

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS
As of 11/1/10

Between Sundays: Parish Life and Leadership

"That's the strangest thing about this life, about being in the ministry. People change the subject when they see you coming. And then sometimes those very same people come into your study and tell you the most remarkable things." From *Gilead: A Novel*, by Marilynne Robinson

Spring 2011
Fireside Room, Starr King School for the Ministry
Wednesday, 9:40am-12:30pm

Instructor: The Rev. Michelle Favreault, Visiting Professor
MFavreault@sksm.edu
Phone: (510) 549-4722
Office Hours: by appointment
FT 4062 3 Units
Minimum 5 Limit 20

I. Description:

This course will introduce students to the rich tapestry of Unitarian Universalist parish life and leadership. Participants will consider the joys and challenges of the day to day work that supports worship each week. From the personal power and authority of the pastor to the governance and organizational dynamics of community life, we will explore roles and relationships in the complex system of parish ministries. Through case studies, interviews and site visits, students will gain insight into the administrative and spiritual work that happens between Sundays.

II. Course Aims and Objectives:

Aims

This course will provide students seeking fellowship and ordination in Unitarian Universalist ministry develop an understanding of the myriad roles and responsibilities that clergy have as administrative executives.

Specific Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will have an increased understanding of the organizational and human/emotional systems of congregational life. The course will introduce students to the importance of collegial relationships through interactions in class (and on site) with clergy and religious professionals serving in parish settings.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Develop skills for analyzing contextual theologies and institutional patterns;
- Understand the distinct roles of clergy as pastor, teacher, priest, prophet, manager, supervisor, historian, visionary and worship leader while developing skills to empower lay leaders and religious professionals in

- discerning roles, relationships and accountability;
- Expand knowledge resources available for continuing education as well as appropriate sources for coaching and mentoring.
 - Understand the search and settlement system for parish leadership in the UUA and prepare a first draft of their self assessment materials for their online profile.

III. Format and Procedures:

Sessions will include guest presenters, case studies, lecture, discussion and ritual.

IV. Assumptions

The class will be designed with a context of Unitarian Universalist congregational settings. The instructor will assume that students have completed reading assignments as noted and participate in discussion referencing the reading assigned for the class.

V. Course Requirements:

1. Weekly class attendance and participation in exercises, conversation and assignments
*two or more absences (or 3+ partial class attendance days) will require a meeting to discuss the students ability to complete the course and may result in a need for the student to drop or fail the course.

2. Course Required Reading:

Serving with Grace: Lay Leadership as a Spiritual Practice

Author: [Erik Walker Wikstrom](#)

ISBN: 9781558965621

Publisher: Skinner House Books

Price: \$12.00

The Growing Church: Keys to Congregational Vitality

Edited by: [Thom Belote](#)

ISBN: 9781558965591

Publisher: Skinner House Books

Price: \$12.00

Reverend X: How Generation X Ministers are Shaping Unitarian Universalism

Edited by: Tamara Lebak and Bret Lortie

SKU:asuc003 (no ISBN)

Jenkin Lloyd Jones Press

Price: \$14.00

Salsa, Soul and Spirit

Author: Juana Bordes

ISBN: 9781576754320

Publisher: Berrett-Koehler

Price: \$21.95

Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What
Author: Peter Steinke
ISBN: 1-56699-328-9
Publisher: Alban
Price: \$18.00

(b) Supplemental reading in the form of handouts or web-based resources may be offered
(c) optional texts* students will select one book (to review) from a selection of congregational management theory.

3. Assignments

Assignment #1 – due in Class Feb 16.

Reflection Paper: What is a leader? How are pastoral, priestly, prophetic, teaching, executive and “other” roles played out in your vision of ministry?

Assignment #2 - Case Study, in conversation with a UUMA member/clergy mentor: describe a congregational situation that it is important for a new minister to consider. Discuss the congregational context, presenting issue, options for addressing the issue, and a conclusion based on actual events. Due in class March 16.

Assignment #3 – Book Review (to be shared in class) 750-1000 words. Due March 30

Assignment #4 - The final reflection paper is designed as an articulation of your theology of leadership and preparation for congregational leadership/discernment. Due by 10 am May 18.

V. Grading Procedures

It is expected that most students will be following the SKSM student handbook guidelines and the Pass/Fail option. Students requesting a grade will be evaluated on the timely completion of all assignments and the quality of work presented.

VIII. Tentative Course Schedule

Feb 2 – Introductions – The Context of Congregational Life
Multiracial/Multicultural/Multiethnic Identity Issues

Feb 9 – Social Media and Clergy Privacy
Start reading of Minister X

Feb 16 – From Generation to Generation – Issues in ministering to people of “a certain age”
Retired Ministers Panel
Complete reading of Minister X

Feb 23 – Minister as Leader of a Staff Team
Start reading of Steinke
Reading Belote

March 2- Professional Identity and Boundaries

Read: UUMA Guidelines, continue with Steinke

Good Officers presentation

-article on depression

March 9 – Ethics and Safety

Complete Reading of Steinke

March 16 – Financial Issues and Congregational Stewardship

Reading Wickstrom

Case Study Due

March 23 – Reading Week

March 30 – Ministering with Families (and Family Systems in the Congregation)

Book Review Due

April 6 – Growing Congregations

Multi-Multi Future

Governance

Bordes Reading

Reading Belote

April 13 – Administration and Polity

Wickstrom Reading

Reading Belote

April 20 – Building Community (within and beyond “these walls”)

Building Projects, Congregation as Community Center, and Leadership in the City

Bringing Worship to the City Streets

Bordes Reading:

April 27 – Search and Settlement Issues

Reading from UUA

May 4 – Growth and Change for Clergy and Congregations

Reading from Wickstrom

Reading from Bordes

May 11 – Wrap Up Session and Final Evaluations

May 18 – Final Papers due by 10 am

