



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY  
UNIT OUTLINE**

**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN MINISTRY  
GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MINISTRY**

UNIT TITLE	<b>POWER, AUTHORITY, LEADERSHIP</b>
UNIT CODES	E74035
UNIT STATUS	Elective
HOST FIELD	E
PREREQUISITE/S	E73042 (or E52042): Communication & Processes in Groups
INCOMPATIBLES	E52033 is incompatible with E74033
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over a 13 week semester
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Annually
PREPARED BY	Revd Dr John Chalmers
UNIT COORDINATOR	Revd Dr John Chalmers
TEACHING STAFF	Revd Dr John Chalmers
DATE PREPARED	14 March 2007

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**Rationale**

This unit builds on, extends and operationalises the communication processes learned in E73042 (or E52042): *Communication and Processes within Groups*. In particular, it explores the consequences for reflective leadership within the Christian community, attentive to the underpinning dynamics of power and authority. In addressing ‘power’, the often unaddressed foundational basis of leadership, the unit ensures that students move beyond the common, unsatisfactory ‘skills’ approach to exercising leadership in the contemporary church. Students confront their implicit assumptions about power from a philosophical and sociological perspective. Alongside this explicit awareness of how power pervades all relationships, students examine various ways of exercising authority, thereby providing clear indicators as to how they might exercise pastoral leadership in respectful ways within various ministry settings, while being attentive to the subtle ways in which power and authority may both enhance and damage the life of any Christian community. While this unit appropriates the insights of several social science disciplines, the conversation is fundamentally theological.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	
At the end of this unit the student should be able to:	
1.	Articulate an understanding of the dynamic nature of power and authority, and the strengths and limitations of various models of leadership.
2.	Demonstrate a capacity for critical assessment and evaluation of power and authority dimensions of situations in which the student exercises leadership.
3.	Demonstrate a capacity to imaginatively integrate the scholarly literature dealing with power and leadership via the resolution of a familiar problematic scenario, as well as through application to current issues in popular media.

## Content

<b>Session 1</b>	Students identify and analyse (both individually and corporately) the assumptions re Power, Authority and Leadership that they bring to the course. They thereby establish lines of enquiry that they will specifically pursue throughout the semester.
<b>Session 2</b>	Students explore, critique and draw implications from Michel Foucault's seminal writings on Power.
<b>Session 3</b>	Students study the concept of 'powerlessness' as probed and critiqued in the writings of Elizabeth Janeway, thereby questioning the predominant societal understanding of Power as a possession.
<b>Session 4</b>	Students continue their exploration of Elizabeth Janeway's seminal text <i>The Powers of the Weak</i> .
<b>Session 5</b>	Building on Foucault's and Janeway's writings, students ground their study of the dynamics of power through Martha Stortz's three congregational case studies.
<b>Session 6</b>	Students explore the links between their understandings of power and authority through the classic Sennett text, emphasising the emotional bonds that connect people to authority figures, along with Hegel's perspective on how freedom might be attained.
<b>Session 7</b>	Students explore Russell's imaginative theological approach to authority through an eschatological lens.
<b>Session 8</b>	Students investigate the processes whereby authority comes to be legitimated: within the institutional, personal and extra-rational domains.
<b>Session 9</b>	Students explore how understandings of authority underpin various expressions of leadership, in particular, the nexus between authority and collaborative leadership.
<b>Session 10</b>	Students critique and appropriate Heifetz's model of leadership in light of their study of power and authority.
<b>Session 11</b>	Students confront the faces and the consequences of the abuse of power by those in positions of authority.
<b>Session 12</b>	From theological and business perspectives, students critically examine contemporary models of leadership within Christian faith communities.
<b>Session 13</b>	Organisational and pastoral perspectives are explored in order to offer a variety of possible ways of exercising ethical leadership within ministry.

## Organisation and Teaching Strategies

Teaching is face-to-face. The contact time includes lecturer's input, focused discussion on set readings, exploration of contemporary case studies and small group projects.

More specifically:

1. Beginning with the second session, all students read the assigned readings and come to class to a probing discussion of the readings.
2. Each week's class comprises two segments, separated by a coffee break. The first 90 minutes sees **rigorous exploration of the readings** set for that evening. Throughout the course, readings cluster about three key themes: power, authority and leadership. Besides grappling with and better understanding the assigned readings for the night, the first segment sees students attempting to make connections with prior readings and perspectives. As well, students encouraged to notice dynamics of leadership that are operative within that night's first segment.

3. The second segment each week consists of **small group clusters** (the same group meets throughout the semester) where students take it in turn to present a case study of their own leadership failure, engaging the other members of their group to explore a range of options for diagnosis and action. After class, students have until 4pm on Fridays to submit a 250 word response to three questions relating to the evening's class.

## Assessment

### 1. Weekly Reflections and Processing tasks (40%) 3000 words in total. Submitted weekly. Examines objectives one, two and three

This assessment item comprises a weekly, focused reflection and response to two or three questions after each week's class. It operates as follows:

- Students take their turn in *presenting a case-study* of their own leadership failure to the small group cluster they have been assigned for the semester. The presenting student prepares a brief description of their failure in leadership and presents it as an engaging story, leaving plenty of time for the group to explore the case study. In preparing his/her concise description of the leadership-failure experience, the student frames two or three stimulating questions that with the group's assistance, will bring greater understanding of the case's dynamics and other possible directions. This develops the presenter's capacity to ask for help with problematic scenarios.
- Each week, one student takes responsibility for keeping the group on task, for being as attentive to the dynamics within the small group (and intervening to trigger familiarisation by other group members to these dynamics) as to the content of the discussion.
- After each week's small group meeting, each student has until 4pm on Friday to prepare a 250 word response (strictly no longer) to a few key questions. Each student's response will be read and responded to by the group. This assessment item responds to the need for students to be able to provide concise but thoughtful comment on important issues, delivered under circumstances of significant time constraints.
- Responses are to be emailed each week to [chalmersj@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:chalmersj@bne.catholic.net.au) (no extensions permitted).

### 2. Case Study (60%) 4000 words. Due: TBA Examines objectives one, two and three

This assessment item involves an analysis of the power, authority and leadership issues involved in a designated case study. Between weeks two and eight, students scan current newspapers or journals for stories that illustrate the issues the class is addressing. At week eight, these clippings are pooled and students choose one of the stories (one's own clipping or another's). Several may choose the same clipping. The newspaper article needs to be attached to the submitted work.

The case study consists of four parts:

- The first part briefly *describes* the parameters of the case study. (about 5% of the paper).
- The second part *identifies* the issues of power, authority and leadership that are at stake in the scenario. (about 10% of the paper)
- The third part *analyses* and *evaluates* the issues of power, authority and/or leadership that have been identified in the previous section of the paper. Texts studied in this course provide useful frameworks for this analysis. (about 60% of the paper)
- The final section of the paper takes the form of a *synthesising response* (perhaps a succinct op ed piece or a letter to the editor) that might find publication in the newspaper/magazine from which the story was drawn. (about 25% of the paper).

## Bibliography

1. **Required Reading:** This is made available as a book of readings, comprising, in order:

▪ **Power:**

- Foucault, M (1968) “The Means of Correct Training” in *The Foucault Reader*. Paul Rainbow (ed) Sydney: Penguin. p189-213
- Foucault, M (1972) “The Eye of Power” in *Power / Knowledge*. Colin Gordon (ed) Harvester Press. p146-165
- Foucault, M (1976) “On Power” in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*. Lawrence Kratzman (ed) London: Routledge. p96-109
- Janeway, E (1980) *Powers of the Weak*. New York: Alfred Knopf p3-21; 108-156; 157-185; 304-321
- Stortz, Martha (1993) *Pastor Power* Nashville: Abingdon Press

▪ **Authority:**

- Sennett, R (1993) *Authority*. New York: Alfred Knopf
- Russell, L (1987) *Household of Freedom*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press
- Whitehead, E and J (1990) “Legitimacy and the Religious Leader” in *New Theology Review* 3: 5-17.
- Wilson, G (1991) “Authority with Credibility” in *Human Development*. 12:4, 38-41.

▪ **Leadership:**

- Burke, W (2003) “The Organisational Change Leader” in Goldsmith et al (eds) *The Many Facets of Leadership* Upper Saddle River: Financial Times Prentice Hall p83-97.
- Cartwright, R (2002) *Mastering Team Leadership* New York: Palgrave Macmillan p27-40.
- Chrislip, D and Larson, C (1994) *Collaborative Leadership* San Francisco: Jossey Bass p127-146.
- Heifetz, R (1994) *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. Cambridge: Belknap Press.
- Poling, J (1991) *The abuse of Power*. Nashville: Abingdon Press p93-120.
- Carroll, J (1991) “The Central Tasks of Leadership in the Church” in *As One With Authority*. Louisville: Westminster / John Knox Press. p97-118.
- Stevens, R and Collins, P (1993) *The Equipping Pastor*. Washington: The Alban Institute. p126-147.
- Goleman, D (2000) “Leadership That Gets Results” in *Harvard Business Review* March-April 2000 p78-90.
- Heifetz, R and Linsky, M (2002) *Leadership on the Line* Boston: Harvard Business School Press p163-186.
- Bennis, W and Townsend, R (1995) *Reinventing Leadership* New York: Quill William Morrow p115-126.
- Cladis, G (1999) *Leading the Team-based Church*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. p33-47.

2. **Further Reading:**

a. **References – Books**

- Badaracco, Joseph and Ellsworth, Richard (1989) *Leadership and the Quest for Integrity*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Boff, Leonardo (1990) *Church: Charism and Power*. New York: Crossroad.
- Bolman, Lee and Deal, Terrence (2001) *Leading with Soul*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Chapman, Audrey (1991) *Faith, Power, and Politics*. New York: The Pilgrim Press.
- Chomsky, Noam (1996) *Power and Prospects*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Conger, Jay (1992) *Learning to Lead*. New York: Jossey Bass.
- Covey, Stephen (1992) *Principle-Centered Leadership*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Goleman, Daniel (1999) *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Hesselbein, Frances, Goldsmith, Marshall, and Beckland, Richard (eds) (1996) *The Leader of the Future*. New York: Jossey Bass.

Kouzes, James and Posner, Barry (1987) *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.  
MacGregor Burns, James (1978) *Leadership*. New York: Harper Torchbooks.  
Scott, John (2001) *Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.  
Senge, Peter (1990) *The Fifth Discipline*. New York: Doubleday.  
Wartenberg, Thomas (1992) *Rethinking Power*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

***b. References – Online***

- [www.foucault.qut.edu.au](http://www.foucault.qut.edu.au)
- [www.ksg.harvard.edu/leadership](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/leadership)