

Associated Canadian Theological Schools of Trinity Western University

CHM 595: Managing Volunteers

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Leadership and Practical Theology
Spring, 2018
3 credit hours

Course Fees – \$30

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Course Duration: Jan. 8 – Apr. 7, 2018
Course Module: Feb. 22-23, 2018
(9:00 am – 4:00 pm)

Note: This course has both a live-stream option and an online option. Students may participate by attending classes in person on campus, through interactive online live-streaming of class sessions or in a forum-based online format (you must register for one of these three options). For those who attend on campus, the class experience will be essentially like that of any other course. For those who plan to join by live-streaming, please see a more detailed description with guidelines and participation requirements in [Appendix A](#) at the end of this syllabus. Online students will watch recordings of the class modular content and then participate in the forums like the rest of the class.

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Course Description

The *Managing Volunteers* course will help you sharpen skills related to recruiting and serving volunteers in ways that help volunteers live out their calling with excellence and a deep sense of fulfillment while making an important contribution to the ministry or program in which they volunteer.

The course will help you understand and utilize key concepts and practices related to managing volunteers. In the course, you will assess the volunteer practices of a ministry, program or organization (preferably the one in which you currently serve). You will explore and discuss books and other materials that describe some of the qualities and common characteristics of volunteers. This information will help you grow in your understanding of what motivates (and releases) people to volunteer.

The course will also help you to discover how to recruit outstanding volunteers.

The course connects servant leadership with the topic of managing volunteers. How do servant leaders support volunteers within their organization? As a part of providing support, how can servant leaders foster a learning orientation amongst their volunteers and provide training which helps them grow and serve with satisfaction and effectiveness?

Throughout the *Managing Volunteers* course, you will explore various theories related to managing volunteers, interrogate them, and use the emergent knowledge to formulate and implement volunteerism “best practices” for your ministry, program or organization.

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Objectives

This course will help you:

- Develop a stronger servant leadership approach to managing and serving volunteers.
- Gain an appreciation for the state of volunteerism in North America.
- Bridge theories associated with managing volunteers with successful best practices.
- Assess the motivational factors that prompt people to volunteer.
- Create strategies for recruiting outstanding volunteers.
- Evaluate what makes a good volunteer coordinator.
- Explore additional issues related to volunteerism including managing virtual volunteers, generational differences amongst volunteers, risk management and new roles for managers of volunteers.

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Course Textbooks/Resources

Books

McCurley, Steve & Rick Lynch. *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All the Resources of the Community* (3rd ed.). Plattsburgh, NY: InterPub Group, 2011. 416 pages.

McKee, Jonathan and Thomas McKee. *The New Breed: Understanding and Equipping the 21st Century Volunteer*. 2nd ed. Loveland, CO: Group, 2012. 278 pages.

Morgan, Tony and Tim Stevens. *Simply Strategic Volunteers: Empowering People for Ministry*. Loveland, CO: Group, 2005. 232 pages.

Electronic Resources (these will be available in the online classroom)

Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2007 Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating. Statistics Canada, 2007. 93 pages

Fryar, Andy, Rob Jackson and Fraser Dyer (eds). *Turning Your Organisation into a Volunteer Magnet*, 2004. 60 pages.

Take the First Step: Understanding Volunteer Screening [in Faith Communities]. Ontario Screening Initiative – Volunteer Canada. 12 pages

The Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement. Volunteer Canada, 2006. 21 pages.

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Course Assignments

There are seven assignments for this course: [Online Forums](#), [Volunteer Management Audit](#), [Course Reading and Ideas Portfolio](#), [Strategic Plan](#), [Major Paper on a Topic Related to Managing Volunteers](#), [Boosting Your Approach with Volunteers](#) assignment, and the [course evaluation](#). If you ever have an idea for an alternative assignment that you believe would have greater value and would still meet the objectives of the course, feel free to talk with me about it. In addition, feel free to use other formats (e.g. PowerPoints, videos) for your assignments. Please double-space all written assignments.

Assignments are due by midnight (your time) on the day they are due. I would ask that you submit your assignments in the online learning classroom accessible through MyCourses. When you go to the online classroom, you will see assignment folders where you can submit assignments. Once I have marked your assignment, I will put it in your grade book in the online classroom where you can check your grade and review the comments I made on the assignment (you will receive an automatic notification whenever I put a graded assignment in your grade book). Please note that I will typically deduct 5% of an assignment's total possible value for each day that it is late. Having said that, if you find that you are unable to complete an assignment on time, I will grant one extension of up to one week for one assignment during the course (without penalty) when you inform me of your need for an extension before the due date for that particular assignment. This does not include assignments due at the end of the course. I will also consider extensions in exceptional circumstances such as a medical emergency (when a doctor's note accompanies the request). For the times when I allow a student to rewrite an assignment, I will generally take off 20% of the assignment's value before assigning a grade to the rewritten assignment.

Here is an overview of all the assignments followed by a detailed description of them (you can click on the assignment links to go right to the description).

Overview of Assignments (click on link to go to description)

| Due Date | Assignments | Percentage of Final Grade | Cumulative Percentage |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| January 15-20 | Online Forum Week #1 | 5% | 5% |
| February 3 | Volunteer Management Audit | 10% | 15% |
| February 5-10 | Online Forum Week #2 | 5% | 20% |
| February 17 | Course Reading and Ideas Portfolio | 15% | 35% |
| February 26 – March 3 | Online Forum Week #3 | 5% | 40% |
| March 10 | Strategic Plan | 10% | 50% |
| March 24 | Major Paper on a Topic Related to Managing Volunteers | 30% | 80% |
| March 26-31 | Online Forum Week #4 | 5% | 85% |
| April 7 | Boost Your Approach with Volunteers | 15% | 100% |
| April 7 | Course Evaluation | | 100% |

Online Forum Participation (20% of the final grade)

This course has four online forum weeks where you will have an opportunity to interact with others in the class around key questions, assignments and/or additional lecture material. You should plan to invest approximately three to four hours into each forum week. Each forum is worth 5% of your final grade.

Here is when the forum weeks will happen (please note that the forum weeks start on a Monday and end on a Saturday):

- January 15-20
- February 5-10
- February 26 – March 3
- March 26-31

Students are expected to contribute to the forum discussions by posting a minimum of four conversational (worth up to 10 points each) and three substantive contributions (worth up to 20 points each) per forum week. Please make sure that you spread out your contributions over at least three days during the designated forum weeks so that you engage in the forum conversations at different points.

By conversational contributions, I mean simply joining the flow of discussion with shorter responses (e.g. questions, affirmations, quick thoughts about what someone has said).

By substantive responses, I mean responses that show a deep processing of relevant ideas (this usually takes 200-300 words). We have a tremendous opportunity to build upon one another's knowledge, insights, and experience. Our goal is to collaborate in the forum. At times, we will respectfully challenge

each other. We anticipate that this will be a rich time of dialogue. To create a safe environment for this to take place, we must build a supportive subculture that encourages one another. Disagreeing and challenging can be stimulating if done in an edifying manner.

Substantive participation may include (among other things):

- ❖ Providing and developing a new thought, idea, or perspective.
- ❖ Citing an experience or example of what we are learning and showing how it applies.
- ❖ Adding a new twist on a perspective.
- ❖ Critically reflecting on an idea/concept.
- ❖ Questioning or challenging a principle/perspective and giving reasons for your questioning.
- ❖ Integrating Scripture and other sources in a meaningful way

What Substantive Participation is NOT:

- ❖ Very basic comments such as “I agree” or “I disagree.”
- ❖ Restating what someone has said (*unless there is a direct purpose in doing so*).
- ❖ Disrespectfully disagreeing.
- ❖ Pat answers that are not thought-provoking.

Below are examples of how to stimulate your own and others’ thinking:

- ❖ What would happen if...
- ❖ Other times it may be helpful to...
- ❖ It is my understanding...what is your experience with this?
- ❖ You might approach this from...
- ❖ Is it possible that...
- ❖ Would you consider...
- ❖ Maybe...
- ❖ Possibly...
- ❖ Sometimes...
- ❖ I'm wondering if...
- ❖ Do you think...

Have fun!

Note: You can use any of your forum posts in other papers for this course. I would also encourage you to view the posts of others as resources that you can cite in your papers. Everyone brings a wealth of insights into the class!

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Volunteer Management Audit (10% of the final grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to evaluate your group’s approach to volunteerism. As a part of this assignment, read the *Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement* and complete the *Volunteer Management Audit* on a ministry, program or organization of which you are a

part (both documents are in the “Course Materials” section of the online classroom). The Canada Volunteerism Initiative, funded by the Government of Canada, produced the documents as a way of helping volunteer coordinators assess the effectiveness of their programs against widely accepted standards for volunteer programs.

Because 360-degree evaluations add different perspectives to the evaluation results, I would like you to work through the Volunteer Management Audit with at least two other people who are part of the ministry, program or organization that you are evaluating (this should take place in a face-to-face meeting, if possible). Please include details as you go through the audit (e.g. if your ministry has various ways of recruiting volunteers, what are they?). Feel free to skip aspects of the audit that may not apply to your ministry. After you have done the audit, agree on three of the twelve standards that you believe your ministry should focus on developing over the next year (e.g. you might choose Standard Eight: Orientation and Training as one of your target areas). When you submit the completed audit document, include a one-page summary of the three standards your group chose and your rationale for choosing them. For the strategic plan assignment, you will develop a detailed strategic plan around these three standards.

This assignment is due February 3.

Note: This assignment assumes that you are currently volunteering in a ministry (or program or organization) or that you oversee volunteers as part of a paid position. If you are not currently serving in one of these capacities and cannot do so this semester, please contact me to discuss alternative assignments.

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Course Reading and Ideas Portfolio (15% of the final grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to glean ideas from others who have considerable experience working with volunteers (aka. the authors of the course reading materials). As you read the course textbooks and electronic resources, create an “Ideas Portfolio” that includes key ideas or best practices related to volunteering that you may want to incorporate into your ministry, program or organization (feel free to add ideas that may not be directly from the course reading materials). Organize the ideas/practices around the twelve standards in the Volunteer Management Audit (you can add new standards, if necessary) focusing on the three standards you and your evaluation team identified as growth areas in the Volunteer Management Audit assignment. Make sure that you include citations for the ideas/practices (author’s last name and page number is fine for this assignment).

You may submit this assignment as an eight-page paper (point-form is fine) or 12-slide PowerPoint or Prezi (this second option may work well for presenting your ideas to your evaluation team for the strategic plan assignment).

The assignment is due February 17.

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Strategic Plan (10% of the final grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to work with your evaluation team to design a strategic plan for making the volunteer dimension of your ministry, program or organization even stronger. Go through the ideas portfolio you created for assignment two with your evaluation team. Brainstorm new possibilities and develop a strategic plan that you believe will strengthen your ministry's approach to volunteers.

For the written part of this assignment, describe the process you followed with your evaluation team. List three major objectives related to the three standards (one objective for each standard) that you identified as strategic growth areas in the Volunteer Management Audit (feel free to make the wording more appealing to those in your context). Then, develop at least five SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) goals for each objective. Include a brief rationale as to why you believe these SMART goals will help you achieve the objectives.

The maximum length of this assignment is three pages. It is due March 10.

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Major Paper on a Topic Related to Managing Volunteers (30% of the final grade)

The purpose of this major paper is to give you an opportunity to research a particular topic related to managing volunteers in an in-depth way. This area should be one of particular interest to you and one that you think has good potential for growth in your current or future ministry (I suspect that this will become increasingly clearer as you do the first few assignments). You can research a general topic like "recruiting volunteers" or you can go with a specific topic like "recruiting millennial volunteers." For this paper, I expect a rigorous integration of the course materials (readings and class discussions) and at least five additional sources. Here are just a few of the many topic possibilities:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Training volunteers
- What motivates people to volunteer
- A theology of volunteerism
- Jesus' approach to serving volunteers
- Managing virtual volunteers
- Recruiting retirees
- Risk management with volunteers
- Creating a volunteer-friendly culture
- Evaluating volunteer performance
- Preparing youth ministry volunteers for success
- Safety issues
- Recognizing and encouraging volunteers
- Ethical issues in managing volunteers
- Other

The maximum length for this paper is 10 pages. It is due March 24.

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Boost Your Approach with Volunteers (20% of the final grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to develop a practical tool or implement an activity that you believe will strengthen your approach with your volunteers in your ministry, program or organization. Here are three options:

Option #1 - Volunteers Training Event – For this option, you can design and deliver a training event (or multiple training events) for your volunteers that is/are at least one hour in duration. Please include your instructional notes, PowerPoint, handouts and any other materials that you use for the training event(s). Include a two-page evaluative summary of the event(s) (what went well, what you would change for next time, etc.)

OR

Option #2 - Volunteers Policy Manual - The policy manual is an eight-page guide that covers key issues we have addressed in this course and is specifically designed for use in your ministry, program or organization. The goal of the manual is to help leaders in your organization know how to effectively administrate volunteer programs that serve the volunteers and the organization well

OR

Option #3 – Create Your Own Tool or Activity – For this option, you can design your own tool or activity that you believe will boost your approach with volunteers. If you choose this option, please submit your proposal to me by March 3.

This assignment is due by March 24.

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Course Evaluation

During the semester, you will receive a notice from the ACTS office about how you can complete the course evaluation for CHM 595. Because your feedback is very important to me (I will often change future offerings of a course based on the feedback I receive from students), I have made the course evaluation a required part of the course. Once you have completed the course evaluation (by April 7 or the deadline specified by the ACTS office), please email me (randy.wolf@twu.ca) to let me know. I will then be able to release your final mark (after I finish marking your other assignments, of course 😊).

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Grading Scale

| Letter Grade | Percentage | Description | Grade Point | Meaning in Graduate Work |
|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| A+ | 97-100 | Superior | 4.30 | Exceptionally well-reasoned, compelling development of position. Outstanding incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Strikingly appropriate examples. Extraordinary insight, critical analytical and evaluative ability, and creativity. Superlative style |

| | | | | |
|----|----------|----------------|------|--|
| | | | | and language usage. Makes an original contribution and is potentially publishable. |
| A | 93-96.99 | Excellent | 4.00 | Well-argued and convincing development of position. Insightful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Notably appropriate examples. Excellent insight, critical analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Impressive style and language use. |
| A- | 90-92.99 | Very Good | 3.70 | Thorough and plausible development of position. Skilful incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Very good examples. Very good insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Commendable and fluent style and language usage. |
| B+ | 87-89.99 | Proficient | 3.30 | Proficient development of position. Appropriate incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Relevant examples. Good quality insight, analytic and evaluative ability, and creativity. Clear and correct style and language usage. |
| B | 83-86.99 | Good | 3.00 | Competent development of position, but possibly with some gaps and/or limitations. Good incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Good examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally good style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws. |
| B- | 80-82.99 | Average | 2.70 | Average development of position, but with obvious gaps and/or limitations. Satisfactory incorporation of personal vision as well as of references and resources. Satisfactory examples. Reasonable insight, analytic and evaluative ability. Little creativity. Generally satisfactory style and language usage, but possibly with some minor flaws. |
| C+ | 77-79.99 | Adequate | 2.30 | Adequate development of position with significant gaps and/or limitations. Some incorporation of personal vision as well as references and resources. Adequate use of examples. Very little creativity. Considerable number of issues related to coherence and style. |
| C | 73-76.99 | Acceptable | 2.00 | Limited development of position with a noticeable lack of consistency with personal vision or references. Limited integration with external sources. Acceptable analytic and evaluative ability. Numerous weaknesses in terms of clarity, coherence, and grammar. |
| C- | 70-72.99 | Needs Work | 1.70 | Passable but unimpressive development of position. Position not completely consistent with personal vision or references and resources not taken fully into account or examples are basic or not completely convincing or barely acceptable insight and analytic and evaluative ability. Adequate style and language usage, but with weaknesses in some respects (e.g., clarity, coherence, grammar). Overall quality shows noticeable deficiencies. |
| F | Below 70 | Below Standard | 0.00 | Unacceptable work at graduate level. Shows lack of understanding and/or competence in several of the criteria described above. This grade is a failing grade at the graduate level. |

Note: This grading rubric is an adaptation of the one used in the MA in Leadership and MA in Educational Leadership programs at TWU.

Assignment Assessment

When I assess written assignments and presentations, I tend to look for the following:

- Appropriateness – The content matches the requirements of the assignments.
- Substantiveness – The content reveals deeper level thinking. This may take the form of critiquing existing ideas and proposing new ones. It may involve applying ideas from the readings and class discussions in deeply personal ways. It could also include a novel integration

of ideas from various sources. As you think about substantiveness, I would also ask you to go beyond “left brain” thinking that focuses on systematic and logical thinking. Add “right brain” analysis that views concepts in intuitive and more holistic ways. This may involve viewing assignment topics from creative vantage points by using word pictures, analogies, metaphors, pictures, diagrams, drama, poetry, music, and other creative devices that can often enrich conceptual meaning and make it more personal. In order to get an A on an assignment, **you really need to present your ideas in an integrative and creative way.** Go beyond the stated expectations of an assignment (not in terms of length ☺). Surprise me with a novel combination and/or expression of ideas.

- Coherence – The content flows in a consistent and meaningful way.
- Engaging – The writing style does not distract from the content (e.g. grammatical mistakes), but rather engages the reader’s attention. By the way, I love creative title pages that introduce a theme or multiple themes from your assignment in an engaging way.

Assignment Grade Appeals

Students can appeal their grade to me by stating in writing their reasons for contesting the grade. Deadline for such appeals is one week after the student has receipt of grade. Formal course grade appeals can be made with the ACTS registrar’s office.

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Tentative Module Schedule

Thursday – Recruiting Volunteers

9:00 – 10:20 – Introduction to the Course, Volunteering Best Practices
10:20 – 10:40 – Break
10:40 – 12:00 – Preparing Your Ministry or Organization for Volunteers
12:00 – 1:00 – Lunch
1:00 – 2:20 – Recruiting Volunteers: Part One
2:20 – 2:40 – Break
2:40 – 4:00 – Recruiting Volunteers: Part Two

Friday – Serving Volunteers and Additional Volunteering Issues

9:00 – 10:20 – Recruiting Volunteers: Part Three
10:20 – 10:40 – Break
10:40 – 12:00 – Serving Volunteers for Maximum Satisfaction and Productivity: Part One
12:00 – 1:00 – Lunch
1:00 – 2:20 – Serving Volunteers for Maximum Satisfaction and Productivity: Part Two
2:20 – 2:40 – Break
2:40 – 4:00 – Serving Volunteers for Maximum Satisfaction and Productivity: Part Three

There is no grade given for attendance but because attendance is critical, I will deduct 10% from your final grade for each class day missed.

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Course Fees

The course fees for this course go towards class handouts, in-class snacks and other course expenses not covered by the course registration fees. A portion of the course fees for students taking the course via live-streaming goes towards live-streaming costs.

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Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the following radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), STAR FM (107.1 FM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM). As well, an announcement will be placed on the University’s campus closure notification message box (604.513.2147) and on the front page of the University’s website (<http://www.twu.ca> – also see <http://www.twu.ca/conditions> for more details).

An initial announcement regarding the status of the campus and cancellation of classes is made at 6:00 AM and covers all classes beginning before 1:00PM. A second announcement is made at 11:00AM that covers all classes which begin between 1:00PM and 5:00PM. A third announcement is made at 3:00PM and covers those classes which begin after 5:00PM.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format except for in counselling courses, for which APA format is used and for CanIL courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to use EndNote Basic/Web (see the tutorial at <http://libguides.twu.ca/EndNote/>) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. They will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html or www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/. Note that in EndNote the available formatting styles are those of Turabian Bibliography, 8th edition, and APA – American Psychological Association, 6th edition. For Turabian, note that there are two formats –Bibliography and Reference List (a short format citation

style). ACTS uses the Bibliography format, not Reference List. The university no longer subscribes to RefWorks.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information found at the following website. <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

For free online programs that will enable you to create properly formatted bibliography citations, go to <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> ("Chicago stands for "Turabian").

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the "student" side. CanIL students can locate this on the CanIL intranet, under the "student" side.

Please check with your professor to see which one he/she recommends you use!!

Course Evaluations

Course evaluations are an important aspect of improving teaching outcomes and for students and faculty professional development. Therefore, completion of course evaluations are considered a course expectation. Professors will schedule time to fill out the online course evaluation (20-30 minutes) during their last scheduled class of the semester, for students to complete on their personal laptop or a collegium computer. Students who are absent or otherwise unable to complete the online course evaluation in the last class, will be expected to make every effort to do so by the last day of exams. Information about how to access online evaluation forms will be provided to the faculty and students prior to the last week of classes by the ACTS Administration.

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/research/research/research-ethics/default.html>. Those needing additional clarification may contact the ACTS Academic Dean's office. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU

As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Further details on this subject are contained in the ACTS Student Handbook in section 4.12. The handbook is available online on the ACTS webpage (www.acts.twu.ca) at the following link: <http://acts.twu.ca/community/student-handbook-2011-12.pdf>.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self-running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://acts.twu.ca/library/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://acts.twu.ca/library/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

http://acts.twu.ca/library/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.

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Appendix A: Live-Streamed Courses

A live-streamed course makes it possible for students at a distance to observe and also to participate interactively with an on-campus class in real time. Those who attend a class by live-streaming see and hear the instructor. They can watch class media presentations (e.g. PowerPoint) on their computer screens. They can follow class discussions, posing questions and making comments of their own. They can join in group discussions with other learners when the class breaks into smaller groups. Through internet-based simulcast, they are able to share all the essential elements of the formal class experience with those who attend class in person.

Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, live-streaming students will do the same course assignments and follow the same course schedule as on-campus students.

Requirements for Participating in a Live-streamed Course

- Because the number of live-stream participants to a course is limited, ***students must receive faculty permission prior to the beginning of the course*** in order to participate through live-streaming.
- ***Students must participate in classes in real-time***, as they would if they were attending class in person. For example, those who take a live-streamed course that meets on Thursday mornings will be expected to be in that class virtually, or physically, when that class meets. (A live-streaming student who is in the area and able may attend class in person when possible if he/she wishes.)

ACTS has the capacity to record live-streamed courses for later viewing, but we do not record them as a matter of routine. If it is difficult for students to participate in a class session, they may ask the instructor for permission to watch recorded versions of the class. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

- Participation in a course through live-streaming ***requires a fast and consistent internet connection (ADSL or cable), a reasonably up-to-date computer system, a webcam, and a quality headset with a microphone***. Students must familiarize themselves with the live-streaming software platform and ensure that their link, webcam, and headset are working properly before the first class session.

Please arrange for a practice run on the system with the instructor prior to class, especially if this is your first live-stream course. This can be arranged by email.

- As much as possible, ***be sure you are fully ready for each class session before the class begins***. To the degree that logging in and connecting with the system can be done from your end, there is some flexibility for you to “arrive” as you are able. But testing the system and other logistics that require faculty assistance should be done before class starts. The instructor will do his/her best to ensure that everything is in place for the live-stream session; but he/she cannot allow live-stream setup to significantly delay or interfere with the smooth flow of the class session for other students once class begins.
- Arrange a backup plan with your instructor in case of system failure. ACTS uses high-caliber, current equipment and communication platforms for live-streaming, but hardware and internet connections are not infallible and do occasionally fail. Your instructor cannot stop class in order

to troubleshoot and resolve technical problems in the unlikely event that these occur. To minimize possible disruption in the case of a loss of connection:

- Provide email, text, or phone contact information so that he/she can contact you at the next natural break in the class.
- Discuss the possibility of a back-up link to the class in case of system failure. (E.g.: a skype or phone link if the regular link fails.)
- Have a plan for follow-up contact with the instructor and/or with a fellow student to fill any gaps in your interaction with the class (as you would if you had to miss a class for other reasons).

Note that under the policy guidelines of our accrediting body, the Association of Theological Schools, live-stream courses are classified as “distance” education and are subject to the normal policies, limitations, and expectations that apply to distance courses. See the ACTS academic catalogue, or consult with the Academic Program Advisor or your Program Chair if you have any questions about the way that distance courses operate within your degree program.

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