



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY
UNIT OUTLINE**

**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN MINISTRY
GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MINISTRY
MASTER OF MINISTRY**

UNIT TITLE	PRACTICUM: PARISH MINISTRY III
UNIT CODES	E74892
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	E
PREREQUISITE/S	At least one of the following units: E52025 E74025 Mission of the Church E52042 E74042 Communication & Processes in Groups
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 as determined by students' needs
PREPARED BY	Mrs Penny Carroll and Revd Dr Neil Sims
UNIT COORDINATOR	Revd Dr Neil Sims
TEACHING STAFF	Revd Dr Neil Sims, Mrs Penny Carroll
DATE PREPARED	18 February 2004

Rationale

Field education is a standard and essential part of professional training. Practicums offer students 'hands-on' opportunities to foster their growth in ministry in the name of Jesus Christ as part of the Christian community. This happens through a continuing conversation between the placement experience and the more formal learning of the classroom. Space is provided for significant reflection with a supervisor and a peer group on one's ministry praxis. This action-reflection model is at the heart of the process. Each of the ten practicums offered within the postgraduate courses gives students a foretaste of what ministry is about.

This unit is the first of two practicums which focus on parish ministry. Students undertake 169 hours of approved field education comprising approximately 20 hours of preparation, 70 hours of actual field experience, 25 hours of report writing, 13 hours of supervision, and 40 hours of attendance at field education seminars.

An example of a practicum in parish ministry is a placement in a church 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 or an approved practicum from one of the other key areas of ministry (e.g., 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*.

Relation to Course

The practicums are integral to all three of the postgraduate ministry courses. This practicum will assist participants to encounter the diversity of ministries encompassed by parish ministry and provide opportunities for them to experience some integral aspects of the practice of ministry. At Graduate Certificate of Ministry and Graduate Diploma of Ministry level, students are able to strengthen their competence in the practice of ministry. Practicums taken in the Master of Ministry course provide students with the prospect of sharpening their ability to critically reflect on the practice of ministry and draw from the rich resources of the theological disciplines.

Aim

This unit seeks to provide students with practical experiences in parish ministry, along with the 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. It aims to challenge students to a deepening awareness of their own practice of ministry, integrity, and accountability using tools of critical reflection and analysis.

Learning Outcomes

The following general objectives apply. More specific objectives are finalised with students on an individual basis taking account of their individual learning needs and the nature of their practicum placement.

On the successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. describe and critique the ministries happening in a particular placement, leading to a clear articulation of the ways in which one or more of those ministries may develop
2. participate with integrity in a number of those ministries, and demonstrate learning from one's praxis
3. design, present and evaluate appropriate ministry events or programs and processes
4. interpret these ministries to the wider ministry context and identify implications for future ministry
5. appreciate and evaluate their own gifts, confront areas needing growth and development and understand their own 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 the appropriate BCT faculty member of the student's member school. This agreement takes seriously the context of the placement and the particular learning needs of the student. The broad areas of content which are typically covered include:

1. Students' experiences of parish ministry and how this "feeds 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; and
4. Specifically focused reading dealing with issues in parish ministry that closely relate to the chosen practicum experience.

Students in a parish placement may take time to explore such issues as what it means to be a minister in this context, what are the goals of this particular parish, how does the parish engage in worship, witness and service, and how does this parish relate to the community in which it is placed. They will also engage in some of the tasks of ministry – preaching, leadership of worship, conduct of sacraments, pastoral care, educational ministry, small groups, administration, equipping of the laity for ministry, and mission – and reflect on how they are part of the whole, how they contribute to the purpose of the church. Important dimensions of

this practicum are appreciating the context of parish ministry and training lay people to share in the ministry of Christ.

Organisation and Teaching Strategies

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 and participate in field education seminars at which the students will present reports and engage with other students as they present their reports. These field education seminars are led by the students and provide them with the opportunity of giving and receiving peer supervision.

Assessment

Postgraduate students will demonstrate throughout their assessment – the Learning Agreement, the reports, the papers, and the evaluation – through their engagement with both the literature and the praxis of ministry, their appreciation of the significance of the ministry context for their praxis of parish ministry, and how they will train and encourage others in their praxis of ministry.

The only grades awarded for practicums are SS (satisfactory) or NN (fail). The award of a grade of SS will require:

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 the Supervisor and the appropriate BCT faculty member. The Agreement will identify Learning Goals and Objectives, Related Ministry Tasks and Performance Indicators. It will name the Supervisor, times of the supervisory sessions (one hour per week for the 13 weeks), the time of the weekly field education seminars and the weeks of placement. It will be one tabulated page.
2. The submission of 7 field education reports each of 500 words which focus on different aspects of the student's learning and uses a variety of reporting formats.
3. Presentation of two 1500-word papers *or* one 3000-word paper providing the student with an opportunity to research a significant aspect of the practicum. For example, a student in a neonatal ward of a hospital may do an intentional reflection on the literature in this field and how it informs one's ministry praxis. A student in a parish setting may design a seminar to train the elders in pastoral care, based on reference to examples from the literature.
4. An evaluation report at the end of the 13 weeks provided by both the student and the supervisor regarding the personal development and ministry practice 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 evaluation required, students and supervisors will be looking at the objectives above – the students' learnings about themselves, their ministry context and their practice of ministry.

Generic Attributes

- Ability to engage in reflective practice within the Church and the community.
- Ability to generate ideas and adapt innovatively to changing environments.
- Ability to identify problems, create solutions, innovate and improve current practices.
- Knowledge and respect of ethics and moral values in relation to Christian ministry and mission.

- Ability to collect, analyse and organise information and ideas and to convey those ideas clearly and fluently, in both written and spoken forms.
- Ability to interact effectively with others in order to work towards a common outcome, whether in the role of team member or of leader.

Academic and General Resource Requirements

This list of resources is limited for two reasons. The primary learning is from the context rather than from written texts. Students are expected to develop their own bibliographies related to the focus of their Learning Agreement.

References - Books

- Ammerman, Nancy T. et al (eds.) *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* Nashville: Abingdon, 1998.
- Bandy, Thomas G. *Coaching Change: Breaking Down Resistance, Building Up Hope* Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.
- Bos, A. David *A Practical Guide to Community Ministry* Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993.
- Buxton, Graham *Dancing in the Dark: The Privilege of Participating in the Ministry of Christ* Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001.
- Farber-Robertson, Anita *Learning while Leading: Increasing Your Effectiveness in Ministry* New York: Alban, 2000.
- Hesselbein, Frances, Goldsmith, Marshall, and Beckhard, Richard (eds.) *The Leader of the Future: New Visions, Strategies and Practices for a New Era* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.
- Hightower, James and Gilliam, W. Craig *A Time for a Change? Revisioning Your Call* Bethesda: Alban, 2000.
- Kaldor, Peter and Bullpitt, Rod *Burnout in Church Leaders* Adelaide: Openbook, 2001.
- Kinast, Robert L. *What Are They Saying about Theological Reflection?* New York: Paulist, 2000.
- Larson, Duane (ed.) *From Word and Sacrament: Renewed Vision for Diaconal Ministry* Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1999.
- Lott, David B. (ed.) *Conflict Management in Congregations* Bethesda: Alban, 2001
- McNeal, Reggie *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders* San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2000.
- Trumbauer, Jean M. *Sharing the Ministry: A Practical Guide for Transforming Volunteers into Ministers* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999.

Journals

Australian Ministry Digest: A Quarterly Journal for Clergy and Church Leaders
Ministry, Society and Theology
Net Results
Pointers: Bulletin of the Christian Research Association

Online Resources

PastorNet: The Australian Christian Network. <http://www.pastornet.net.au>
 Religion-online.org (Full texts by recognised religious scholars). www.religion-online.org