



ASSEMBLIES *of* GOD
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY

Contextual Education Manual

OFFICE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

1435 N. Glenstone Avenue

Springfield, Missouri

(417) 268-1044

(800) 467-2487, ext. 1044

E-mail: agts-ext@agseminary.edu

biblical answers...ministry empowerment...global impact...

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The Contextual Education Manual was developed by Randy C. Walls, Director of Continuing Education and Jay P. Taylor, Director of Student Life.

DEFINITIONS

Contextual Education - Contextual education is a practical learning experience in which the continuing education participant is exposed to varied aspects of Christian ministry in approved contexts. This program provides an opportunity for reflection on the theology and practice of ministry within one's ministry setting. It is a unique opportunity to earn academic credit through field based practical ministry under the supervision of an AGTS advisor.

Academic Supervision - The supervisory role of the AGTS advisor centers upon producing a learning contract with the contextual education participant. The advisor will work with the participant to insure the integrity and viability of the practical learning experience. The advisor will also provide a final assessment of the participant's performance in the learning contract.

Learning Contract - The learning contract is an agreement between the AGTS advisor and the contextual education participant. It will define the content and the process of the learning experience.

TIME EXPECTATIONS

The contextual education experience will proceed for one 15-week time period, depending upon the program choice of the continuing education participant. It is expected that the participant will complete at least 150 hours of field based ministry during this 15 week period. Three credit hours will be granted for this program when satisfactorily completed. The beginning of the 15-week period will be determined by the AGTS advisor in the learning contract.

OUTCOME EXPECTATIONS

The contextual education experience should result in the following for the continuing education participant:

1. Improvement of the performance skills needed to effectively function in the sphere of ministry emphasized in the learning experience.
2. Enhancement of the evaluative skills needed to effectively identify the key objectives in performing the ministry emphasized in the learning experience.

3. Appreciation of the value of in-depth reflection on the sphere of ministry emphasized in the learning experience.

HOW THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE IS ESTABLISHED

REQUEST

A request must be made to the AGTS Office of Continuing Education for approval to take the contextual education learning experience (complete the Course Selection Form online).

http://www.agts.edu/continuing_education/ce_course_selection_form.html

PROPOSAL

The participant shall present a proposal to the AGTS advisor, which must contain the following details:

1. **Ministry context** - the environment in which the learning experience is to take place. This should include specific details regarding the geographic location of the ministry sphere and the demographic data of its constituents, as well as any other information that will assist in developing the content and process of the learning contract.
2. **Ministry need** - the particular area within the ministry context that will become the focus of the learning experience. This will identify the target audience and the proposed ministry goals.
3. **Ministry strategy** - the means by which the ministry need will be met during the learning experience. This should include the details and chronology of the programmed plan for meeting the ministry need.
4. **Ministry assessment** - the means by which the ministry output will be evaluated. What do you consider to be the key points for assessing the effectiveness of the ministry program implemented to meet the ministry need?

If necessary, the AGTS advisor will dialogue with the participant regarding the submitted proposal to insure that it meets the standards of a proper graduate level field-based learning experience. The participant will then resubmit the proposal based on the changes agreed upon in the dialogue with the advisor.

CONTRACT

The AGTS advisor will develop a learning contract for the contextual education participant based upon the proposed ministry model. It will seek to integrate the uniqueness of the participant's proposal with the general standards for contextual education. Thus, an intentionally personalized learning plan will be established for each participant that will provide an opportunity for studying a variety of ministry settings.

GRADING

The grading of the contextual education learning experience will be based upon the participant's level of performance in the following areas:

- Accomplishment of the intended ministry goals.
- Maintenance of the integrity of the proposal and contract within the learning experience.
- Exhibition of graduate level competency in every area of the learning experience.

The grading scale for the contextual education experience is as follows:

- S** - Satisfactory. Represents a contextual education participant's performance at a highly effective ministry level.
- M** - Marginal. Represents a contextual education participant's performance at a minimally effective ministry level.
- U** - Unsatisfactory. Represents a contextual education participant's performance at an unacceptable level of ministry effectiveness.

DIRECTORY OF APPENDICES

The attached documents are created samples intended to provide the contextual education participant with a general model of what will be expected and used in the actual learning experience.

ProposalA

Learning ContractB

SAMPLE PROPOSAL

I, Rev. Joe Par Ticipant, submit the following proposal for consideration as a partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Contextual Education portion of the AGTS Master of Arts in Christian Ministries degree program.

1. Ministry context

Anytown, USA is a midwestern metropolitan area with a population of about 180,000. This is comprised of a central city of 80,000 people and five suburban communities of approximately 20,000 each. The area is representative of a cross-section of second and third generation ethnic groupings, predominantly Caucasian. The African American, Hispanic, and Asian American communities, who comprise about 12% of the population of the total metropolitan area, are located in the central urban center of the area in low income housing most of which is government subsidized. Christian Fellowship Church is church of 400 people located in the northeastern suburban community. The pastoral staff is comprised of a Senior Pastor and three Associate Pastors, myself being the Associate Pastor of Leadership and Ministry Development. I have been on staff at the church for 5 years. The congregation is predominantly comprised of a mixed Irish and Native American ethnic heritage, baby boomers, middle class, white collar, and well educated (several with graduate degrees). The worship style of the Church is contemporary. The senior pastor, who is in his 50's, is a graduate of Evangelical Seminary, with an MDiv degree. He has been the pastor of Christian Fellowship for 12 years and has developed a strong worship community with an emphasis upon personal discipleship. The church is well versed in the Bible and in Christian doctrine, and are very generous in their giving to support both home and foreign missions. The general fund of the church is very healthy with adequate resources to maintain current ministry programs as well as to implement new ministry efforts.

2. Ministry need

Over the last six months the pastoral staff has been discussing and praying about how we may more effectively reach out to the ethnic groups in the low income housing of the urban center of our community. Since the demographics of this area are significantly different from our own community make-up, we want to be careful to design an outreach program that will enable us to fulfill the primary objectives of evangelism. Thus we want to embark upon a spearhead evangelistic campaign through which we can penetrate the community and establish an ongoing care-giving relationship with these groups.

3. Ministry strategy

Since we have decided to use a block party/carnival as the vehicle for our outreach, we will have a variety of ministries that will need lay leadership involvement. My role in the outreach campaign will be to equip the key lay leaders to facilitate the ministry team. We will need 10 lay leaders to cover the following areas of the outreach:

- Activities/Booths
- Advertising/Promotion
- Altar Workers/Prayer Team
- Children's Ministry
- Concessions
- Equipment
- Music Ministry
- Personal Evangelism
- Sidewalk Performers
- Youth Ministry

I will serve as the general coordinator for the event with these 10 people as the steering committee.

The plan for this 15-week period is as follows:

- a) Phase One - **Recruitment** - the pastoral staff will meet to select the steering committee for this event. I will follow up with the invitation to each of them to serve in their particular roles on the committee. (one week)
- b) Phase Two - **Promotion** - a church wide promotional campaign will be enacted in order to assimilate as many people into the ministry process as is possible. Our design is not only to have people at the event equipped for intentional ministry, but also to promote the event on a larger scale as a fellowship/ministry in which the entire congregation can participate. (whole 15 week period)
- c) Phase Three - **Training** - there will be key areas in the outreach that will require specialized training for the lay leaders. I will develop the materials for a one-month (once a week) leadership training course which I, along with other staff will teach. (weeks two through five)

- d) Phase Four - **Planning** - the steering committee will begin planning the event, including promotion, staff, and activities. (weeks six through ten)
- e) Phase Five - **Implementation** - the last five weeks of the outreach preparation will be focused upon the final recruitment, promotion, and resource acquisition. (weeks eleven through fifteen)

4. Ministry assessment

I believe that this field-based learning experience can be best assessed by focusing on my performance in the following areas:

1) Organizational ability

How effectively do I plan the various elements of the ministry development process? Are my thought processes and organization structures consistent with the goals and objectives of the overall ministry effort? Does my organization enable or inhibit the ministry development process?

2) Interpersonal skills

How well do I work with the pastoral staff and lay ministers? Do I take an active role in providing the needed leadership and guidance for assisting them in maintaining their proper focus? Do I respond favorably to their input, seeking to incorporate all of the ideas proposed into the final outcome of the ministry effort?

3) Communication skills

Do I make a concerted effort to monitor the written and verbal communication with the people involved in this ministry equipping process to make sure that I accurately reflect my intentions? Am I serving as the communication link with all the parties involved to make sure that everyone is tied into the community information line? In the equipping sessions, do I utilize several kinds of communication, i.e. verbal, non-verbal, media, to maximize the teaching event?

4) Research/Study Skills

Am I taking advantage of the resources that are available to me to increase my own learning curve? Am I spending adequate time in preparation to make sure that I have created a well-constructed lesson plan? Am I developing a teaching plan with a progressive and practical learning element for the program participants?

SAMPLE LEARNING CONTRACT

Based upon the proposal submitted by Rev. Joe Par Ticipant, the following elements of this learning contract are outlined to define Joe's expected performance in the AGTS contextual education learning process.

- a) Phase One - **Recruitment**. Turn in a copy of the following items:
 - All significant written communication to the pastoral staff
 - Agenda/minutes for staff recruitment meeting
 - Initial written communication to the lay leaders
- b) Phase Two - **Promotion**. Turn in a copy of the following items:
 - All printed promotional materials, including weekly bulletins, inserts, mailers, etc.
- c) Phase Three - **Training**. Turn in a copy of the following items:
 - All lesson plans for the leadership training course, including a bibliography of materials used in their development
- d) Phase Four - **Planning**. Turn in a copy of the following items:
 - All significant written communication to the steering committee
 - Agenda/minutes for the steering committee
- e) Phase Five - **Implementation**. Turn in a copy of the following items:
 - All significant written communication to the staff, leadership, church, and community.
- f) Phase Six - **Outcome Project**. The final project of this contextual education experience will be an analytical reflection paper of not less than 10 pages identifying the primary elements of ministry growth in the field-based learning experience and assessing its overall value. This paper should follow the format of the latest edition of the Turabian style manual.