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Pastoral Leadership Program Guidelines

The purpose of Lexington Theological Seminary is to be a servant of the church preparing men and women for ministry in congregations through innovative instruction, flexible curriculum, congregational experience and compassionate engagement with the needs of society. The faculty, trustees and ministry partners of LTS understand ministry to be both a divine calling and a learned profession. Students enter a 3,000 year conversation about such things as who we are, what we are formed to be and do, what it means to be a people of trust, how to respond to life-altering events, who will hear our silent cry, how we craft questions that deepen the conversation, why we assume that the source of wonder and awe is beckoning us, how we listen and respond to the conversations of other people of trust and of mistrust and why we understand people and the earth to be unfolding mysteries rather than unsolved problems.

Whether you represent a Teaching or Affiliated Congregation, serve as a Local Mentor, participate as a member of the student's Ministry Support Committee, or if you are a Master of Divinity student, your participation in this program will have a great impact on your life.

As a student, this program is an essential and required part of your Seminary experience. Your mentoring and congregational relationships will cause you to focus on your personal character, your vocation, spiritual growth and ministerial skills. You will be called to live what you are learning in the classroom.

As a Local Mentor, you will be a trusted, gracious, yet honest, friend who will give accountability and encouragement during the duration of your student's Seminary education. You will help your student apply academic knowledge to daily life and pastoral ministry.

As a member of the Ministry Support Committee, you will journey with and support the student as she/he learns the many facets of ministerial life.

Please be sure to use the Professor of Pastoral Leadership and the Mentoring Program Coordinator as a resource in support of your journey through this program. We hope that the following *Guidelines* will provide you with a general overview of the program and some specifics about its administration.

Thank you for your commitment to this important work. We look forward to learning with you.

Dr. Steve Monhollen
Professor of Pastoral Leadership

Rev. Jan Ehrmantraut
Mentoring Program Coordinator

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(and Sample of Completed Form)

Student's Ministry Site Evaluation form

Student's Evaluation of Ministry Support Committee form

Student's Evaluation of Mentoring Relationship form

I. Getting Started

Steps to Follow If You Are A Student

Upon acceptance to LTS:

- Complete the *Mentoring Student's Profile* form and return it to the Mentoring Program Coordinator (jehrmantraut@lextheo.edu) upon admission to Lexington Theological Seminary.
- The Mentoring Program Coordinator will contact you regarding the process of finding a mentor. Normally and preferably, the Local Mentor (LM) will be someone other than the pastor in your congregation.
- After the Mentoring Program Coordinator has given you the name(s) of potential clergy in your area who could serve as LM, set up interview(s) with that person(s).
- In consultation with the Coordinator a LM will be selected.
- Initiate and schedule your first meeting(s).
- Work with your mentor to identify your first Pastoral Leadership Learning Goal (see form). Complete this task by the conclusion of your second meeting with your mentor.
- See additional information in the following sections of this *Guidebook*: “Student Responsibilities: Local Mentor,” “Student Responsibilities for the Congregational Relationship,” and “Student Responsibilities for Ministry Support Committee.”

Steps to Follow If You Are A Local Mentor

- Complete a *Mentor Application* form and send it to the Mentoring Program Coordinator (jehrmantraut@lextheo.edu).
- Local Mentors (LM) must be approved by the Mentoring Program Coordinator.
- The name and profile of your prospective mentoring student will be sent to you by the Coordinator.
- The student will contact you to schedule an exploratory interview during which you will decide, together, about a mentoring relationship. The student will then report the outcome of the interview to the Coordinator.
- After the mentor relationship has been confirmed by the Coordinator, the student will contact you to schedule your meeting(s). If you do not hear from your student, please contact the Coordinator.
- See additional information in the following sections of this *Guidebook*: “Mentoring Program Guidelines,” and “Local Mentor Qualifications and Expectations.”

II. The Local Mentor

Mentoring Program Guidelines

Introduction

The mentoring program is about relationships! The focus is preparation of the Master of Divinity students for ministry. Through their learning goals, students create specific plans for their personal development and the integration of their academic, congregational and spiritual formation efforts. Through trusted mentoring relationships, students are accountable for progress toward their goals.

A mentoring relationship is required for all Master of Divinity students throughout their program. A seasoned pastor accompanies each student through the program offering support, posing exploratory questions, and examining ministerial identity. The mentoring component accounts for 5% of the student's grade for most courses.

While mentors are involved specifically in guiding and fostering growth toward the Pastoral Leadership goals (described later), mentors generally support students as they work on the program goals which have been established for students in the LTS Master of Divinity program.

- Students will learn to think critically and creatively about the Christian faith.
- Students will gain the skills and knowledge in the fields of theology, church history, ethics, and Biblical studies that are needed for effective leadership in the Christian community.
- Students will gain specific pastoral and leadership skills appropriate to ordained ministry, including teaching, preaching, and pastoral care.
- Students will learn to appropriate the Gospel for their varying contexts.
- Students will learn to integrate the spiritual, intellectual, and practical aspects of ministry.

Why be a Mentor?

The Local Mentor facilitates the process of transition from student to clergy; as such, mentoring benefits the church as a whole by ensuring the quality and commitment of the next generation of clergy.

As a Local Mentor, your leadership will benefit the student in several ways:

- Students are less likely to feel ambushed by potential (spiritual and professional) bumps in the road, having been alerted to them and provided resources for dealing with stressful or difficult periods in their formation and careers.
- The experiences and networks their mentors help them to accrue may improve the students' prospects of securing a placement which draws upon their strengths.

- The knowledge that someone is committed to giving solid advice and to act as an advocate can help to build confidence and lower stress.
- Constructive interaction with a Local Mentor and participation in the collaborative activities of the curriculum promote a deeper engagement in all eight M. Div. curriculum areas of formation (see LTS M. Div. curriculum ----- link)

Mentoring rewards the Local Mentor as well:

- Relating to your student will keep you abreast of new ideas and trends and challenge you to think in diverse ways.
- Helping the student to make the professional and personal connections she/he needs to succeed may extend your own circle of colleagues.
- Seeing your student succeed can be personally satisfying. You will know that the student is more likely to have a productive, fruitful and ethical career that enriches the life of the church thanks to the legacy you convey.
- Engaging as a Local Mentor allows you to audit up to four online courses at LTS at no charge.

Local Mentor Qualifications and Expectations

Typical Profile of a Local Mentor

- Formal theological education (Master of Divinity from an ATS accredited program)
- Minimum of three years in a full time congregational ministry position post Seminary
- Minimum of one year in current position
- Have standing in his/her denomination
- Committed to and positively enriched by congregational ministry
- Knowledgeable about and committed to the Lexington Theological Seminary curriculum and the integration of intellectual, practical, and spiritual dimensions of ministry

Expectations of a Local Mentor

- When the student is enrolled in a course (or courses) spend at least one hour a week (or two hours every other week) with the student to explore key issues of ministry, discuss issues from the course(s), and help the student reflect upon his/her development in ministry. (Although not required, you are encouraged to meet even when the student is not enrolled in a course.)
- In working with the student offer accountability by asking in depth questions while providing positive support and guidance; stimulate and challenge the student's thinking and behaviors and model the character aspects of ministry for the student's growth.

- Discuss with the student your method of mentoring, emphasizing your commitment to confidentiality
- Provide a centering moment or process in your meetings with your student; in that centering moment/process connect your conversations with the wider community of faith
- Observe the student in ministry (either in person or through video)
- Help your student identify his/her learning goals as he/she submits his/her Learning Goals form every six months
- Be a coach and model to your student in her/his work on the learning goals, suggesting possible growth areas where appropriate
- Complete a six month assessment of the student's learning goals
- If requested by a faculty member give some assessment on an element within a course taken by your student. (You will not be asked to grade a student for a course.)
- Return the mentor-course brief, two question survey at the end of each course the student takes. (The survey will be sent to you.)
- Assist the faculty in a qualitative assessment of your student's competency exercises at the end of Level I of the M.Div. curriculum. (Instructions will be offered later.)
- Through practical advice, encouragement and guidance support your student's planning and implementation of the capstone project at the end of Level III of the M. Div. curriculum.

Student Responsibilities

Local Mentor

Your Local Mentor relationship is intended to be a field-based experience through which you are exposed to and develop the tools for an active/reflective style of ministry. You will work with your Local Mentor (LM) through all three levels of your Seminary curriculum creating and working toward specific learning goals. Once a LM has been assigned to you, you are responsible for communicating and organizing your work together.

1. Arrange your first meeting with your LM.
 - Set subsequent meeting dates
 - Discuss your first Learning Goal (see *Pastoral Leadership Learning Goals Action Plan* form and the completed *Sample* of it)
2. Complete your Learning Goal form (noted above) and return it to the Professor of Pastoral Leadership by the conclusion of your second meeting with your mentor. Submit one every 6 months (on January 15 and July 15 of each year) thereafter. Also, share a copy with your Ministry Support Committee.

3. As you work towards your selected goal(s), discuss your progress with your LM at your meetings:
 - Seek feedback from your LM
 - Ask for support and suggestions
 - Share your thoughts, feelings, and frustrations
 - Ask for assistance where appropriate
 - Invite your LM to observe you (either in person or on video) at work in your congregation
4. Complete a *Student's Evaluation of Mentoring Relationship* each year by July 15. Schedule a meeting during which both you and your LM discuss your evaluation. (If problems arise that you and your LM are unable to resolve contact the Mentoring Program Coordinator (jehrmantraut@lextheo.edu)).
5. If a faculty member requests it your LM may assess one or two elements of one of your courses as well as your competency exercises at the end of Level I. Take these opportunities for focused conversation and learning.

III. The Congregation

Congregation Program Guidelines

Congregation Program at Lexington Theological Seminary

All Master of Divinity students are required to work at a Congregation through all three levels of the Master of Divinity program. This part of the M.Div. curriculum is designed to expose students to the basic, various, and complex areas of ministry through direct observation and hands-on practice. It is this exposure and competency rather than perfection of the development of skills that is to occur through these years. Through this experiential work the student learns about the many parts of congregational and ministerial life. This includes worship, administration, education, pastoral care, ministries new to the student, and ministries outside the walls of the congregation building. Reflection upon these experiences occurs in the context of the student's time with his/her Local Mentor and Ministry Support Committee. The congregation program portion of the M. Div. program serves a key role in students' developing sense of God's call to the ordained ministry.

Profile of an Accountable Congregation (Ministry Site)

- A congregation with a minimum of 20 – 30 participating members
- A congregation that is recognized within its denomination

- A congregation in which the student works as a volunteer or a paid employee a minimum of ten (10) hours per week
- A congregation that officially (through Board, Council, Session, Vestry or Elders and Congregation) agrees to be one of the following: a **Teaching Congregation** or an **Affiliated Congregation** (see the distinction between Teaching and Affiliated congregations below)

Expectations of All Congregations

- Provide a minimum of 10 hours a week of ministry experience
- Provide proper and adequate work space and resources
- Provide the required administrative reports to the Seminary
- Make a formal decision to recognize the relationship between the congregation and the seminary either as a **Teaching Congregation** or as an **Affiliated Congregation**
- Arrange for a *Litany of Commitment* to welcome your student (see Appendix for sample of the Litany)
- Intentionally and explicitly work on transition issues in a situation in which a member of the church is moving into student ministerial leadership

Distinction Between a Teaching Congregation and an Affiliated Congregation

A church which chooses to function as a Teaching Congregation agrees to meet the *Expectations of All Congregations* as well as the additional expectations noted below.

A church that has chosen not to become a Teaching Congregation or wants additional time to consider whether to do that is understood to be an Affiliated Congregation with the Seminary. The church agrees to meet the *Expectations of All Congregations* as well as the expectations noted below.

Expectations of A Teaching Congregation

Church agrees to:

- Fulfill the requirements of *Expectations of All Congregations*
- Expose the student to the varied areas of pastoral ministry in the congregation
- Facilitate understanding of congregation and community dynamics
- Expose the student to ministries beyond the congregation (e.g. ecumenical ministry, jail ministry, community organizing, etc.)
- Take responsibility to provide a Ministry Support Committee (see description below)

Expectations of the Pastor of a Teaching Congregation (when the student does not serve as the pastor)

- Work with the student as he/she grows personally, theologically, and as a future ordained minister
- Provide learning and leadership opportunities in the varied aspects of worship and congregational life
- Oversee the breadth of learning experience offered to the student and provide feedback to the student
- Help select a Ministry Support Committee (see description below)

Expectations of an Affiliated Congregation

Church agrees to:

- Fulfill the requirements of *Expectations of All Congregation*
- Consider ways to connect the student to a breadth of ministry experience that undergirds the student's formation and work in the Master of Divinity program
- Honor the student's requirement to recruit a Ministry Support Committee

Student Responsibilities for the Congregation Relationship

Most often, the student will have already identified a congregation upon application to Lexington Theological Seminary. When this is not the case, a site must be arranged by the student within two credit hours of enrollment.

The student's responsibilities in relation to this congregation site are:

- Submit the *Accountable Ministry Site (Congregation) Information* form by email attachment to the Professor of Pastoral Leadership (smonhollen@lextheo.edu) within two credit hours of enrollment
- Recruit the Ministry Support Committee (MSC) if your ministry site is an Affiliated Congregation (in a Teaching Congregation it is the responsibility of the church to recruit the MSC) (see descriptions elsewhere on selecting members of a ministry support committee and the committee's role and responsibilities)
- Arrange with your Congregation Pastor and others for a *Litany of Commitment* (see Appendix for a sample of the Litany)
- Spend a minimum of 10 hours per week on your congregation commitments, involving yourself in a broad range of ministries
- Meet quarterly (or more often as necessary) with the Ministry Support Committee
- Communicate and discuss your Pastoral Leadership learning goals with your LM, MSC and local pastor
- Each year submit the following forms by July 15:
 - *Student's Ministry Site Evaluation* to Professor of Pastoral Leadership (smonhollen@lextheo.edu)
 - *Student's Evaluation of Ministry Support Committee* to Professor of Pastoral Leadership
 - *Student's Evaluation of Mentoring Relationship* to Mentoring Program Coordinator (jehrmantraut@lextheo.edu)
- Remain focused on your role as learner; seek out opportunities for new ministry experiences and take care to avoid internal problems and conflicts within the congregation
- If a problem arises with the ministry site which you and they cannot resolve, contact the Professor of Pastoral Leadership (smonhollen@lextheo.edu).

IV. Ministry Support Committee

Ministry Support Committee Guidelines

For generations, seasoned clergy companions and supportive congregations have been essential partners with the Seminary in forming students for ministry. The Seminary's curriculum recognizes the congregation as the central context as students enter fully into the life of pastoral ministry. The Ministry Support Committee (MSC) has a critical role in guiding the student throughout the congregation experience. It functions as a sounding board, a central body for feedback, and a helping hand as the student works on his or her specific Pastoral Leadership learning goals and engages in a variety of ministerial experiences.

Selecting the Ministry Support Committee

The responsibility for selecting members of the committee differs between Teaching and Affiliated Congregations. The Pastor of a Teaching Congregation is to establish and recruit the members of the MSC; the student (in collaboration with the Pastor and others) is to establish and recruit the members of the MSC in an Affiliated Congregation.

These traits may be considered as members are selected for the MSC:

- Faithful worship attendance
- Willing to pray for the student regularly and to show their care and support
- Capable of giving articulate, honest, but constructive feedback regarding the student's ministry skills, especially worship leadership
- Eager to share experiences and insights about their own ministry in daily life
- Willing to set aside the necessary time for committee meetings
- Involved in and knowledgeable of ministries beyond the congregation with which the congregation is involved or can develop

Consider these traits for the group as a whole:

- Broad cultural breadth and ministry representation among the congregation's membership
- Ministries in the areas in which the student has responsibilities or has indicated an interest
- A collection of persons who work well together and represent a broad range of styles, e.g. directive, pastoral, teaching, etc.

Activities of the Ministry Support Committee

- Meet quarterly (or more often as necessary) for sustained guidance, feedback and support of student in his/her ministerial growth

- Give feedback to the student as he/she identifies areas of concern
- Initiate conversation around aspects of ministry and performance which members believe will be helpful and supportive of the student's growth and goals
- Offer support as the student works on his/her Pastoral Leadership learning goals

Student Responsibilities for Ministry Support Committee

- Establish and recruit members if you a pastor or are in an Affiliated Congregation
- Schedule MSC meetings and prepare agenda
- Share the learning goal(s) you are presently working on and your progress
- Identify areas of concern for which you seek feedback and support from the MSC
- Submit annual *Student's Evaluation of Ministry Support Committee* by July 15 to the Professor of Pastoral Leadership (smonhollen@lextheo.edu)

APPENDIX

Submission Information for Forms:

<u>Form</u>	<u>Submit To</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Accountable Ministry Site (Congregation) Information	Professor of Pastoral Leadership	Within two credit hours of enrollment
Litany of Commitment (sample)		
Mentoring Student's Profile	Mentoring Program Coordinator	Upon Admission to Seminary
Mentor Application	Mentoring Program Coordinator	
Pastoral Leadership Learning Goals Action Plan (and sample of Completed form)	Professor of Pastoral Leadership	By end of second mtg with LM submit first form; then submit forms every 6 months by Jan. 15 & July 15
Student's Ministry Site Evaluation	Professor of Pastoral Leadership	July 15
Student's Evaluation of Ministry Support Committee	Professor of Pastoral Leadership	July 15
Student's Evaluation of Mentoring Relationship	Mentoring Program Coordinator	July 15

Forms can be found and downloaded at [Pastoral Leadership Program Guidelines](#)

- *Accountable Ministry Site (Congregation) Information*
- *Mentoring Student's Profile*
- *Mentor Application*
- *Litany of Commitment (Sample)*
- *Pastoral Leadership Learning Goals Action Plan (and Sample of Completed form)*
- *Student's Ministry Site Evaluation*
- *Student's Evaluation of Ministry Support Committee*
- *Student's Evaluation of Mentoring Relationship*

