

# MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP IN A PROFESSIONAL SETTING

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Spring Term | LD0530 | Hybrid (see below)

Dates: Online and in-person precepts, and **May 4th in-person defense date**  
(note: there will be alternatives for people who cannot be here in-person that day)

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

### Missional Leadership in a Professional Setting

This course serves as a final capstone course for the three MA degrees in the Leadership Division. Students will demonstrate their ability to integrate theology, theory and practice in the creation and defense of a capstone project centered on a current issue in their concentration area. Capstone projects might include a practical ministry project or an article for publication. In addition, students will reflect on themselves as professional Christian leaders in light of their program learning, and prepare professional development plans for their first two years after the program. *Full course (1.0)*

### Learning Objectives:

- Students will refine their ecclesiology and theology of leadership in light of their learning throughout their program.
- Students will assess themselves as a Christian public leader within community and in light of the competencies of their concentration.
- Students will create their own ministry resource in their area of concentration by collecting, reviewing and supplementing their work through their learning in their degree program.
- Students will help peers reflect on their learning and will assemble a portfolio in their concentration area.
- Students will demonstrate their ability to integrate theology, theory, and practice in the creation of a capstone project in their concentration area

**Reading (required):**

K. McAlpin, *Ministry That Transforms: A Contemplative Process of Theological Reflection* (Liturgical Press, 2009). [Only a brief excerpt is required, which will be available for free in moodle.]

In addition, you will do whatever reading and research are required within your degree concentration to complete your final project.

**Recommended reading:**

R. Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (pp. 2-30), Eerdmans, 2008. [This text has been used in previous CPL courses, but this excerpt will be available online as well.]

M. Wheatley, *Perseverance*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2010.

**Additional Electronic Resources** will be available including but not limited to:

- Center for Writing and Research (<http://luthersem.libguides.com/wsg/writingcenter>)
- Resources for American Christianity (<http://www.resourcingchristianity.org>)
- Nonprofit Technology Network resources (<https://www.nten.org/knowledge/reports-and-resources/>)
- Open Source Religious Resources (Feautor.org)
- BuildFaith (<https://www.buildfaith.org>)
- More TBA

**PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH**

The MA in Leadership degree programs are designed to ignite a missional imagination, grow and hone your leadership competencies, and connect your witness to the gospel with a lifelong pursuit of learning. Questions, even more than ideas, shape your learning within specific degree programs. Courses, contextual learning, and community participation help you to hone, expand, and redirect your questions, resourcing you with ideas and giving you an opportunity to reflect on your competencies as a leader in ministry, while discovering resources for leading in the future.

This capstone class, and in particular your capstone project and your collection of artifacts, is a key way you can demonstrate your competency, integrate your learning, and go deeper into an area of ministry in your concentration area. The capstone project, as described in more detail below, provides you with an opportunity to create an original argument around an area of ministry you care deeply about. The portfolio (or collection of artifacts) highlights your theological and theoretical commitments and competencies in areas related to your concentration. This course is designed to bridge the learning that has taken place within your degree program with what is needed for your leadership and for becoming a life-long learner in ministry.

The primary learning in this course takes place in peer-led precept settings where you come together with other MA students in leadership degrees to reflect on various aspects of your learning. A secondary mode of learning centers on the process of developing, writing, and defending an original practical ministry project. Precepts may be held in a variety of ways (in-person, asynchronous online, synchronous online, at the pleasure of the members of your precept group). You will check-in directly with the professor two times during the semester (sign-up for those meetings will be available through Moodle). *Defenses of capstone projects* will take place on **Friday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018**. You are strongly encouraged to be present on campus for this defense day, but online options will also be available if necessary.

## REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

There are three primary assignments in this class. The first is full and consistent participation in your precept. I cannot stress enough how important this process is for helping you to develop skills in peer reflection and support. The other two assignments are a portfolio/collection of artifacts, and a capstone writing project.

### Weekly precepts

Each week you will have an assignment related to an aspect of the capstone project or the collection of artifacts. These assignments vary and are intended to “prime the pump” for that week’s precept discussion, as well as connect in a particular way to the artifact assignment and/or capstone project. Completing assignments each week will spread the work of the course across the semester, as well as contribute to substantial peer learning.

The precept-based format of the class means all participants – students, TA, and professor -- are actively engaged in the teaching and learning in this course. Rather than having readings or lectures guide the learning, your reflection each week (on your experience, your calling, previous course learnings, your project research, etc.) becomes the primary driver for learning. Active participation will not only help you to learn, but also shapes the learning of your precept-mates. Participation in precepts is a requirement. There are no unexcused absences. If you must miss a precept, please communicate that first to your group, and then also to me so that we can arrange an alternative.

The first week of class you and your precept mates will need to make some decisions about when and how you are going to meet. Are you going to have one of you pose a question that the rest of your group should answer, and then discussion unfolds? This is a good mechanism for asynchronous groups (that is, groups which do not meet with everyone participating at the same time). If you choose this mode you need to decide with each other when and how you will post to a discussion, your deadlines, and so on.

Or you may decide to meet using a synchronous tool such as Zoom (and I can make that available to any precept group which is interested in it). In that case you might decide to have one person each week begin the group with a prayer and one person end it with a prayer, and then hold a discussion “in between” those bookends. My assumption is that you will need at least an hour to meet, if you choose to do so in this way.

Either way – or some other way that has not occurred to me! – your group needs to send me your precept agreement which specifies how you intend to meet by the Friday of the first week of class (that is, February 9<sup>th</sup>). You can find the template for these agreements in google doc form here ([link](#)). Note that in week 3 (week of February 19<sup>th</sup>) and week 7 (March 19<sup>th</sup>), there will be no required precept meeting, but instead you will make an appointment (either in person or via zoom) to talk with me about your work. And in weeks 10-12 there will also be no precept meetings, but rather you will have the space to refine and conclude your portfolio/collection of artifacts, and your capstone project.

Precept engagement accounts for 20% of your grade, but it actually carries a much larger place in your learning because this is a space in which you can support each other and help to keep each other accountable for your projects. My TA (Kelly Sherman-Conroy) and I will be checking in regularly with your precepts, and we remain “on call” for any help or support you might need. Towards the end of the semester (Weeks 9 and forward), Kelly will have time in her schedule specifically to meet with you to help you fine-tune your capstone project.

### **Portfolio/Collection of Artifacts**

Artifacts are evidence of your learning within this degree program. They might include a paper, a Bible study, a curriculum resource, a sermon, a video, and so on, that was created during your degree program and which highlights an area of learning or a competency within your area of concentration. You will collect artifacts that demonstrate each of the areas highlighted below as a way of reflecting on and highlighting your learning. There are six areas identified.

You can – and should! -- choose artifacts from existing work within your previous courses and contextual learning experiences. You can refine such artifacts to highlight your current thinking or capacities, and to respond to any critical feedback you might have received on them from other faculty. The audience for this collection of artifacts is not your seminary peers, but rather people in the area you imagine serving in in the future. One way to think about this collection is that it could be presented to a potential employer or candidacy committee to showcase your ideas and provide artifacts of your work. You have a lot of freedom to determine where and how you would like to house these artifacts, but they need to be electronically available (for example, you could create a webpage using wordpress, you could create a collection of documents using google, etc.). At each assignment deadline you will provide me with a link to the artifact in question.

Your collection should have six sections: (1) an annotated bibliography of ministry resources connected to your concentration (CML, CCC, CYF, with a section on your specific research area), (2) a statement of your overall theological commitments, (3) a clear statement of your theology of ministry (with particular focus in your concentration), (4) a set of contextual learning resources, (5) a statement which articulates your theology of leadership (including reflection on your own leadership style, gifts, and competencies), and (6) a clear plan with assessable goals for future learning.

#### **Annotated bibliography with focus in your area of concentration**

Create an annotated bibliography for your concentration area by drawing together resources from the courses you have taken, and any other resources

you might have collected. Use the Chicago Style Guide, and include brief annotations for each resource (no more than 200 words for each). This annotation should be something that helps you to remember the resource in the distant future, and points you to specific elements you found useful within it. Your bibliography should include at least 20 resources, with a minimum of five theological sources, five theoretical sources, five practical sources, and five within your area of specialization. There are likely to be resources which fit in more than one category, but please only list them once. Resources can (and probably should be a mixture of books, articles, videos, websites, curricular materials, and so on.

### Statement of theological convictions

As a student with a master degree in theology, the ability to articulate your core theological commitments is extremely important. The goal for this artifact is to highlight your theological fluency by articulating your core theological and/or biblical commitments. You are free to use whatever format is most helpful for you here, but keep in mind that this artifact should help the reader (or viewer) understand your core theological commitments. Perhaps you've written a paper in a class which draws upon and integrates at least six to ten outside resources. Or perhaps you've produced a video which is 5 to 10 minutes long (again, with multiple theological convictions referenced). Perhaps you've developed a website or other curricular resource with multiple theological commitments described, referenced, and annotated. Any of these would be an appropriate artifact for this section of your portfolio collection.

### Statement of theology of ministry in your concentration area

Ministry concentration areas provide specificity and a clear sense of location for your leadership. It is important that you have the ability to articulate, in your own words, why theology matters to you in relation to your specific concentration. What theological metaphors sustain your understanding of leadership? What biblical imperatives offer you hope in the midst of struggle? Why are theological concepts an important part of how you describe your areas of passion and compassion? Perhaps you've done this as an assignment in a course paper, perhaps you have an example of a case study from your ministry context which embodies your theology of ministry. The goal for this section of your portfolio is to highlight your specific gifts and vocational passion through the lens and language of theology and/or the Bible. If you do this as a paper it will probably be 3-5 pages long (including citations). Whether a paper, a video, or some other media, your work should integrate theology, theory, and concrete ministry examples, and draw on at least 5 sources in addition to your own experience.

These three components of your portfolio should be submitted to me by **Monday, March 12th**

### Contextual learning ministry resources

Translating classroom learning and theory into practice is a competency that you hone over time. Given that much of your learning in this degree program has been done intentionally outside of Luther Seminary in contextual ministry sites, we want you to provide at least two original resources you have created and used in a ministry setting. These ministry resources serve as examples of your creative, on-the-ground leadership within a particular context. Examples of ministry resources could be Bible study sessions, curriculum resources for a grief and loss support group, a scope and sequence plan for a confirmation retreat, an outline and materials for a professional leadership development workshop, and so on. The length and format of such resource will vary. If you have any questions about what might be appropriate, please consult with me.

### A statement which articulates your theology of leadership (including reflection on your own leadership style, gifts, and competencies)

Throughout your time in this degree program you have taken various leadership inventories (eg. StrengthsFinder, MBTI, IDI, Enneagram, etc.) as well as worked with specific leadership frameworks (eg. Osmer, Root, Kegan, Latini, Wheatley, etc.). By now you should have at least a basic grasp of what you believe Christian public leadership consists in/of, as well as an understanding of how your gifts function within such leadership. In this section of your portfolio we want you to dig through your various previous assignments, and find and refine – or write – a paper which articulates your specific theology of leadership and describes your gifts in relationship to your call into leadership. This paper is likely 3-5 pages in length, and refers to specific resources from within your area of concentration.

### A clear plan for future learning with assessable goals

One of Luther Seminary's objectives is to foster lifelong learning among all of our graduates. This commitment is both a posture, that is a stance which is continually open to learning, as well as an intentionally strategic way of leading. As you approach the conclusion of this degree program, we are asking you to think very concretely about your next steps in learning by creating two or three specific learning goals for your first few years after seminary. These learning goals will help readers of your portfolio catch a glimpse of your continuing interests, as well as demonstrate your commitment to the ongoing nature of learning while leading.

These final three components of your portfolio should be submitted to me by **Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>**

## Capstone Project

During this semester you will construct a capstone project within your concentration area. Capstone projects address a particular ministry issue important to you using either Osmer or Leddy's practical theology approach as a base. Projects might focus on a particular ministry practice (eg., confirmation ministry, social justice advocacy, adult faith formation, hospice care, interim leadership), specific philosophical/theological issues (eg., the ethics of short-term mission, a Trinitarian understanding of communication practices, theological responses to religious pluralism in community development), or address a cultural phenomenon/reality (eg. racism, sexual harassment, cyber-bullying).

These 15 to 20 page (double spaced) papers make an original argument relevant to your area of concentration, and responsive to specific concerns within that concentration. Papers should be written using Chicago style citations and will be publicly defended before your peers. You will be evaluated on your ability to present a solid argument, mobilize Leddy or Osmer's practical theology hermeneutic, and respond appropriately to significant current issues in ministry. You need to submit your paper to me by Friday, April 20th, 2017 for feedback and grading and then present your project to your peers in a public defense on Friday, May 4th, 2017. (Note: if you are in the CYF concentration, your defense day will be Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>.) Please make a note of these dates! Defense day is a day of mutual learning and the final completion of your degree program. This day is open to the whole community as a showcase of excellent work in this area of study. Papers received after the April deadline will be docked 10 points and will have limited feedback from the professor. *(CYF students who meet the April deadline will be considered for the annual CYF prize, details of which are included at the end of this syllabus.)*

## Defense Day

You will present your projects to each other on Defense Day, which is either May 2<sup>nd</sup> (if you are in the CYF concentration) or May 4<sup>th</sup> 2018 (for all other concentrations), beginning at 8:30 am central time. This day will be a time of learning from each other as well as getting feedback and questions from a panel of faculty and staff. Your presentation will be done in *ignite* form, meaning you will offer the whole of your presentation in 20 slides that are timed for automatic advancement after 15 seconds each, for a total of no more than 5 minutes. Upon completion of the *ignite* presentation you will have fifteen minutes to field questions. You must be present for the specific session in which you are scheduled to present, but you are strongly urged to be there for the entire day. There will be a sign-up for sessions on that day, with more details available on Moodle by mid-term. You can find more information about *ignite* presentations here: <http://www.ignitetalks.io>

## GRADING

A word on grading. To pass the course you must be an active and constructive participant in precepts, as well as complete all of the written work. Given the communal learning process, there will be no unexcused absences. If you have an unavoidable need to miss a precept, please consult both with your precept and with me about alternatives. Late assignments will be accepted only if you get permission and make

other arrangements with me well before the due date. The criteria for each assignment are listed in the syllabus.

Grades will be determined by the following percentages:

Group Participation	20%
Portfolio	30%
Capstone Project	45%
Capstone Project Presentation	5%

Each assignment will be assessed on its own merits. Generally, however, I look for three main criteria, most of which I have borrowed heavily (read “lovingly pilfered”) from Adam Copeland, who in turn borrowed from Daniel Paul O’Donnell, Ryan Cordell, and Craig Carey:

How **compelling** is your work? An artifact or project is compelling when:

- it is polished, clear, and demonstrates deep engagement with the topic
- it is as interesting as the topic and approach allows
- it is as complete as its topic and approach allows (it doesn’t have huge gaps that you seemed to have skipped, or obvious points you have not considered)
- it is truthful (if the project is argumentative, does it convince? Is it accurate and honest?)

How **effective** is your work? An artifact or project is effective when:

- it is appropriate (i.e. does it correspond to the assignment, does it reflect the standards of written English, does it credit sources?)
- it is attractive (i.e. it is presented in a way that leads the audience to trust the author and their arguments, examples, and conclusions)
- it is readable/clickable/watchable/listenable (If appropriate....are the production values are appropriately high, etc.)

How **thoughtful** is your work? An artifact or project is thoughtful when:

- it reflects deep engagement with the topic, moving from reporting to analysis and staking claims
- it anticipates the audience’s reaction and shows appreciation of context
- it shows both intellectual humility and a willingness to make a particular/distinct argument

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1		Assignments
February 5th	<p>Research question for capstone project, and precept learning agreement</p>	<p><i>Precepts:</i> Check-in with group members, pray for and with each other, make a precept learning agreement, introduce your research questions/topic for your capstone project to each other, and begin to help one another refine that question/topic.</p> <p><i>Read:</i> McAlpin's and Osmer's practical theology hermeneutic, and choose which one you will work with</p> <p><i>Review:</i> Samples of previous projects posted in Moodle to view.</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Decide on your research question and note ideas and potential conversation partners (research, theologians, theorists) for each of the "moves" or moments in Osmer or Leddy.</p>
Week 2		Assignments
February 12th	<p>Annotated bibliography</p> <p>This is a good time to schedule a visit with the librarians and/or a faculty person in your area of interest for help in choosing and developing annotations.</p>	<p><i>Precepts:</i> Revisit your research question/topic, share annotated bibliographies, help each other connect resources with capstone projects, pray for and with each other.</p> <p><i>Review:</i> Look over the courses you've taken within the concentration and lift up the resources that are most important to you given your concentration and future work</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Take a first run at creating an annotated bibliography of 20 resources in the five categories above</p>

<b>Week 3</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
February 19th	Sign up for a time to meet with me	<p><i>Precepts:</i> none (meet with the professor instead)</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Decide research question or main idea for capstone practical theology project. Develop accompanying bibliography of five to six resources with notes on how they connect to your research question (these will likely form the specialized section of the annotated bibliography for your portfolio)</p>
<b>Week 4</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
February 27th	Theological commitments	<p><i>Precepts:</i> Share theological commitments, resources, and discuss each other's questions. Pray for and with each other.</p> <p><i>Review:</i> Review assignments in which theological commitments and missional ecclesiology are present</p> <p><i>Assignment:</i> Review papers which articulated your Theological Commitments. Note at least 6 resources that fit with your commitments, as well as 1 or 2 questions you want to ask during the precept.</p>
<b>Week 5</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
March 5th	Theology of ministry (with focus on concentration area)	<p><i>Precepts:</i> Discuss the process of writing a theology of ministry paper, in particular your key ideas about your theology of ministry within your concentration. Pray for and with each other.</p> <p><i>Review:</i> Review key courses within your concentration – in particular look toward your</p>

		<p>foundational courses (i.e. <i>Foundations of Pastoral Care work</i> or <i>Biblical and Theological Foundations for Mission</i> or <i>CYF Theological Frameworks</i>).</p> <p>Assignment: Upon revisiting previous work, choose one theology of ministry paper and refine it given your current understanding of ministry.</p>
<b>Week 6</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
March 12th	<p>Develop an outline for your capstone project, and remember that Part 1 of your portfolio/collection of artifacts is due to me by Monday, March 12th</p>	<p>Precepts: Discuss each other's capstone project draft outline, helping each other refine and expand. Pray for and with each other.</p> <p>Review: Your chosen practical theology hermeneutic, if needed.</p> <p>Assignment: Construct a draft outline using that theological hermeneutic.</p> <p>Complete Part 1 of your Portfolio/artifact collection.</p>
<b>Week 7</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
March 19th	<p>Outline for capstone project, sign-up to meet with professor</p>	<p>Precepts: none, meet with professor instead</p> <p>Assignment: Refine your capstone draft outline noting key ideas and resources for each of the areas of Osmer's or Leddy's practical theology hermeneutic.</p>
<b>Week 8</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
April 2nd	<p>Contextual learning resource</p>	<p>Precepts: Share a story from your contextual learning experience that impacted your view of ministry and/or leadership. Pray for and with each other. In addition, share two ministry resources you created and led, along with</p>

		<p>the insights you gained in using them.</p> <p>Review: Christian Public Leader in Context assignments and work done in context.</p> <p>Assignment: Choose two original resources created for leading ministry within your contextual ministry site.</p>
<b>Week 9</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
April 9th	Theology of Leadership and Personal Assessment of Leadership (including style, gifts, and competencies) and Goals for Future Learning	<p>Precepts: Discuss elements important to you in developing a theology of leadership and share what you have learned about yourself as a Christian Public Leader. Pray for and with each other.</p> <p>Review: Christian Public Leader in Context assignment, as well as other assignments from other courses on leadership.</p> <p>Assignment: Upon revisiting previous work, construct a theology of leadership paper, with a particular eye toward your current understanding of ministry. Include a personal assessment of yourself as a leader and two learning goals for the two years after graduation.</p>
<b>Week 10</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
April 16th	Capstone Practical Theology Project due by Friday, April 20th	<p>Precepts: none</p> <p>Assignment: Work on Capstone Practical Theology Project</p>
<b>Week 11</b>		<b>Assignments</b>
April 23rd	Part 2 of e-collections due by Friday, April 27th	<p>Precepts: none</p> <p>Assignment: Complete your portfolio collection, and hone your <i>ignite</i> presentation.</p>

Week 12		Assignments
May 4th	<b>Defense Day!</b>	Precepts: none Assignment: Prepare a five minute <i>ignite</i> presentation on your capstone project and participate in Defense Day

## POLICIES OF LUTHER SEMINARY

### ADA Compliance Statement

Reasonable accommodation will be provided to any student with a disability who is registered with the Student Resource Center and requests needed accommodation. If you are a student with a disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or accommodation in this class or any other class, please contact the Director of the Student Resource Center or contact your instructor directly.

### Academic Honesty

Members of the Luther Seminary community are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and honestly in academic matters. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses against this expectation and are subject to disciplinary action.

If instances of cheating or plagiarism are detected, one of the disciplinary actions shall follow: either the instructor records a failure for the assignment or examination, or the instructor records a failure for the course. In either case, the instructor shall bring the matter to the Office of the Academic Dean and the Office of the Dean of Students, and the question whether further disciplinary action should be considered will be determined in consultation with the instructor, the Office of the Academic Dean, and the Office of the Dean of Students. See the current Student Handbook for more details on this matter.

### Plagiarism

"Plagiarism is the dishonest act of presenting the words or thoughts of another writer as if they were your own.... If you quote from anything at all...you must put quotation marks around it, or set it off from your text. If you summarize or paraphrase an author's words, you must clearly indicate where the summary or paraphrase begins and ends.... In every instance you must formally acknowledge the written source from which you took the material." [Quoted from James A. W. Heffernan and John E. Lincoln, *Writing: A College Handbook* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1982), p.457.]

Some examples of plagiarism could include:

- Copying from a source text (whether online or offline) without proper acknowledgment.
- Turning in another student's work with or without that student's knowledge.
- Copying materials word-for-word from a source text, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing materials from a source text without appropriate documentation.
- Turning in a paper copied from a website.
- Recycling your own work from a previous assignment, without permission of the instructor or proper citation

If instances of cheating or plagiarism are detected, one of the disciplinary actions shall follow: either the instructor records a failure for the assignment or examination, or the instructor records a failure for the course. In either case, the instructor shall bring the matter to the Office of the Academic Dean and the Office of the Dean of Students, and the question whether further disciplinary action should be considered will be determined in consultation with the instructor, the Office of the Academic Dean, and the Office of the Dean of Students. See the current Student Handbook for more details on this matter.

### **Course Workload**

Throughout this course, students will be expected to engage in a total of 135 Student Learning Hours, which are divided between Guided Learning (precepts and meetings with the professor) and self-directed learning (reading, writing and other course work). This course is heavily weighted towards self-directed learning, with precepts being a primary source of collegial work.

A final word about the CYF prize:

#### CYF Prize

This prize is given annually to two students who demonstrate excellence in reflecting theologically, culturally, and pragmatically on the practice of children, youth, young adult, or family ministries.

#### Process for Evaluation

For capstone projects to be considered for the CYF prize they must be submitted by the April deadline. The professor will read all CYF capstone projects received (mostly from grading for class), and nominate ten papers to go through a blind review process. These ten papers will be blind reviewed and ranked by others (inside and outside Luther). From these blind rankings, four students will become finalists to be announced on Defense Day, with two students being the recipients and announced at graduation.

#### Review Criteria:

1. originality of thought (ability to mobilize theological and other theoretical ideas)
2. use of the hermeneutical circle, i.e. clear practical theological project directed toward the first third of life
3. clarity in argument/
4. ramifications for further study or implementation (this gives it both a field and scholarly possibility)

The CYF Prize consists of the following:

- Recognition in the graduation bulletin
- A small cash prize (\$100 each)
- The publishing of their thesis in *Youth Ministry Today*