



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY
BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY
UNIT OUTLINE**

UNIT TITLE	PRACTICUM: PARISH MINISTRY 1
UNIT CODE	E52092
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	E
PREREQUISITE/S	Nil
INCOMPATIBLES	No more than two practicums per semester
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	13 hours per week over a 13-week semester
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Each semester – generally as required, but may be limited by the availability of supervisors and placements
PREPARED BY	Rev Dr Neil Sims
UNIT COORDINATOR	Members of Faculty specializing in Field E
TEACHING STAFF	Members of Faculty specializing in Field E
DATE PREPARED	27 August 2006

Rationale

Field education is a standard and essential part of professional training. Each of the ten practicums within the Bachelor of Theology program allows and requires significant reflection on the practice of ministry and gives students a foretaste of what ministry involves. Contemporary parish ministry is often seen as the “general practice” of a wide variety of possible ministries. Therefore, it is necessary that a prospective ministry practitioner be given the developmental opportunity under supervision to gain “hands on” experience in a variety of ministry contexts, in order to facilitate the skills necessary for vocational ministry.

Relation to program

The field of Ministry and Mission (Field E) concentrates on integrating theory and practice. Practicums begin with experience in the field, and call for sustained, critical reflection on one’s practice of ministry. Written reports, supervision sessions and peer group sessions relate this reflection back to the rest of the student’s learning in theology. This experience promotes “deep” learning when the parameters of the practicum are set in place.

Aims

This unit seeks to provide students with practical experiences in parish ministry, along with opportunities for personal and shared reflection about their own role in parish ministry, about the contexts of parish ministry, about best practice in parish ministry, and about the relationship between parish ministry and other areas of ministry.

Learning Outcomes	
At the end of this unit the student should be able to:	
1.	Describe and analyse the ministries happening in the particular placement;
2.	Participate effectively in those ministries towards their enhancement;
3.	Design and present an appropriate ministry event or program or process;
4.	Interpret these ministries to the wider ministry context;
5.	Evaluate their own gifts and limitations in ministry.

Content

The specific content of this practicum is determined primarily by the Learning Agreement drawn up by the student, after consultation with the Supervisor and a Field E faculty member of the student's member school. The broad areas of content which are typically covered include:

- 1 Students' experiences of parish ministry and how these "feed into" their vocational direction.
- 2 Reflection on the models of ministry being offered in the placement.
- 3 The specific ministry context and its networks with the wider ministry of the church.
- 4 Some reading about parish ministry.

Organization and Teaching Strategies

This unit is the first of two practicums focusing on parish ministry. Students undertake 169 hours of approved field education comprising *approximately* 20 hours of preparation, 85 hours of actual field experience, 25 hours of report writing, 13 hours of supervision, and 26 hours of participation in a peer group for reporting and reflection on ministry praxis.

Each practicum is supervised by a person approved by the member school of the student. This is normally a person who is active within the placement setting and who has received training in the theory and practice of supervision. Supervisors are required to participate in the training opportunities offered by the member school to which they are responsible.

In each practicum, students engage in ministry tasks based on their learning agreements. They are required to take time to reflect on those ministry experiences, especially through written reports (according to approved formats provided by the College). They also meet weekly with their Supervisor for guided learning.

An example of a practicum in parish ministry is a placement in a congregation, under the supervision of a suitably qualified minister/priest and an approved BCT lecturer. Further practicums in the same setting may include a second practicum in parish ministry (E52093) or an approved practicum from one of the other key areas of ministry (eg worship and preaching, pastoral care, mission, or educational ministry). Due to the demanding nature of the practicums and the need for adequate reflection and analysis of both performance and observations, students may undertake no more than two practicums per semester.

Assessment

The only grades awarded for practicums are SS (satisfactory) and NN (fail). The award of a grade of SS requires:

1. Completion as soon as possible (but no later than one month after the commencement of the placement) of a Learning Agreement which has been approved by both the Supervisor and a Field E faculty member of the student's school. The Agreement will identify Learning Goals and Objectives, Related Ministry Tasks and Performance Indicators. It will name the Supervisor, the times for supervisory sessions (one hour per week for the 13 weeks), and the time of the weekly peer group sessions.
2. The submission of 6 field education reports of about 500 words each of a standard acceptable to a Field E faculty member of the student's school.
3. The presentation of a paper on parish ministry or some dimension of it, about 1000 words, or some alternative form of assessment equivalent to this. The topic for this paper is to be approved by the Supervisor of the student concerned.
4. Presentation of two book reviews, each of about 500 words. The books to be reviewed are to be as required by the Supervisor in consultation with the student.
5. An evaluation report at the end of the 13 weeks provided by both the student and the supervisor regarding the personal development and practical ministry of the student concerned. The report will include the ministry experiences gained in the placement, giving particular attention to the degree to which the terms of the Learning Agreement have been fulfilled. The evaluation will also look forward to how the student needs to grow in ministry from this point on.

Note that in supervision, in written reports and in the evaluations required, students and Supervisors will be looking at the learning outcomes above – the students' learnings about themselves, their ministry context and their practice of ministry.

Bibliography

A Practicum is more about reading the context of ministry than about reading textbooks. Since goals for practicum learning are set by a student in consultation with others, texts cannot be prescribed. Below is a brief sampling of possibilities, but students will need to find some books, journal articles and/or websites related to their goals.

- Anderson, Ray. *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2001.
- Browne, Elizabeth. *Creating an Inclusive Worship Community: Accommodating All People at God's Table: A Parish Handbook*. Liguori, MO: Liguori, 2004.
- Collins, Alan. *Making Ministry Work: A Guide to Serving Together*. Melbourne: JBCE, 1996.
- Croft, Stephen. *Ministry in Three Dimensions: Ordination and Leadership in the Local Church*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1999.
- Dawn, Marva and Eugene Petersen. *The Unnecessary Pastor: Rediscovering the Call*. Vancouver: Regent College, 2000.
- Farber-Robertson, Anita. *Learning While Leading: Increasing Your Effectiveness in Ministry*. New York: Alban, 2000.
- Hightower, James & W Craig Gilliam. *A Time for a Change? Revisioning Your Call*. Bethesda: Alban, 2000.
- Johnson, Ben & Andrew Dreitcer. *Beyond the Ordinary: Spirituality for Church Leaders*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Scalise, Charles. *Bridging the Gap: Connecting What You Learned in Seminary with what You Find in the Congregation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2003.
- Schieler, Robert. *Revive Your Mainline Congregation: Prescriptions for Vital Church Life*. Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2003.
- Witcombe, John (ed). *The Curate's Guide: From Calling to First Parish*. London: Church House Publishing, 2005.