SM 501 Integrative Seminar
Spring 2015
Thursdays, 7:00-9:40 pm
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Course Objective
The Integrative Seminar course is a seminary capstone experience. The class is designed to
assess each student’s integration of the main educational and formational goals of Northern
Seminary in the areas of Christian Heritage, Formation and Ministry.

Course Goals
The goal is to know the Christian story you inhabit, and to live responsively from within that
narrative. You will be able to theologically assess issues from a Christian perspective, to practice
wise discernment in the communal class experiences, and to articulate a coherent response in the
context of your own small group as a Christian community. Our emphasis is upon “integration.”
This course will give students the opportunity to:
1. Demonstrate competence in articulating your own clear and coherent theology. Peer
   interaction, feedback, research, analysis and revisions will help you achieve this goal.
2. Correlate your personal and communal theology, in a meaningful and coherent way, with
   various life issues through practical, informed judgments and action steps.
3. Show self-awareness of your theological ‘lens’ or orientation, express your own faith
   convictions and ministry responses in a dialogical context, and learn from the perspective of
   others.
4. Present what you learned and discerned as possible leadership steps to offer the class
   (thinking of us as ‘the church’ gathered for this course experience).

Required Reading:
Additional book chapters, essays, video clips, movies, etc. may be assigned, depending on your
group’s decisions regarding use of resources in working through life issue.

Required Personal Resources (needed for Week 2 - Apr 16):
- List of courses taken (from Student Portal, select “Number Transcript” option on left of screen)
- Personality assessments from Seminary Formation course (Midwest Ministry Center)
- Two best/most influential books, videos, studies or other resources from your time at Northern.
Course Requirements & Evaluation:
You will have opportunity to practice ‘ministry application’ that corresponds to your theological identity and orientation within the Kingdom/gospel narrative, in which you and God’s people participate. You will be presented with a concrete ministry issue, which you will work through in and as an assigned small group that will function as a church’s ministerial leadership team. You will develop practical, measurable ministry responses integrating these resources:

- particular Christian tradition, if any
- presentation of the Christian narrative (delineating doctrinal categories) that gives the theological contexts for why this issue matters to the church
- (direct or indirect) biblical exegesis and hermeneutics on this issue
- exegesis of the particular context of the ministry issue
- Christian ethical analysis and interpretation of the issue in that context
- interpretation of the issue through cultural, anthropological, sociological, psychological, medical studies, etc.

In the use of these resources for theological reflection, you must demonstrate hermeneutical awareness of how they involve presuppositions and ideologies that reflect particular world views, cultural values, social locations, etc. In short, you must be able to exegete the hermeneutical assumptions of your resources, even as you use them to develop or expose your own underlying assumptions and the ‘located particularity’ that affects your understanding and obedience.

Class Schedule:

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>Intro to Integrative Seminar</td>
<td>Sign up for Group Presentation Date</td>
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| 2    | April 16 | -Share your Northern Stories  
-Share Group Resources  
-Discuss Pahl: Points for Mapping our Christian Story  
-Life Issue will be assigned after class session | Read - Pahl, Resurrection to New Creation  
Write & Hand IN - Northern in Your Narrative |
| 3    | April 23 | -Share Initial Life Issue Responses  
-Write Communal Covenant | Write & Hand IN - Initial Life Issue Response |
| 4    | April 30 | -Draft a Plan/ Procedures/ Participation Guide (Guidelines Posted on Moodle)  
-Begin Group Process | DUE MONDAY, MAY 4  
Plan/ Procedures/Participation Guide |
| 5    | May 7 | Group Process | TBD by group |
| 6    | May 14 | Group Process | TBD by group |
| 7    | May 21 | Group Process | TBD by group |
| 8    | May 28 | Group Presentations | |

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Assignments:

I. Reading: *From Resurrection to New Creation*, Michael Pahl - DUE APR 16

II. Papers:

A. **NORTHERN IN MY NARRATIVE (3 PAGES) - DUE APR 16**

   This paper will give you the opportunity to reflect back on your seminary journey and its place in the story God is writing in your life: What got you to Northern at first? Has that goal changed? What pieces of the Northern journey have been particularly transformative? How has your time at Northern influenced aspects and seasons of your life and ministry? Has there been a theme throughout this season for you personally? How has your understanding of and/or relation to God and God’s people been impacted? No sources or citations required.

B. **LIFE ISSUE INITIAL RESPONSE (3 PAGES) - DUE APR 23**

   This paper is to be a quick, unfiltered initial response to the life issue presented to your small group. If you had to talk about it with someone with no opportunity to reflect or research, what would you say? You have 2 hours to write this paper. It will not be assessed for readability (grammar, punctuation, etc.). If you are getting too ‘heady’, write it out with your opposite hand. OR, if you prefer to talk it out, record yourself, or talk with someone else. Have that other person transcribe your recorded or ‘real time’ thoughts. Be honest. DO NOT FILTER. Write or talk as quickly as you are able precisely in order to find out what you already think. **DO NOT DISCUSS these papers with your group before the next class session.**

C. **LIFE ISSUE INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION (7-8 PAGES) - DUE JUNE 8**

   This paper should articulate your personal pastoral response to the issue presented to your group. Your theological and practical conclusions may differ from your group presentation response in this paper and that is fine (see presentation instructions below). You are to fully integrate multiple sources in your response; that is, this is not an “opinion” paper but must reflect your integration of the knowledge you gained during your time here at Northern. You should incorporate knowledge from multi-dimensional sources, recognizing that there is also wisdom and truth from God outside of scripture. Sources may include psychology, sociology, cultural, church tradition, personal experience, etc.
D. LIFE ISSUE GROUP PROCESS REFLECTION (7-8 PAGES) - DUE JUNE 8

This paper will give you the opportunity to reflect on the group (ekklesia) experience. What were the challenges and benefits of wrestling together over this issue? What did you notice about the dynamics of the group? Did it change over the course of your weeks together? Reflect also on your own experience in the group. What happened to you during this time? Where your initial perspectives challenged? How was your theology or praxis sharpened/widened/enhanced/affirmed? What did you learn about your “part” in the body of Christ? What strengths did you bring to the group? What did other members of the group bring that you lacked? Conclude this paper by reflecting on how all the pieces of your group work in this course came together to affect your view of yourself, the issue at hand, and what it means to discern things together as the church. (INCLUDE A COPY OF YOUR GROUP COVENANT & PLAN/PROCEDURE/PARTICIPATION GUIDE)

III. Group Process on Life Issue:

Your small group will work together to present an overview and analysis of the life issue you were assigned. Your group process in this class is to be a microcosm of what is experienced in the church. As issues come up, the hope is that there is a group process to discern theologically sound and human image-bearing honoring responses. As in any congregation or leadership team, individuals need to submit to one another and corporately consent for the good of the group, even as disagreements arise.

A. PLAN/PROCEDURE/PARTICIPATION GUIDE (1-3 PAGES) - DUE MAY 4

This guide should clearly indicate what your issue is, what your plan is for preparing a response to this issue, what procedures you will take to become more informed and to inform the church about this specific issue and its more wide-ranging contextual issues, and how you will each participate in this process. Set clear tasks, expectations, roles and responsibilities for researching, discussing, praying, writing up and presenting the issue to the church (class). Set clear deadlines and lines of communication for each step. Craft this together as a group and then have one person in charge of creating the document and sending a copy to each group member.

B. GROUP PRESENTATION - DUE MAY 28 OR JUNE 4

Think of this presentation in regards to how you might present the issue to your wider congregation. You are to suggest a way forward for the church around your assigned issue, with theological implications and practical actions. Presentations should be about 45 minutes. Each person in your group must participate during the presentation. You may use slides, handouts, and anything that will help communicate your proposal. Be creative.

C. GROUP PROCESS QUESTIONNAIRE - DUE MAY 28 OR JUNE 4

In addition to handing in a copy of your presentation materials, you will each hand in a 1-2 page questionnaire to assess your involvement, and the involvement of your group members, in the process, and how closely you followed your plan/procedure/participation guidelines. (Questionnaire will be posted on MOODLE by April 30)
Grading/Evaluation:
Letter Grade, based upon:
I. Northern in My Narrative - 10%
II. Case Study Initial Analysis - 10%
III. Case Study Individual Theological Reflection - 25%
IV. Case Study Group Process Reflection - 25%
V. Case Study Group Presentation - 30%

Grading Policy
I. Grading Scale: The following grade standards are not “relative” to other Northern students, but are as “absolute” or “objective” as possible regarding standards of graduate-level work generally.
   • “A” for “distinctive” work means that all the work submitted is of superior and some even of distinctive quality, demonstrating clear and deep understanding as well as interaction with class concepts, originality, and nuanced, mature judgment. Assignments reflect a great deal of effort and reflection, with clear and creative thinking throughout – outstanding in all respects, including written presentation.
   • “B” for “superior” work means that the majority of the work demonstrates good comprehension of class concepts, and there is a fair amount of deep and creative thinking, reflecting personal (intellectual and spiritual) growth. Most assignments demonstrate considerable effort, and there is consistency to their level of achievement.
   • “C” for “acceptable” work means that the student demonstrates adequate comprehension of class concepts and some deeper thinking on certain relevant issues. Quality is uneven, some work being average while other work demonstrates more minimal effort. Overall, the work is undistinguished but adequate to the basic achievement of course goals. Essays whose grade falls within the ‘C’ range lack essential material and show insufficient reading and effort to be acceptable, perhaps, even to the point of showing obvious misunderstanding.
   • “D” for “unsatisfactory” means that the student demonstrates minimal effort and poor understanding. The majority of the work is apparently rushed, of substandard quality, and does not indicate basic achievement of course objectives.

II. The Grading Scale is as follows:
   A = 100 – 95 Distinctive
   A- = 94-90
   B+ = 89–87
   B = 86–83 Superior
   B- = 82-80
   C+ = 79-77
   C = 76–73 Acceptable
   C- = 72-70
   D+ = 69-67
   D = 66–63 Unsatisfactory
   D- = 62-60
   F = 59 and below

   This grading scale is based on content and form. Writing errors will lower your grade accordingly. It is expected that written products will be legible, professional in appearance and ERROR FREE in regard to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

III. NO late papers will be received.
POLICIES FOR ALL MASTERS CLASSES

NOTE: All communications from the seminary will go to your seminary email account. Contact ithelpdesk@seminary.edu if you need help forwarding your seminary email address to your personal email address.

As a seminary community we hold integrity/hospitality as core values. Individuals are able to do their best work and thinking when their peers are fully present and engaged. We expect each person to both participate in class and carefully listen to others with the belief that everyone’s contribution is equally important. Therefore, the following policies have been established in order to provide clarity in regard to attendance expectations and relationships in the classroom.

Class Attendance Policy
It is expected that students will attend and participate in all class sessions. Failure to attend at least 80% of class sessions is grounds for automatic failure. A professor may set other attendance expectations. Students are always expected to communicate with a professor in advance if they will be absent. Attendance expectations are higher for online and intensive courses (see syllabus for specific requirements).

Class Tardiness Policy
The third time a student is late to the start of class, it will be counted as a class absence. It is also expected that students will return from a break by the time specified by the professor.

Late Work Policy
If a student cannot complete the work for a course by the due date listed on the syllabus, they must submit a “Request for a Grade of Incomplete” form to the Registrar by 4:30 of the last day of the term. The form must be signed by the instructor and Dean of Students. The professor may set stipulations and grade reductions. In the absence of a formal request form, the student will receive a grade based upon work completed by the last day of the term.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the act of passing off as one’s own the words or ideas of someone else without providing proper acknowledgement or documentation. See the “Academic Honesty Policy” in the Seminary Catalog for more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it. All papers will be submitted electronically through TURNITIN, the plagiarism assessment tool. You may submit drafts of papers ahead of time and get a TURNITIN assessment to help you make necessary corrections prior to submitting the final draft via TURNITIN to the professor via Moodle.

Electronic Format - TURNITIN
Unless otherwise specified by the professor, all work must be submitted electronically in a Word document format (.doc, .docx) through TURNITIN.

Technology Use in the Classroom
Unless it is directly tied to note-taking or research for the class, students are expected to refrain from using cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class. For this course, you will not be permitted to use laptops unless specifically permitted on a given day or for a given assignment by the professor.

Course Evaluation in Moodle
Students must complete an online course evaluation using the seminary Moodle system at http://moodle.seminary.edu in order to receive a final grade for the course. The evaluation will be open for one week starting the last day of the term. If you need assistance connecting to Moodle or accessing the evaluation, please send an email to ithelpdesk@seminary.edu.