & Pace, Ch. 3 – Christological: The Pastor and God’s Champion (Union with Christ).</p> <p>J. Todd Billings, <i>Union with Christ</i>, Ch. 5 “Ministry in Union with Christ: A Constructive Critique of Incarnational Ministry.”</p> <p>Richard Baxter, <i>The Reformed Pastor</i>, Part 3, “Application,” Ch. 6 “The Use of Humbling Ourselves.”</p> <p>Submit: Interaction Journal #1</p>
4 (Jan 26–30)	Zoom 2: Moral Integrity and Accountability	Zoom: Case Study #2
5 (Feb 2–6)	Spiritual and Emotional Maturity	<p>Akin & Pace, Ch. 4 – Pneumatological: The Pastor and God’s Companion.</p> <p>John B. Webster, <i>Holiness</i>, Ch. 3, “The Holiness of the Church,” pp. 53-76.</p> <p>Submit: Interaction Journal #2</p>
6 (Feb 9–13)	Zoom 3: Inner Life and Spiritual Practices	Zoom: Case Study #3
7 (Feb 16–20)	Pastoral Ethics and Self- Watch	<p>Akin & Pace, Ch. 5 – Anthropological: The Pastor and God’s Compassion.</p> <p>John B. Webster, <i>Holiness</i>, Ch. 4, “The Holiness of the Individual,” pp. 77-98.</p> <p>Submit: Interaction Journal #3</p>
8 (Feb 23–27)	Zoom 4: Ethical Reflection and Peer Practice	Zoom: Case Study #4
9 (Mar 2–6)	The Pastor’s Relationships (Marriage, Family and Friendships)	<p>Akin & Pace, Ch. 10 -- Familial: The Pastor and God’s Covenant</p> <p>Richard Baxter, <i>A Christian Directory</i>, Volume 2, Ch. VII “The Mutual Duties of Husbands and Wives Towards Each Other,” Ch. X “The Duties of Parents for their Children;”</p> <p>Dietrich Bonhoeffer, <i>Life Together</i>, Ch. 1, “Community”</p> <p>Submit: Interaction Journal #4</p>
10 (Mar 9–13)	Zoom 5: Philosophy of	Zoom: Final Reflections + Case Study #5

Week	Theme / Focus	Readings & Assignments
	Ministry & Integration	Submit: Philosophy of Ministry Paper (Part I)

7. Academic Policies

Please see the Carey Academic Catalog for more details: <https://carey-edu.ca/current-academic-catalogue/>

Course Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions to fulfil degree requirements. This includes on-line webinars and/or live-streamed portions of courses.

Carey Grading Scale

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for details on the Carey grading scale.

Course Withdrawal Policy

A student who withdraws after the period for which tuition refunds are available within the first half of the course will receive a “W” on their transcript. Beyond those dates, they will receive an “F.”

Extensions

Extensions for coursework will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If an extension will make it impossible for the professor to submit the final grade no later than one month following the final assignment, the student must petition the Registrar’s Office. If the Registrar’s Office grants such a request, the final extension deadlines will be clearly established. Work granted an extension may receive a grade reduction of up to one-third of the final mark.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest and responsible scholarship. Students are expected to submit original work and give credit to other people’s ideas. Academic dishonesty is acting in a manner to gain unearned academic credit. Examples of academic dishonesty are:

- Plagiarizing by misrepresenting the work of another person (in whole or in part) as a student’s own work or failing to give credit for either wording or ideas that belong to another.
- Submitting the same material for credit in more than one course (whether the earlier submission was at Carey or another institution).
- Using unauthorized aids of any sort in examinations, completing work in unauthorized collaboration with others, or the unauthorized recording and use of class lectures.

Penalty for a lack of academic integrity may include a failing grade in the assignment, examination or course, depending on the severity of the offense. All students are responsible for knowing and practicing academic integrity and must become familiar with the plagiarism student resource at: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity/>.

Classroom Etiquette

All students should engage class lectures and discussions (live and online) with due professionalism, respect and Christian maturity. Students should be on time and remain throughout the allotted session with sufficient connectivity to ensure consistent audio and visual participation. Cameras should remain on during Zoom sessions. Students should remain attentive at all times and contribute with a Christ-like attitude.

Generative AI

Outright ban: Students are not permitted to use generative AI for work produced in this course. Given this ban, work created by AI for this course, even if cited, will not be graded.

Gender Language

As language usage changes, the church must discern where its language must change in order to bear faithful witness to the gospel. Modern English usage has moved away from using masculine terms to refer to groups that include women. Using of such terms in worship, writing, or conversation miscommunicates the invitation of the gospel and the nature of the church. Assignments that don't conform to the gender language policy will be returned to the student for resubmissions.

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for more details on this policy.

Carey' Grading Scale

Grade class	Descriptors	Letter grades	GPA	Detail	%
A class work Excellent, superior work	Effectively and exceptionally accomplishes all course outcomes and objectives. Work produced is excellent quality, of publishable quality, and benefits the wider Christian community. Shows exceptional growth/mastery. Exceptionally creativity and originality in approach to the subject.	A+	4.0	Special Commendation work	100-98
		A	4.0	Consistent A-class work	97-94
		A-	3.7	Generally A-class work, some lapses and areas for refinement	93-90

B class work Good solid work	Accomplishes all course outcomes and objectives. Work produced is good quality, and beneficial to peers and fellow students. Growth/mastery of course material is good. Shows creativity and originality in approach to the subject.	B+	3.3	Primarily B-class, superior to some areas	89-87
		B	3.0	Consistent B-class work	86-84
		B-	2.7	Generally B-class work, some lapses and areas for refinement	83-80
C class work Passible but needs to improve	Accomplishes enough course outcomes and objectives to be passible. Work produced is not recommended for dissemination unless qualified. Growth/mastery is basic, but encouraged to repeat the course. Shows hints of creativity and originality, but not consistent.	C+	2.3	Primarily C-class, better in some areas	79-77
		C	2.0	Consistent C-class work	76-74
		C-	1.7	Generally C-class work, but this is based on generous interpretation. Elements that fall significantly short, marginally passable.	73-70
F class work Not passable	Fails to accomplish course outcomes and objectives. Work should not be disseminated under any condition. Little to no growth/mastery of course material. Fails to show creativity or originality in approach to the subject.	F	0	Generally unpassable work.	69-0

8. Bibliography

Some titles are available in EBSCO Library (via Carey login)

- Akin, Daniel, and Scott Pace. *Pastoral Theology: Theological Foundations for Who a Pastor Is and What He Does*. B&H Academic, 2017.
- Bennett, Zoe, et. al. *Invitation to Research in Practical Theology*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge, 2018.
- Billings, J. Todd. *Union with Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together*. London: SCM Press, 1954.
- Dever, Mark. *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church (Fourth ed.)*. Crossway, 2021.
- . *The Church: The Gospel Made Visible*. B&H Academic, 2012.
- Ford, Coleman M. and Shawn J. Wilhite, *Ancient Wisdom for the Care of Souls: Learning the Art of Pastoral Ministry from the Church Fathers*. Crossway, 2024.
- Graham, Elaine, et. al. *Theological Reflection: Methods*. 2nd ed. Lightning Source/SCM Press, 2019.
- Goto, Courtney. *Taking on Practical Theology: The Idolization of Context and the Hope of Community*. Brill Academic Publishers, 2018.
- Hopkins, Denise, et. al. *Bridging the Divide between Bible and Practical Theology*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018.
- Reader, John. *Reconstructing Practical Theology: The Impact of Globalization*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge, 2016.
- Southgate, Christopher, et. al. *Tragedies and Christian Congregations: The Practical Theology of Trauma*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge, 2020.
- Vanhoozer, Kevin, and Owen Strachan. *The Pastor as Public Theologian: Reclaiming a Lost Vision*. Baker Academic, 2015.
- Ward, Pete. *Introducing Practical Theology: Mission, Ministry, and the Life of the Church*. Baker Academic, 2017.
- Webster, John B. *Holiness*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003.
- . *Word and Church*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001.
- Willimon, William, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry (Revised Edition)*. Abingdon, 2016.
- Wilson, Todd and Gerald Hiestand. *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision*. Zondervan, 2015.
- Wilson, Jim & Earl Waggoner. *A Guide to Theological Reflection: A Fresh Approach for Practical Ministry Courses and Theological Field Education*. Zondervan Academic, 2020.

Ebooks available via VST/JRA Library (some titles may require either VST or archive.org login)

- Mudge, Lewis & James N. Poling et. al. *Formation and Reflection: The Promise of Practical Theology*. Fortress Press, 1987.
<https://archive.org/details/formationreflect0000unse/page/n5/mode/2up>
- Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.
<https://archive.org/details/practicaltheolog0000osme>

Porter, Stanley, *Evangelical Theological Method: Five Views*. IVP, 2018.

Poling, James N. *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985.

<https://archive.org/details/foundationsforpr0000poli/page/n7/mode/2up>

Whitehead & Whitehead, *Method in Ministry: Theological Reflection and Christian Ministry*. Sheed & Ward, 1995.

Woodward, James, Stephen Pattison & John Patton. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

https://archive.org/details/blackwellreaderi0000unse_g2q7/page/n7/mode/2up

Viau, Marcel. *Practical Theology: A New Approach*. Boston, MA: Brill, 1999.

<https://archive.org/details/practicaltheolog0002viau/page/n1/mode/2up>