

COURSE SYLLABUS

Core Intensive: Theology and Ethics for UU Ministerial Leadership

Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt

Monday-Friday August 19-23, 2019

Time: 10 am – 1 pm; 2 pm-6 pm **[PLEASE NOTE TIME]**

This required course is meant to examine the many roles of the minister, as viewed through traditional ordination vows of **worship, instruction, counsel, administration and service**. Close attention will be paid to the issues of ethics and accountability that attend these roles. We'll read, do role plays, and have lots of discussions about matters that face UU ministers in both parish and community settings. Most importantly, the First Rule of Ministry will be revealed!

Learning Objectives

Through this course, students will:

- Gain clarity about ministerial roles
- Understand more clearly ministerial authority and its appropriate use
- Examine issues of power between ministers and congregations/organizations
- Grasp the importance of spiritual practice in ministerial life
- Confirm the rightness of call in their lives

Procedure

Following a format that includes opening and closing prayer each day, our class will engage the question of how to be a minister in a variety of formats. Class discussions will be a major aspect of this intensive, supported by readings, role playing exercises and other formats as necessary. Current events will **always** be part of the work of the class.

GRADING/EVALUATION

In keeping with Starr King's educational philosophy, this course is offered on a credit/no-credit basis (grade recorded on the GTU system as P/F). I will provide a narrative evaluation of your work which will assess your performance in the different areas and requirements outlined below. The assessment will include class attendance, class participation, and demonstration of a thoughtful engagement with all elements of the class.

If you need or desire to receive letter grades please notify the instructors. For people requesting letter grades, we follow PSR guidelines (<http://www.psr.edu/grades>).

Class Attendance - Attendance and participation in class discussions are essential components of this course, and all students are required to attend class and participate actively. Please **be on time. Please refrain from texting, e-mailing or surfing the Internet for personal reasons during class.** If you are waiting for an important call (e.g. as a chaplain, on a family emergency), please notify the instructors and sit next to the exit door.

Class Participation - It is absolutely essential to individual and group learning that you approach the beginning of this course having completed the required readings and prepared to engage in group discussions.

Final Paper – Please write a final reflection paper that addresses what you’ve learned about ministry in each of the vows discussed (worship, instruction, counsel, administration, service). Supplement your learning with examples from relevant class texts.

Credits and workload: **this is a 3 credit, graduate-level class.**

Assignments:

For **Monday** class session: Read: Nouwen book; Sawyer article listed below; Chapter 8 of Greenwood and Harris (available on Moodle); Arnason/Rolenz book. Come with your favorite worship story.

For **Tuesday** class session: Read the complete curriculum *Resistance and Transformation*. Come prepared to teach a unit to your “congregational” group. Be prepared to discuss something you learned in adult religious education, in this curriculum, or another. Be prepared to discuss the other ways ministers “instruct.”

For **Wednesday** class session: Read Gula book on Professional Ethics in Pastoral Ministry, UUMA Professional Guidelines and Codes of Conduct, including social media guidelines. Be ready to talk about your most difficult ethical challenge in church life so far.

For **Thursday** class session: UUA Commission on Appraisal: Who’s in Charge Here? The Complex Relationship between Ministry and Authority.

What does this book tell you about administration in a congregational system? What does it leave out? Come prepared to discuss your administrative experiences, failures and successes. If you don’t have such experiences, what surprised you most in this text?

For **Friday** class session: Read Ferguson and Faith by Gunning. What is the difference between working in service and working for justice? Be prepared to discuss times when you have done both, and how you discerned the difference.

REQUIRED READING

Greenwood, Andrea and Harris, Mark W. *An Introduction to the Unitarian and Universalist Traditions*. Cambridge University Press. **978-0521707718**. Chapter 8, "Worship," pgs. 147-165.

Arnason, Wayne and Rolenz, Kathleen. *Worship that Works: Theory and Practice for Unitarian Universalists*. Skinner House Books. **978-1558965263**.

Bossen, Colin and Hamilton, Julia. *Resistance and Transformation: Unitarian Universalist Social Justice History*. Tapestry of Faith, Adult Programs. Available online: <https://bit.ly/2zoDagm>

Francis, Leah Gunning. *Ferguson and Faith: Sparking Leadership and Awakening Community*. Chalice Press, 2015. **978-0827211056**.

Gula, Richard M. *Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministry*. Paulist Press, 2010. **978-0809146314**.

Nouwen, Henri J. M. *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*. Doubleday, 1979. **978-0385148030**.

Sawyer, Ken. "It's the Minister: The Mystery and the Magic of the Role." 2007 Essay, the Ministerial Conference at Berry Street. Available online: bit.ly/2L4qRr1

UUA Commission on Appraisal *Who's In Charge Here: The Complex Relationship between Ministry and Authority*. **9781558967083**

UUMA Code of Conduct; Guidelines; guidelines for social media. Available online:

bit.ly/2KL5EXb